CHAPTER - V

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Forms of linguistic expression

Ordinarily 'communicability' is the soul of language, as a language is capable of being understood by any one, and forms a bond of communication between speaker and hearer of the language. If language looses this primary and essential capacity, then it is not a language at all.

As human society proceeds on, parallel to it we find the linguistic ability of its members develops in the field of social culture. Some centuries ago such development started in Indian philosophy also. It has branches of linguistic analysis in the 'Vakya-Sestra' of Mimansa and the 'Sabdekhanda' of Nyaya. In western philosophy we find such development during the 20th Century, particularly in the school of 'logical positivism', and Linguistic Analysis, which devote special attention to discussing critically various linguistic problems.

Camp, Neurath and other logical positivists systematically pursue the logical analysis of language. By the application of logical analysis of language, they try to show how pseudo-problems and non-sensical theories are generated by the meaningless uses of language in philosophy.
But positivists cannot claim to perceive words and determine the sense of statements. If we analyse the positivist criticism of metaphysics, we find that it is nothing more than a tautology. Because if we translate the sentence 'metaphysics is meaningless' by substituting for the subject and the predicate the meanings that they themselves give to these words, then it is equivalent to "that which deals with the trans-empirical concepts has no reference to the empirical". But such an empty remark made by positivists as if it were important, really destroys the meaning of metaphysics by introducing self-contradiction.

In fact, even if we judge the value of metaphysics by the pragmatic test of empirical consequences - which some positivists adopt for determining meaning - the history of human culture and civilization will justify its existence.

More recently some positivists confine themselves wholly to the world of language which turns positivism into a kind of linguistic solipsism. So Bertrand Russell rightly disapproved this tendency of positivism in his book "An enquiry into meaning and truth". He says, "Some modern philosophers hold that we know much about language, but nothing about anything else. This view forgets that language is an

empirical phenomenon like another, and that a man who is
metaphysically agnostic must deny that he knows when he uses
a word.

Actually the problem is more deep rooted. Logical
positivists deal only with the linguistic errors which arise,
either (1) by the use of a meaningless word with other words
which carry sense or (2) by the combination of words none of
which has any sense, or (3) by the combination of words each
of which has meaning in an other context, but the combination
as a whole does not make any sense.

It is wellknown that no word has meaning in itself,
until it is "given" meaning by the users. Most of the words
in different languages have been given meaning long ago and
this meaning has been accepted by the users of those languages.
So, the word became meaningful, only when the users mutually
accepted the assigned meaning for that word. The words or
rather we can say more accurately visual signs and audible signs
appear before us, and their "given" identity with images, which
may or may not carry meaning are a secondary matter.

At first we apprehend only the images. Images are the
first formations before our mind or from opposite perspective
our sense organs first receive the surrounding stimuli which
stimulate us variously, and immediately form an image within our minds. That is the primary condition of our perception. Next we transfer these personal stimuli to the conventional signs. These conventional signs may be visible or audible. They are conventional in the sense that these signs are conditioned by some specific meaning. After perceiving these conventional signs others also transfer these signs to the images already given to them. F. Rylend\(^1\) rightly says "Language is a system of signs of ideas and of relation between ideas. These signs may be spoken sounds as in ordinary speech, or purely visual, or signs like the Egyptian Hieroglyphs, or some construction of movements as in the finger language used by deaf mutters. So, in the public language we are constantly dealing with such words, which are conventional, pre-settled and given meaning long ago before our uses. We have no scope to use our creative faculty in these conventional meaning of the words. Even there is no scope or opportunity for creating new impressions or images without which 'art' cannot be successful.

But we know that the reception of the images is so peculiar to each individual, that, it is very difficult to transfer these images through some conventional signs, which carry only "just like" senses most of the time, but not the actual sense of what we want to communicate. So Clive Bell\(^2\)

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1. Abindranath Tagore, Beganweiri Silpa Prabandhabali, p. 56.
2. Clive Bell, Art, p. 6.
rightly says that "the starting point for all systems of aesthetics must be the personal experience of peculiar emotion".

To meet this difficulty an artist always tries to create new signs, visible or audible to communicate his emotion and feelings in a most unconventional way. So some linguistic philosopher called the artistic language as the "Private language", which is private in the sense that only the artist can express it, though the language could be understood by others. This linguistic ability of a particular artist is sometimes called the particular 'style' of that artist.

Herbert Spencer also holds that as there has silently grown up a "Language of Ideas", which now enable us to convey with precision the most subtle and complicated thoughts so, there is still silently growing up a "Language of Feeling", which we may expect will ultimately enable men vividly and completely to impress on each other the emotions, which they experience from moment to moment. An Artist is more emotional than any ordinary person.¹ In case of ordinary people emotion expresses itself immediately after its occurrence. But an Artist can store it and used it at the time of creation. Leo Tolstoy made this point clear in a more straightforward fashion. He maintained that the main activity of Art consists

¹. Aesthetics and Language, p. 87.
in this, that one man (an artist) consciously by means of certain external signs, hands on his feelings to others.

Sign: Audible, Visible and Audio-Visual:

"Sign" from Latin signum, a mark or token, means intrinsically a concept. It is an interposition between 'word' and 'thing' in case of literary language. There are two types of signs, natural and artificial. The 'natural signs' are the universal mental counterparts of reality and these are matched, by convention, with the 'artificial signs', which are physical sounds and letters.

In art we have to deal always with artificial signs. An artist is always seeking new artificial signs to convey his individual feeling and emotion, and in this way he is creating his original or private artistic language, according to his own genius.

These artificial signs may be divided into three broad classes. Audible, visible and audio-visual signs. But it should be remembered that there is no limit to what a sign may mean. This is even more obviously true in case of artificial signs.

Audible Signs:

A train-whistle means that the train is about to start. This is an artificial audible sign. Meaning of this
sign is fixed and certain. But there are many uncertain artificial signs used in our life. For example, the sound of bell, may mean - some one at the door, the telephone - meal is ready - typewriter line is ended - school begins and so on. We are very apt to misinterpret bell signals, because it may be either wrongly associated with their objects or the sound of one bell may actually be confused with that of another. In modern art in most of the cases, complexity arises only due to the wrong association of signs. Though the creative artist always tries to create new association between sign and meaning, yet perceivers are not able to equip themselves with new associations, and naturally misinterpret the meaning.

In case of audible signs or notes we have to consider both the factors: receiver: our ear, and the produce either our vocal cord or any other instrument through which one can produce musical sounds. It is well known that our audible capacity is limited. Our sensitiveness to tones ranges from about 40 cycles per second up to about 20,000 or slightly more. We can hear 'as tone' only the series of vibration rates that are within this range.

So, in musical language, one has to know first of all, the rate of vibration. Though excluding technicality, a musical artist really follows the vibration theory to produce loudness or softness, yet a trained audience also knows its effect.
In musical sound, control of vibration is an essential factor for creating the environment, situation, mood etc in our mind. In Indian music 'Rāga' or musical phrase is the life of the music. Though 'Rāga' is composed through 'Swara', yet it is ever-free from the bindings of 'Swara'.

Shri K.esarudeb Sastri says in the preface of his book 'Rāga Alāpana Thāyēma,' that, "Every Swara" has in its pronunciation a wavy curve of an ebb and a flow which is essential for its enjoyability. A uniform sound like the whistle of a steam-engine cannot be called a swara, as it is not enjoyable. This word 'swara' means 'enjoyable by itself', 'swa' meaning 'by itself', 'ra' standing for 'rangayēte' meaning 'pleases'.

So, in musical sound or swara we find the different motions and intonations are essential for its production. The principal aim of Indian music is to produce impersonal and transcendental feeling of Reza. In western music, melody is similar to Indian Rāga. Edwards and others say, "A melody is a succession of single tones and rhythmic patterns, and it creates a minimum but complete aesthetic unit, conveys a self-contained musical thought and embodies a meaningful and feelingful expression".

1. Swami Prajnananda, 'Rāga-O-Rupa
Plato and Aristotle propounded the view that music is the imitation of idea. In 'problem', Aristotle specially speaks about the motion, which is essentially used in music as language. 'Motion' is the action, which helps us to perceive ideas in music. Actually we feel the motion which follows sound. Rhythms and melodies which are composed of sound resemble the feeling, even melody without words generates feeling.

These motions stimulate our action and this action is the sign of feeling. Each single note is felt as an inward agitation. The regular succession of musical sound governed by the laws of melody, and rhythm are allied to those 'actions' or outward activities which are the expression of a mental state.  

The idealist thinkers identify different modes, sharp and tone of the sound with different ideas. To-day in our music generally we associate the major mode primarily with strength, virility, gaiety and even frivolity while the minor mode suggests sadness, seriousness and profundity. Sir James Jeans in his 'Science and Music' suggests different keynotes as: Do - Strong, firm, Re - hopeful, Mi - steady, calm, Fa - desolate, awe - inspiring, So - grand bright, La - sad, weeping, Ti - piercing, sensitive etc.

Visible Signs:

Like audible signs there are so many artificial visible signs used in our surrounding environment. This illustration (skull and crosswise two bones) is a well-identified visible sign. This sign which is used mainly in electrical poles, railway crossing, instrument and machines moving on, and bottles containing poisonous chemicals means danger. Everybody knows that the suggested meaning of this sign is that, if anyone touches or drinks those objects carelessly, death will be the ultimate effect.

Audio-Visual Signs:

In various motion pictures and drama or T.V. Programme Directors often use the vision of orange sky with the music of birds - which signifies the dawn. With jackal's exclamation and dark blue light is created a suspense and the audience take it as a sign of some misdeed going to happen.

So in Humbolt's\(^1\) (1767-1835) opinion, the study of the systems of signs is arising out of human intercourse. These signs are the most adequate expression of man's profoundest

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interest, bringing to light the uniformity as well as the
variety of human nature. Analysing various systems of signs
he developed his universal science of language.

The motion picture or cinema is another most modern
linguistic medium through which we communicate our audio-
visual signs. To-day a successful director has to perceive
all the factors or signs — such as habits of speech and
behaviour, deep-seated social practices, past traditions,
present influences and so on. The famous Director, Dr. Satyajit
Roy¹ says, "the more perceptive the film maker, the more
acutely is he aware of these factors and the better able to
weave them into the fabric of his work".

But ultimately this perceptive aptitude is not confined
only within visual or aural signs. Like other mediums, in film
we also perceive with intellect and through audio-visual signs.
Ultimately we have recourse to intellectual perception, where
audio-visual signs are transcended and we can feel ourselves
free with our imaginations.

In film language it is called "Montage", which we find
in China picture language, namely 'Hieroglyphs'. The same thing
reappears in modern motion picture as 'Montage'. Soviet film
Director Eisenstein also speaks about such development of per-
ception in film movement.

¹ Dr. Satyajit Roy, Our Films, Their Films, p. 154.
We all know that cinema or motion picture is a collection of innumerable still photographs. Through these still photographs we perceive an illusion of speed, in a second we perceive twentyfour still photographs, and create an intellectual perception within ourselves.

In a film-show the spectator physically occupies a fixed seat, but aesthetically he is in permanent motion as his eye identifies itself with the lens of the camera, which will move according to the director's will, as well as external perception. So the director's temporary perception of audio-visual signs has been recorded through movies and with it we are able to comprehend the idea of the film maker.

Richard Starke\(^1\) has also discussed aesthetic signs in the article "The Problem of Art in Freud's Writings". Freud lays stress upon the aesthetic signs as a means of communication between the artist and the beholder. This sign may abolish the barriers between the ego of the artist and the egos of other people or perceivers.

Art as a means to fill up communication gap:

Every man is an islet, every one alienated from each other. The concept of alienation was known to almost all ancient religions, where we find that the fall or the

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alienation of man from God had been an object of serious discussion. It was further developed by modern philosophers such as Hegel, Feuerbach and Marx. Though Marx has discussed it to expose the economic life of people under capitalism, yet 'alienation' is a well accepted theory of sociology. Marx has identified four aspects of alienation, firstly, man is alienated from nature, secondly, he is alienated from himself, thirdly, man is alienated from his being as a member of the human species, fourthly, he is alienated from other men.

In this fourth aspect of alienation, which is also a topic of sociology, art has a vital role to play. Success of art, as well as aesthetic language depends on its capacity to integrate the people. Art is one of the best means through which an individual being, breaking his own individuality may join with others. So some aestheticians say that real art belongs to the people.

Aram Knechaturyen says¹ - "Indeed, the language of music needs no translation. Generally comprehensible, universal 'language of music', actually comprises numerous languages, and the fact that we understand these languages - Russian or German, Armenian or French - must not in any way subject their existence to doubt".

In this connection he also says that, the world's classical music came into being only because every really

great artist has contributed to it on behalf of the people whose culture served as the basis for the education and development of his creative personality. We can take the example of Bach, who brilliantly embodied and communicated in perfect form of the spirit of his people, their national character. His musical language has been formed of intonations and rhythms of German peasant songs and his music contains quite a few "excerpts" from actual folk melodies. And yet his art has long since been the property of all mankind. Everybody finds something in it that greatly harmonizes with his feelings, thoughts and notions of the soul.

Aesthetic language is a unique means to intensifying social consciousness of people in different ages and countries. The necessity for intensifying aesthetic effect on men by means of artistic language is confirmed by the acute experience of modern men's spiritual life. Because an individual being with all his modern values and emotions still gravitates towards stable "eternal" spiritual values as - national traditions, thinking in folkloric images etc., which link his present life with the past and give him a stable feeling of the totality and universality of life, rather than of the disconnectedness of "the span of times".1

1. Arxist - Leninist Aesthetics and Life, pp. 67, 69, 73.
The true artist attains considerable success only when he embraces the depth of the popular artistic consciousness and combines this with the immediate social problems of life, thus realizing the principle of the integrity of artistic language.

If we analyse carefully the history of aesthetic of different countries we can get confirmation of this theory. Ignoring surrounding life and society of that age an artist cannot establish his creation as a universal language beyond time.

The art of ancient Greece objectified the popular mythological consciousness and the immediate social aspects of life, such as courage, heroism duty etc., uniting them with man's physical existence. The artist and contemporary time are organically merged in their aesthetic creation, and mainly for that reason ancient art served the purpose of communication.

In Indian ancient art, we find the same social consciousness in literary art, Mahabharata and Ramayana, or in painting of Ajanta and sculpture of Ellora. In support of this idea we can quote the writing of Dr. Bhupendranath
Dutte\textsuperscript{1} about 'Swastika' \(\text{\textcopyright} \) as follows. "Here it must be pointed out that the Swastika representing mystic symbol of religion has been discovered at Mohen-jo-daro and is extant in popular Hindism as well. The artistic representation of Hindu religious mysticism as depicted in Swastika has constantly followed the trails of Hindu cultural history. This symbol has undergone various vicissitudes in the history of India and has been discovered in the archaeological findings of ancient Caucasus as well as Crete, Mexico and other countries. The discovery of its complete history will add a chapter to the cultural history of man. Thus Indus Valley civilisation and its arts speak about the culture and the civilization of the Indians in Chalcolithic period. It gives testimony of the spiritual capacity of the man in India of that age."

So, the actual universality and integrity of different individuals can be communicated through aesthetic language. This language creates a universal system of values and an audio-visual representation of life in the form of images, that are emotionally convincing. It evolves the meaning of life and enables human beings to reestablish the spiritual relation between them with the help of aesthetic Idea.

\textsuperscript{1} Dr. Shyamendranath Dutta, Indian Art in relation to culture, p. 16.
Notation and Abstraction

Though Marxist-Leninist aestheticians believe that art cannot be transformed into the level of visual, aural demonstration of scientific propositions or an abstract declaration of political or moral ideas, yet abstraction is necessary for various purposes and to universalize the idea of the individual artist.

This abstraction is required mainly to maintain the dynamic linguistic flow of aesthetic idea. As Abanindranath Tagore\(^2\) says that the water of rain is usable only when it is flowing as a river or fountain, but it is useless when it exists as ice on the top of the Himalayas. Sometimes language, that may be aural or visual or symbolic loses its flow and becomes fixed within a style. It is just like a river which loses its flow under the weight of the sand carried by itself. A new poet, a new artist mixing his own motion of mind and motion of idea with the flow of language alters his style and again language gets its root. Had it been otherwise, we would even now speak in Vedic language, or still we would paint the picture in Ajanta style or Moghal

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2. Bageswari Silpe Prabandhabali, p.60.
style and would continue to act in the 'Jatra' style. Wilhelm Worringen\(^1\) in his article "Abstraction and Empathy", says that the tendency to abstraction appears to us as the polar opposite of the need of empathy. The tendency to abstraction is thus dominant in the initial stage of all art, and remains so with certain peoples at higher levels of culture.

One can ask the question, what are the psychological presuppositions of the tendency to abstraction? It can be said that the tendency to abstraction is the result of a great inner conflict between men and his surroundings, and corresponds in religion to a strong transcendental colouring of all ideas.

Some thinkers believe that there must be a causal connection between primitive culture and the highest and purely regular form of Art. The tendency to abstraction has created this form as an elementary necessity without the intervention of the intellect. The intellect had not yet disturbed the instinct, hence the innate disposition towards regularity could find abstract expression. Pure abstraction can never attained physically, so an actual natural

\(^1\) A modern book of Esthetics (Edited, Melvin Beder), p. 386.
prototype is the model of such abstraction.

In painting, men were impelled towards flat representation because three-dimensionality is the greatest obstacle to a grasp of the object in its self-enclosed material individuality. Its perception as a three-dimensional object requires a sequence of connected moments of perception in which the separate individuality of the object dissolves. The dimensions of depth betray themselves only by foreshortenings and shadows, hence their comprehension requires a strong co-operation of understanding and habit. The suppression of space-representation was for this reason a dictate of the tendency to abstraction, because it is space itself which connects things with one another.

"Aesthetic" at present has acquired a special meaning and is confined to modes of perception that affect our feelings of different moods. There is no doubt that an increasing number of people find in certain works of art, which in the strict sense have no aesthetic appeal, certain satisfaction which is neither intellectual nor sensational, but which must therefore be subconscious. The psycho-analytical theories of Freud and Jung give us plenty of justification for such a possibility.
Surrealism is such an art movement which took definite shape in a manifesto issued by the poet André Breton in 1924. As a movement it is not confined to the plastic arts, but includes poetry, drama and even psychology and philosophy.

The term 'surrealism' implies the main doctrine of the school that there must exist a world more real than the normal world; and this is the world of unconscious mind. Though some of the advocates of this school acknowledge Leutremont as their master and seek metaphysical justification of this theory in the philosophy of Hegel, Sigmund Freud is the real founder of this school. As Freud finds a key to the perplexities of life in the material of dreams so Surrealist group of artists also finds its best inspiration in the same region.

It is an art without limits of any kind. Its underlying idea is the recovery, by means of what Breton calls "a vertiginous descent into ourselves" of the whole force of the mental personality. It believes that there are hidden springs in the unconscious, and that these can be tapped if we give our imagination free rein— if we allow thought to be automatic. The artist, does not seek a symbol or abstraction for what is clear to the understanding and capable of

1. Herbert Reed, Art Now, p. 95.
discursive exposition, because he realises that mental life exists on two planes, one is, definite and visible in outline and detail, the other submerged, vague indeterminate, which is perhaps the greater part of our life. A human being drifts through time like iceberg.

The aim of the surrealistic artist, whether he is a painter, or a musician or a poet, is to try and realise some of the dimensions and characteristics of his submerged being. To do this the artist resorts to the significant imagery of dreams and dream-like states of mind represented by abstract form, colour and rhythm.

Symbolisation of Art

Such discussion has been made about signs, but signs and symbols are not the same. Symbols are not proxy for their objects, but are vehicles for the conception of objects. So we can say a symbol is the conception, not the things that they directly mean.

The picture is essentially a symbol, not a duplicate of what it represents. Because the picture may be black or white, red or grey etc., it may be larger or smaller than
the object; it is certainly flat and although the tricks of perspective sometimes give a perfect illusion of three-dimensionality, it is still representing an object. In case of other forms of aesthetic creation this theory may be applicable. Though they are not duplicate, yet they must represent the very object which the artist went to convey.

We find a very intimate relationship between Art and Symbol. Whether this relationship is justified or not that is a question of analytic judgement. Here we are only discussing symbolization of Art work, which is the most important property of aesthetic language. According to Susanne K. Langer¹ in a special sense one may call a work of art, a symbol of feeling for a like symbol, it formulates our ideas of inward experience, as a discourse formulates our ideas of things and facts in the outside world.

But actually a true symbol and a real art always differ from each other. A symbol does not point beyond itself to something else. Where art presents something like a direct vision of vitality, emotion, subjective reality.

As soon as the natural forms of subjective experience

¹ Susanne K. Langer, Philosophical sketches, p. 60.
are abstracted to the point of symbolic presentation, we can use those forms to imagine feeling and understand its nature.

Herbert Read\(^1\) has thrown new light upon this symbolization of art. He says that the artist becomes a man gifted with the capacity to project symbols from his unconscious. These symbols are of general validity. Other people might project these symbols, if they had the technical capacity to express their ideas. Though ordinary people cannot project the idea, yet they can immediately accept it. This act of acceptance replaces the feeling of pleasure which is the reaction in the case of normal work of art. Rudolf Arnheim\(^2\) also accepts the theory that 'all art is symbolic'. Because, according to him, the simplest line expresses visible meaning and is therefore symbolic. Though Rudolf Arnheim does not describe the function of sound in his writings, this theory may be tenable in case of sound also. Simplest form of sound expresses some audible meaning.

We all know that art deals with colour, shape and notions, which are more concrete than abstract thinking;

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and with these human mind perceives and interprets its image of the outer world. There is no way of presenting our unconscious without the reflection of perceivable things. These perceivable objects are symbolic in character.

Hirod Dezumder, a modern artist in one of his articles defines symbol as a point of assignment, only, through which the artist can express the timeless absolute as well as an abstract and indistinct Idea.