REFLECTIONS ON VEDANTA

HERBERT HERRING

A GOLDEN JUBILEE PUBLICATION
The Dr. S. Radhakrishnan Institute for Advanced Study in Philosophy.
UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS

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GENERAL EDITOR

Dr V. A. DEVASENAPATHI

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FOR ADVANCED STUDY IN PHILOSOPHY
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FOREWORD

The Department of Philosophy was started in the University of Madras in September 1927. In August 1964 it was raised to the status of a Centre for Advanced Study in Philosophy by the University Grants Commission. From 1976 it has come to be known as The Dr S. Radhakrishnan Institute for Advanced Study in Philosophy.

Since its inception in 1927, this Department has kept in view two major objectives: (1) the study of Indian systems of thought and (2) the study of other systems of thought. Last year the Department arranged for a course of special lectures in furtherance of these objectives.

Dr Herbert Herring, formerly Director, Max Müller Bhavan, Madras, has been evincing keen interest in the activities of this Institute. He not only participated in the All-India Seminars conducted annually by this Institute but also organised Seminars under the joint auspices of Max Müller Bhavan and this Institute. He very kindly arranged for special lectures by distinguished professors from Germany. After his return to Europe he paid two visits to this Institute. The first was in July 1976 when he delivered a course of seven lectures. These have been published under the title, *Being and Unity in Western Philosophy*, in our Golden Jubilee Series. Dr Herring attended the Golden Jubilee Celebrations of the Department of Philosophy on 7th and 8th September 1977 and participated in the Seminar on 'The Philosophy of Radhakrishnan' held on that occasion. The Institute took the opportunity of his visit to arrange for a course of four lectures. These are being published in this volume under the title, *Reflections on Vedanta.*

As part of the Golden Jubilee Celebrations, the special lectures delivered at this Institute are brought out as Golden Jubilee Publications. The Institute thanks Dr Herring for permission to publish

his lectures in the Golden Jubilee Series, and for the helpful discussions the staff and research scholars have had with him.

The Institute wishes to thank the Government of Tamil Nadu, Dr Malcolm S. Adiseshiah, the Vice-Chancellor, and the other authorities of the University of Madras for the financial aid given for these publications. The Institute is appreciative of the interest evinced by the University Grants Commission in upgrading the parent department into a Centre for Advanced Study in Philosophy, financing it for ten years and for its subsequent and sustained interest in the progress of the Institute.

The Institute is grateful to the late Professor S. S. Suryanarayana Sastri for laying the foundations of the Department on sound lines and to Dr T.M.P. Mahadevan, former Director of the Institute, for building up the Department over a period of three and a half decades by his devoted services.

The General Editor thanks his colleague Dr R. Balasubramanian for seeing the matter through the press and the Avvai Achukkoodam for the prompt and neat execution of the work.

Madras-600 005
February 20, 1978

V. A. DEVASENAPATHI

PREFACE

This is the text of four lectures which I delivered at the Dr S. Radhakrishnan Institute for Advanced Study in Philosophy, University of Madras, in September 1977. The idea to deliver these lectures at all did not spring from my mind; it was suggested to me by my Indian partners during my last year's visit to the Institute when lecturing on central themes of Western ontology. On eventually receiving the official invitation, I found myself in a somewhat difficult position. I certainly regarded the invitation to give my assessment of basic topics and problems in Indian philosophy, specially the Vedānta, as a great honour, since it seemed to indicate that my friends at the Radhakrishnan Institute, so extremely well versed in Vedāntic thought, considered me capable and worthy enough to step on to their indigenous field and to develop my views of what I take to be essentials of Hindu philosophy, theoretical and practical. But it was precisely this attitude of theirs which made me hesitate to accept the invitation, for I had some doubts whether I—the outsider who was trained in the philosophical traditions of the West—would come up to their expectations that is to say, whether I could contribute much to the discussion and reconsideration of problems which, doubtless, reckon among the subtlest and most complicated philosophical reasoning is given to tackle. When I finally agreed, it was mainly for the reason that, whatever little Indian scholars of philosophy might benefit by my deliberations, I would certainly be the beneficiary of their critical remarks; and this expectation of mine has surely been fulfilled

Thus I wish to express my sincere gratitude to my colleagues at the Radhakrishnan Institute, above all to the Director, Prof. Dr V A. Devasenapathi, for their encouragement as well as for their critical

but kindly comments which help me to delve deeper into the vast and profound ocean of Hindu thought.

I am also grateful to the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) for paying my travel expenses.

H. HERRING

CONTENTS

1

INTRODUCTION

It is a much deplorable fact that philosophers in the West — apart from such laudable exceptions as Paul Deussen, Friedrich Max Mueller, Heinrich Zimmer, Aldous Huxley, R. C. Zaehner and a few others — hardly have taken into consideration the great philosophical endeavours and achievements of the East, especially of India, — systems of thought that came into being long before the Pre-Socratics and which could well provide new metaphysical impulses and incentives to Western thought in its rapidly increasing reduction to works of the theory of science and to socio-economic problems. T. M. P. Mahadevan had obviously this in mind when stating recently that histories of philosophy written in the West almost completely ignore Indian thought, giving one the impression that east of the Suez there has never been any genuine philosophy.[1] If this omission of Indian thought might have been understandable and excusable before 1900, since among the non-Indian scholars only a few had access to the relevant sources, such an excuse no longer holds good in the 20th century; for those sources have been accessible to everybody for quite a number of years by now, thanks to F. Max Mueller's great undertaking of a critical edition of *The Sacred Books of the East* (1875-1900), out of the 50 volumes of which no less than 31 were dedicated to classical Indian texts. Nevertheless, the majority of thinkers in the West

prefer to hold the prejudiced opinion that Indian thought is a jungle of abstruse mysticism and absurd religious speculations, having nothing whatsoever in common with what, since Aristotle, is considered the criterion of philosophy proper in the West, *viz.* the investigation of reality and our knowledge of reality, based upon sense-perception and logical inference. Now, apart from the fact that such a concept of philosophy need not be acknowledged as the only valid one, the great systems of Indian thought (and this means to me first and foremost the Vedāntic schools) seem to be well compatible even with this Western understanding of philosophy, — as I hope to show, *inter alia*, in the course of these lectures.

I cannot deny that I myself was still under the influence of this common Western outlook on Indian thought before coming to Madras, in 1969, although the late Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan's enlightening work on *Indian Philosophy*, which I had studied with ever increasing curiosity and eagerness more than 30 years ago, and the good fortune I had when being given the chance to attend some of his lectures and seminars during my time at Oxford, 1951/52, made me more than once doubt the correctness and justification of our general attitude towards the cultural heritage of India. But it is only natural that one is inclined to trust one's own brood more than witnesses from a strange and remote region. It was, thus, not until I came to Madras, being privileged to participate in the activities of this Centre of learning that I gradually realized why my approach hitherto to Indian thought was, more or less, doomed to fail. Through my participations in many an All India Seminar here and thanks to innumerable discussions with my Indian colleagues and friends, I came to see that the many systems and schools of Indian thought (the so-called orthodox ones at least) had obviously more in common than I had imagined. I came to realize that all these systems, notwithstanding their many differences, had basically one essential thing in common : they were

all assessments, elaborations, profound and subtle interpretations of the fundamental problems of Being and Unity. Now, this alone would certainly not mark a fundamental distinction from philosophical research in the West, for there also Being and Unity have always been perennial problems under investigation. But whereas in the West the various answers to these problems differ from each other to an extent which shows a thorough incompatibility of the great systems, their preceptors and followers being on a permanent war path, the answers to the fundamental problems given by the great Indian thinkers are, on the whole, thoroughly compatible, each thinker regarding the inquiries and results of a predecessor or contemporary as a valuable step towards the uncovering and realization of the eternal truth and reality. Thus Radhakrishnan writes in the Introduction to Vol. I of his *Indian Philosophy* :

> The twin strands which run through all the efforts of the Indian thinkers are loyalty to tradition and devotion to truth. Every thinker recognizes that principles of his predecessors are stones built into the spiritual fabric, and if they are traduced, one's own culture is defamed ... The later Indian thinkers justify the different philosophical interpretations of the universe advanced by the earlier ones, and regard them as varying approximations to the truth as a whole. The different views are not looked upon as unrelated adventures of the human mind into the realm of the unknown or a collection of philosophical curiosities. They are regarded as the expression of a single mind, which has built up the great temple, though it is divided into numerous walls and vestibules, passages and pillars.[2]

Bearing this in mind, makes it much easier for a non-Indian to understand the otherwise rather surprising if not confusing fact that so many celebrated thinkers, though firm representatives of a certain system and spokesmen of a particular school of thought, have nevertheless commented on other schools, not in order to tear them to pieces, as it were, by pointing out their inconsistencies and absurdities (as is so common in the West) but in order to show in how

far they are all legitimate and laudable attempts to contribute to a proper understanding of the underlying metaphysical problems. Maṇḍana Miśra and Vācaspati Miśra at Śaṅkara's time; Śrīkaṇṭha, the contemporary of Rāmānuja ; Appayya Dīkṣita in the 16th century, and in more recent times Vivekananda, Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Aurobindo, and Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, to name only these, they all have shown deep respect to trends of thought other than their own, Radhakrishnan even going so far as to aim at a reconciliation of one of the heterodox systems, namely Buddhism, with Advaita Vedānta as the outstanding orthodox system of thought.

This, at first sight, surprising fact becomes, however understandable when we remember that all systems and schools of Hindu philosophy (and with Hindu philosophy or the orthodox systems alone I shall be concerned in my lectures, not with Buddhism Jainism and other heterodox schools) are based upon the same sources : the *Vedas*, the *Upaniṣads* and the *Bhagavad Gītā* whose authoritative character has always been acknowledged by all of them throughout the ages and has never been doubted or seriously disputed. This again shows a remarkable and significant difference from the history of thought in the West where there are no such undisputed authoritative sources. It is true that Aristotle's *Metaphysics* or Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* has been taken at certain times and by certain schools of thought as the utmost that could be accomplished in philosophy ; but at no time have they been regarded as the unquestionable embodiment of eternal truth and wisdom.

The fact of Hindu philosophy's being based upon the firm ground of those texts has also led to another misunderstanding of Indian thought in the West, i.e. its alleged lack of originality. The Hindu thinkers, even the most reputed among them such as Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja or Madhva, are said to be mere commentators of the sacred texts. Now, apart from the fact that such a

statement only reveals the uncritical attitude towards other, non-Western ways of thought, taking the general idea and outline of what philosophy is meant to be in the West as the only criterion of philosophy as such,—apart from this the statement that Hindu philosophy has always been lacking in originality due to its being mere comments or footnotes on certain authoritative texts, is unwarranted for another reason, *viz.* the misunderstanding of the meaning and character of a so-called *bhāṣya*. If a *bhāṣya* were simply a commentary on a work of thought (whether on a sacred text or the work of a certain author is of minor importance in this context), then the above mentioned criticism could be justified. But a *bhāṣya* is more than a commentary. It does not so much explain and interpret the wording of a given text, aiming at an easier understanding of its general outline and main propositions. This also a *bhāṣya* certainly does, but this is not a *bhāṣya*'s essential character. A *bhāṣya* deals with the problems of a given text and context in a rather free and critical manner, thus revealing surely as much of original thinking as many a Western philosophical essay or book. What T.M.P. Mahadevan writes with regard to the *bhāṣyas* on the *Sūtras* holds thus good for *bhāṣyas* as such :

> The commentators seek to explicate the meanings of the *Sūtras*. And in so doing, they allow themselves the freedom to expound their own philosophical perspective, systematically and consistently.[3]

Under this aspect and taken *cum grano salis* the whole work of Aristotle could be considered a *bhāṣya* on Plato's thought; the inquiries of Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas could pass as *bhāṣyas* on Aristotle; and almost the entire complex of German Idealism proper and Neo-Kantianism might well be understood as *bhāṣyas* on Kant's *opus*.

There are, indeed, some Western thinkers whose judgement on Indian philosophy is somewhat milder and

more balanced in so far as they are willing to exempt at least the classical systems of Indian thought from the verdict of lack of originality. Thus, for instance, Karl H. Potter writes in *Presuppositions of Indian Philosophies*[4] :

> ... philosophy in India for the moment has degenerated into mere scholarship, the description, classification, and comparison of Indian or Western schools of thought. Philosophers no longer talk problems; they talk about problems ... They find themselves caught in a sort of limbo between the attitudes of the Indian past, of which they have lost hold, and the attitude of the Western present, in which they are still not yet at home.

To this I remark from my knowledge, both of contemporary Western and Indian philosophy, that the present day Indian thinkers on the whole (and exceptions only prove the rule) have certainly not lost hold of India's heritage. They are at least in such a firm command of it as their Western colleagues are in intellectual command of the Greek origins of their philosophy. How else could it be explained that the majority of philosophical publications in India today deal with problems of the classical sources ? Does this, then, at least confirm Potter's statement that Indian philosophers no longer talk problems but talk about problems instead ? Taking for granted for a moment that this be the case, I think there would be not much of a difference between contemporary Indian and Western philosophies ; since when looking at the attitudes of the predominant trends in the West, one finds that analytic philosophers—logical, linguistic and therapeutic positivists—for some decades have always been talking a lot about sense and meaning, and in doing so they not always talked sense. The various schools of social philosophy, on the other hand, are more concerned with finding out what Marx, his followers and opponents, have said or what they had meant to say instead of dealing with the problems of history and society as such. But even so, what is wrong in talking *about* problems? If one agrees (and

from what I know, Potter certainly would) that there are fundamental problems in philosophy as a perennial challenge to the human mind, could we think of any thing better and more appropriate in philosophy than to critically think about and thus talk about such problems which, before long, would turn out to be pseudo-problems or, at best, questions meaningful only at a certain time and within the limited framework of a given scientific, cultural or social setup ?

With all this in mind, I shall venture in my lectures to inquire into basic problems and ideas of *Vedānta* thought and their mode of treatment by prominent Vedāntins in past and present,—using the term *Vedānta* in its original sense, of course, meaning the philosophical ideas based upon the *Āraṇyakas* and the *Upaniṣads*, and not in the term's much later restriction to Śaṅkara's Advaita only.

2

ASPECTS OF VEDANTA ONTOLOGY

Indian thought is basically and essentially Vedic thought, meaning its being based upon the *Vedas*, the concluding portions of which are the *Upaniṣads*, representing the central teachings of the *Vedas* in a most sophisticated, sometimes seemingly abstruse way,—hence the name *Upaniṣads*, i.e. secret. most profound teaching. On these again *Sūtras* are based, ascribed to Bādarāyaṇa, early in the Christian era, a collection of subtle statements and aphorisms which pretend to present the sometimes conflicting teachings of the *Upaniṣads* in a more systematic order or, as Śaṅkara puts it in his *Brahmasūtra-bhāṣya*, I, i, 2, "....the *Sūtras* are meant only for the purpose of stringing together the flower-like *Vedānta* passages" The *Sūtras* together with the commentaries or *bhāṣyas* on the same written by such prominent Indian thinkers and sages as Śaṅkara, Bhāskara, Rāmānuja, Keśava, Nīlakaṇṭha, Madhva, Vallabha and others, mark the origin of the various schools of *Vedānta* philosophy, such as the Advaita or absolute monism of Śaṅkara, Viśiṣṭādvaita or qualified monism of Rāmānuja, the Dvaitādvaita or dualism-cum-monism of Nimbāraka, the Śuddhādvaita or pure monism of Vallabha, the Dvaita or dualism of Madhva.

The central theme of the *Vedas*, the *Upaniṣads*, the *Brahmasūtras* and of the schools of thought derived from

these sources is that of the Absolute in its relation to man and world. What is the Absolute? Can man achieve knowledge of the Absolute? How can the Absolute be realized in man's life? These are the fundamental questions for the Vedāntin, from which there follow metaphysics, gnoseology and ethics of Vedānta philosophy.

What seems to me the core of Vedānta metaphysics or ontology, common to all the schools, is the Unity of Being, experienced by man by means of a critical analysis and evaluation of the character of the apparent diversity and multiplicity of beings or entities. All Vedāntins basically agree that there is only one principle of reality *viz. Brahman* or reality as such. It is with regard to the relation of *Brahman* to man and world that we meet with different, sometimes conflicting points of view which, to my mind, characterize the main differences among the Vedāntic schools. Thus those differences do not arise from investigations and interpretations of different texts (as is the case in Western philosophy), but from different interpretations of the same authoritative texts. Let us, therefore, consider the teachings of the texts as regards the principle of reality in order to understand why and in how far these teachings could be interpreted in different ways, such as monism and dualism, idealism and realism.

It need not be mentioned in front of such a distinguished audience of students of Vedānta that, if not in *Vedas*, at least in the *Upaniṣads* the terms *Brahman* and *Ātman* have the same meaning and are thus synonyms. The identity of *Brahman* and *Ātman* is the central teaching of the *Upaniṣads*. Perhaps the most convincing testimony for this is the story of Śvetaketu being enlightened by his father about the only true reality, as narrated in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* VI, i, 1 - VI, xii, 3. *Brahman* and *Ātman* are mostly described and explained in terms of negation, stating what they are not as against things in space and time of which we have verifiable or scientific knowledge. There are, however, also passages

where *Brahman-Ātman* is being talked of in an affirmative way, by means of positive or qualitative terms (especially in chapters VII-XI of the *Bhagavad Gītā*); but this is done only in order to indicate that — due to the limited capability of the human mind—the Absolute is to be thought of as all we are able to experience and to imagine in its highest, unsurpassable perfection, — very much like the scholastic designations of God or the *realitas absoluta* as *summum unum, summum verum, summum bonum.* All such statements on *Brahman-Ātman,* however, culminate in that famous passage of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* where *Brahman-Ātman* is spoken of as *satyasya-satyam,* the Real of the real, the supreme reality as such (II, i, 20). What, now, do the *Upaniṣads* teach about *Brahman's* relation to the world?[5]

It is obvious that, for once, this relation is conceived of in the form of a theory of emanation, very like the respective theory in Neoplatonism, specially in Plotinus, that is to say, that this relation is regarded as inter-relating origin and offspring, the latter being modifications of the former. Thus we read, for instance, in *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* I, i, 7:

> As the silk-spider sends forth and withdraws (its thread), as plants grow on the earth, as hair on the head and on the body of a living person, so from the Immutable arises here the universe.[6]

From this it becomes, furthermore, obvious that *Brahman* creates the world out of its own (spiritual) substance and not out of some pre-existent matter, that the universe (i. e. everything which is not *Brahman*) is a manifestation of *Brahman* in the sense that "That out of which the universe is made is the same as that which makes it."[7] In the words of the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* III, i, 3:

> All this ... is based upon spirit. The eye of the universe is spirit; spirit is its foundation. Spirit is Brahman.

There are, no doubt, other passages which could justify a different interpretation of the *Upaniṣads'* statements on the relation between *Brahman* and world, regarding the world as a mere appearance and thus as the non-real as compared with the only reality. Such instances can be found in the above mentioned story of Śvetaketu or in *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* IV, 9 reading thus :

> The Vedas, the sacrifices, the rituals, the observances, the past, the future, and whatever the Vedas declare, — this universe that illusion-maker projects from that (Brahman). And the other (the soul) is confined within that (the world) by illusion."

There are similar passages in the so-called *Śaiva Upaniṣads*.

Now, whereas the theory of the universe's emanating from *Brahman* or the cosmic view is favoured by the theistic Vedāntins, the theory of appearance, the acosmic view is upheld and defended by the Advaitins. I shall attempt to show in my following reflections on Vedānta ontology that to my humble knowledge there is no clear statement in the *Upaniṣads* that the universe is an illusion in the ontical sense, and although Gauḍapāda seems to have taught such an understanding of the *Brahman*–world relation, Śaṅkara—from all I know—does not. His interpretation of this relation seems to be one which finds the justification for a metaphysical or ontical monism in the thesis of an ontological dualism; that is to say, the problem is not whether there are two or even more (since that there is only one unique reality is to him not to be doubted), but how can it be explained that the one and only realm of Being appears to us as a manifold of beings or entities. Taking Śaṅkara's Advaita under this aspect, I think it should be seen that the above mentioned opposing standpoints of Vedānta thought, *viz.* the cosmic and the acosmic theories of world-creation, do not exclude each other but are well compatible with one another.

In order to understand my assertion that I find no clear statement in the *Upaniṣads* in favour of the view that the universe and all its entities are mere illusions or appearances in the ontical sense, and that Śaṅkara finds the justification of his metaphysical or ontical monism in the theory of an ontological dualism, we have to reflect for a moment on the proper meaning of the terms *ontical* and *ontological*, which unfortunately until recently have always been used as synonyms. It was none other than Martin Heidegger who, in § 4 of *Being and Time* (1927), drew a clear cut distinction between these two terms in stating that "Dasein is ontically distinctive in its being ontological".[8] Thus the term *ontical* denotes what is, whereas the term *ontological* refers to our understanding, our knowledge of what is. When applying the term *ontical*, we refer to something being, to an entity in its subject-independent existence; when, however, applying the term *ontological*, we refer to our knowledge of such an entity. I want you to bear in mind that wherever I shall make use of these terms in the following deliberations, I shall use them only in this particular way and meaning.

Let me first give a brief outline of the cardinal tenets and theses of Vedānta ontology as put forward by the Vedāntins.

There is only one ultimate reality, *viz. parabrahman* or *nirguṇa-brahman* which is also described as *paramātmā*, i.e. pure Being (*sat*), pure consciousness (*cit*), pure bliss (*ānanda*). But it has to be seen that *sat*, *cit*, *ānanda* are not attributes or properties of *Brahman* but *Brahman's* very constituents. The very concept of *Brahman* implies, incorporates being, consciousness, and bliss in their supreme or pure form. As pure Being, *Brahman* is by definition and necessarily indivisible, spaceless, timeless, passionless, without any qualities whatsoever. *Brahman* is the all-pervading substratum of everything; though being itself uncaused, it is the ground and reason of every entity and

the totality of entities. As against this, our world of common-day experience, the world governed by the principles of space and time and the laws of causality is only existent in its relation to and dependence on *Brahman* as the universal creating, sustaining and dissolving power. But saying that this world with all its entities is thus appearance or illusion as against *Brahman*, does not mean that it is only existent in our imagination, as a dream or a hallucination; it is existent, being experienced by the senses, being used in scientific experiments, but as soon as a man realizes his own identity with *Brahman*, he realizes the phenomenal or illusory character of the world. Thus we have three levels of our dealing with Being according to the Vedānta. There is the supreme level of *pāramārthika* or pure Being; there is, secondly, the realm of empirical or phenomenal existence, *viz. vyāvahārika*; and there is finally the sphere of apparent or imaginative existence only, as in a dream, a hallucination or in a mirror reflection, the sphere of *prātibhāsika* (which is, strictly speaking, part of the *vyāvahārika-satya*). Now, whereas *Brahman* alone *is* reality, everything else besides *Brahman* is not real in the true and unrestricted sense but has a lower grade of being, due to and dependent on *Brahman's* reality. Nothing is apart from *Brahman*, and apart from *Brahman* there is nothing. I have said in the introduction to my lectures that it was not so much the doctrine of *Brahman* as the only true reality which has been disputed among the various schools of Vedānta but rather the problem of *Brahman*-world relationship, and this is, indeed, one of the crucial points in the *Upaniṣads* themselves. As M. Hiriyanna righteously remarks:

> The vagueness of Upanishadic teaching is particularly in reference to the relation of Brahman to the individual soul on the one hand, and to the physical universe on the other.[9]

There are statements in the *Upaniṣads* that identify *Brahman* with the worldly entities, and there are also statements that deny such an identity and point to the

total difference between *Brahman* and everything being. A highly significant attempt to reconcile these contradictory statements was made by Bhartṛprapañca who maintained that the universe was as well identical with *Brahman* as different from *Brahman*. The ultimate reality is as *Brahman* undoubtedly one whereas as souls and the universe it is many. *Brahman* is everything, and everything is *Brahman*, thus in *Brahman*, thus emerging from *Brahman* and returning into *Brahman* as into its own identity. Variety and diversity are essentially subsisting in *Brahman*, and creation is thus nothing but the unfolding articulation of *Brahman* itself.

Looking for a corresponding theory in Western thought, one might be reminded of Hegel's dialectical metaphysics.[10] In Indian thought it resembles much the Sāṅkhya as ascribed to Kapila; but it seems to me that Bhartṛprapañca's view, commonly described as the doctrine of the self-evolving *Brahman* (*brahma-pariṇāma-vāda*), though basically monistic and idealistic, can also be linked up to the Dvaita Vedānta of Madhva. This seemingly bold statement I justify thus.

Madhva's Vedānta is called *dvaita* because of its being founded on the concept of difference (*bheda*). Difference, however, according to Madhva is nothing besides the things, is neither an attribute of things nor something designating the relational or relative character of things. Difference is the thing itself, its very essence (*svarūpa*). Thus "thing" means the same as "a thing" which again means the same as "different thing", those terms being synonyms. M. Hiriyanna puts the essence of this doctrine in the following sentence :

> Everything is unique, and it is this very uniqueness that constitutes its difference from other things.[11]

This pluralistic theory again has an interesting correspondence in Western philosophy, namely in the metaphysics of Leibniz, especially in his doctrine of the Principle of the Identity of Indistinguishables (*Principium identitatis indiscer-*

nibilium) which, in short, states the following: everything exists as an individual, as a unique being, though it may have the same general qualities as other specimens of the same species or resemble them upto the subtlest detail. Thus the principle of indistinguishables is only valid in the realm of actual things, it is only applicable to the individual being and not to its concept or species. For instance, all beings subsumed under the terms or concepts of "leaf" or "drop of water" are totally alike by definition and thus indistinguishable. But apart from the various kinds of leaves and the analogous use of the term, every single leaf — e. g. of a mango tree — is completely different and distinguishable from all the other leaves of the same tree (and, of course, from all the leaves of other mango trees, trees of a different kind, other plants and, in general, as this leaf different and distinguishable from all other natural beings) because it is substantially different and distinguished from them This becomes even more evident with regard to man. According to the logical definition of man, for instance "Man is the rational living being", every living being to whom this definition is applicable is entirely identical with all the others thus defined, *viz.* indistinguishable from these others. In reality, nevertheless, every single man is different from another one and thus distinguishable, at least in principle. He is distinguishable from others not only under racial, national or religious aspects or with regard to his height, age or dress (these are mere contingent attributes) but with regard to his essential qualities everyone is unique as that particular person. Since everything, being this (and only this) unique one, is at the same time the other to everything else, it is distinguishable from everything else; and every being's being distinguishable from everything else is to Leibniz an indubitable criterion of the essential or metaphysical difference of all beings.

And we also find in Leibniz a correspondence to Madhva's hierarchy of beings as, for example, in his

letter to Bierling, dated August 12, 1711. Leibniz writes:

> Monad or simple substance in general implies perception and appetition and is either primeval or God, in whom is the ultimate reason of things, or a derivated one, a created monad which, again, is endowed either - as mind - with reason or - as soul - only with sense organs, or even only with a minor grade of perception and appetition, a kind of soul which is content with the mere name of monad, for we do not know its gradations.

Returning now to Madhva, there can be no doubt that in spite of his realistic and pluralistic view which takes the universe not as an appearance or illusion brought about by the principle of *māyā* but as the supreme Being's manifestation in space and time, only *Brahman* can be called reality as such; *Brahman* being the ground of the totality of beings, all beings being dependent on *Brahman* as the unity of Being. Thus everything in its metaphysical essence is as well *Brahman* as it is different from *Brahman* when being in space and time: *ekaḥ sarvottamo jñeyaḥ, ekaḥ eva karoti yat* (He is the one supreme Being that is to be known; he alone is the independent agent.)

Now, how does Śaṅkara deal with this central problem of Vedānta metaphysics as formulated at the outset of his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtras* in what is called the *adhyāsa-bhāṣya* and what could be considered an outline of Advaita metaphysics? This central problem Śaṅkara formulates thus: If *Brahman* is the only reality, how can it be explained that we see a world of diversity and plurality in its place? In II, i, 14 of the *Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya* where he extensively discusses the Being of *Brahman*, the Being of the universe and their interrelation Śaṅkara states, referring to the respective passages of the *Upaniṣads*, that we cannot but acknowledge the following doctrine as true:

> In the same way as those parts of ethereal space which are limited by jars and waterpots are not really different from the universal ethereal space, and as the water of a mirage is

> not really different from the surface of a salty steppe - for the nature of that water is that it is seen in one moment and has vanished in the next — . . . , so this manifold world with its objects . . . has no existence apart from Brahman.

It has to be noticed that Śaṅkara does not say that this manifold world of ours has no existence; he says that it has no existence apart from *Brahman* which means that it also is *Brahman*,—*Brahman*, however, not in its absolute reality as *pāramārthika* but as the world of appearances, the world of causation and contingency or nature which is *Brahman* as *vyāvahārika*. To the human mind the universe is an appearance of the Absolute; it is not the Absolute itself, and compared with its perfection it is non-existent, even Nothing. It is only the phenomenal field of the Absolute, its manifold manifestation in space and time. Śaṅkara always and consistently describes the universe as empirical, as objective, as existent but never as unconditionally real or as an illusion in the ontical sense. This relational character of the phenomenal or empirical world to the real Being qua *Brahman* and the relational character of our knowledge is made very clear in I, i, 12 of the *Bhāṣya*:

> Although one and the same Self is hidden in all beings, movable as well as immovable, yet owing to the gradual rise of excellence of the minds which form the limiting conditions, Scripture declares that the Self, though eternally unchanging and uniform, reveals itself in a graduated series of entities and so appears in forms of various dignity and power.

The minds taken as forming the limiting conditions means obviously that the empirical world, the world of appearances is understood as being dependent on the structural limitations of the human mind, limitations that are in themselves a manifestation of man's essential limitation and its dependence on *Brahman*. The empirical world of our common-day experience, the world which we experience under the forms of space and time and subject to the laws of causality is said to be produced by

māyā. *Māyā* has two characteristic qualities, the ontical quality of concealing the one and true reality (*māyā* as *āvaraṇa*) on the one hand, and the ontological quality of misinterpreting this true reality in the human mind (*māyā* as *vikṣepa*); in this latter meaning *māyā* is identical with *avidyā*, i e. incorrect or putative knowledge. The inclination of the limited human mind to take the one and only reality to be manifold and to take the multiplicity of empirical things for the one and only reality is expressed by the very term *avidyā*. The terms *māyā* and *avidyā* are thus synonyms: considering the problem of appearance and reality under the objective aspect, we may speak of *māyā*, whereas considering it under the subjective aspect, we may speak of *avidyā*.

There can be no doubt that for Śaṅkara the phenomenal world is rooted in the Absolute, in *Brahman*, for otherwise there would be something else besides the Absolute and, if so, the Absolute could not be called the Absolute. Thus he states in *Bhāṣya* I, iv, 23 that "from *Brahman* proceed the origination, sustentation and retractation of this world." *Brahman* is the operative cause (*viz.* formal cause and efficient cause) of the world, but it is at the same time the material cause. *Brahman* is the operative cause "because there is no other ruling principle", and *Brahman* is the material cause "because there is no other substance from which the world could originate". But strictly speaking, with regard to *Brahman* the distinction between material cause and operative cause makes no sense since it applies to worldly things alone. Thus we may call *māyā* "the principle of cosmic illusion"[12] as well as "the infinite power of creative self-expression and self-manifestation of the Absolute in terms of relativity and under the aspect of finitude."[13]

Because this empirical world, the world of appearances is self-expression, self-manifestation of the Absolute it would obviously be wrong to call it non-

existent; the phenomenal world is not the imaginary (*asat*) but the illusory (*mithyā*), that which we, at first sight, take to be the real but, after having been enlightened by the Absolute, unmask as the unreal. *Mithyā* means certainly something different from the real (*sat, satyam*) but it is, nevertheless, not unreal, not *asat*.

Recalling what I have said at the outset, namely that Śaṅkara's Advaita Vedānta, though a most rigorous ontical non-dualism implies an ontological dualism, I think that we can state the following. The idea of an *ontological* dualism is to be distinguished strictly from that of an *ontical* dualism, i.e. the theory of the existence of two separate and different worlds (or realms of Being) in the metaphysical sense. Speaking of an ontological dualism does not maintain that besides and apart from the eternal realm of reality as such there exists a realm of appearances as the realm of our human experience in space and time. Such a theory we would have to call ontical or metaphysical dualism. The term "ontological dualism" means, on the contrary, that there is only one single and unique realm of being which is, however, considered under two different aspects: due to the limitations of our minds (which in itself is due to the finitude of man himself) we are bound to restrict our scientifically verifiable knowledge to what is given to us under the forms of sense-perception and rational discourse, i. e. things as they appear to us. This being the one aspect, the other is that of the same realm of Being in its real ontical structure, apart from its being ontologically linked up to the human mind, i.e. apart from the subject-object relation. Although we cannot prove this latter aspect of the world scientifically by rational discourse, there can be no doubt that things exist apart from the human mind; for how could we talk of appearances unless there is something to appear?[14] Unless I am completely mistaken, I think that Dr P. K. Sundaram is on the whole in agreement with my under-

standing of Śaṅkara's interpretation of the *Brahman*-world relation. In his essay *Realism of Sankara and the World-Illusion* [15] he writes :

> While Śaṅkara's metaphysical idealism and non-dualism would deny that the world has any reality over and above that of *Brahman*, it takes note of the derived reality of the world-manifestation as it is presented to us in such concrete dimensions with its dependable laws and regularities. There is reality in things that appear, but this reality is *Brahman*. What is unreal about the world is its names and forms, limitedness and finitude, its inexplicable relations and categories. Accepting the world presented to the mind as it is, as the object of mind which is itself part of the world-scheme, the problem of knowledge is raised and the nature of this knowledge is determined by the Advaita in as systematic and serious a way as in any other epistemologically realistic philosophy either in the East or the West.

3

ASPECTS OF VEDANTA EPISTEMOLOGY

Turning now to Vedānta epistemology (by which I mean both the epistemological views as revealed in the Triple Texts and those developed in the various schools of the Vedānta), we should first note that with regard to the principles and means of knowledge there is much in common between original Vedāntic and classical Greek thought. There is the dependence of human knowledge on what is given in sense-perception, as taught in ancient Greece by Parmenides, Empedocles, and Democritus and which comes close to the Vedāntic concept of *pratyakṣa*. There is the doctrine of achieving reliable knowledge of what there is by means of a recursion to the qualitative and quantitative structure of things, taught by Anaxagoras and Democritus, which resembles the Vedāntic theory of *anumāna*. There is, furthermore, especially in the teachings of the so-called Sophists, significant reference to the subjectivity and thus relativity of human knowledge, and among the Sceptics even to the impossibility of any knowledge which would, by and large, correspond to the *avidyā*-character of the *vyāvahārika*-confined knowledge as taught in the Vedānta.

With regard to the final aim of knowledge there is also not much of a difference between Plato's inquiry into the One that permanently is without ever commencing

or vanishing and Aristotle's investigation of the uncaused cause of everything caused on the one hand, and on the other hand the opening sentences of the *Brahma-sūtra* where the aim of all true knowledge is given as *Brahman* realization. But there are two essential differences distinguishing the Vedāntic tackling of the problem of knowledge from almost all of the Western epistemological doctrines which, to my mind, are

(1) the Vedāntin's footing on *śabda*, i.e. the reliance on verbal testimony as enshrined in the binding authority of the Scriptures, and

(2) the Vedāntin's identification of *Brahman*-knowledge with *Brahman*-realization.

In dealing firstly with the binding authority of the Scriptures, I refer to Śaṅkara's statement in II, i, 14 of his *Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya*:

> ...the Upaniṣads are the ultimate means of valid knowledge, establishing the truth of the oneness of the Self, after which nothing else remains to be sought after for knowledge.

How this is to be understood (certainly not, as a superficial interpretation could suggest, as an abstruse and philosophically irrelevant uncritical dogmatism) F. Max Mueller explains thus:

> It seems strange at first sight ... that the Brahma-Sūtras ... should apparently have attached so little importance to what may be called their *Critique of Pure Reason*. This would seem indeed to lower the Vedānta-philosophy to the level of all pre-Kantian philosophy, but a little reflection will show us that there was in the Vedānta a sufficient excuse for this neglect. What at first sight makes the case still worse is that while Pratyaksha, perception, and Anumāna, inference, are ignored, the only evidence invoked by Bādarāyaṇa is Śruti or revelation... To most philosophers revelation would seem a very weak instrument of knowledge, and one that could never claim more than a subordinate

> place ... But we must remember that it is the highest object of the Vedānta to prove that there is only one true reality, namely Brahman, and that the manifoldness of the visible world is but the result of that nescience which the Vedānta is meant to destroy. It will then become intelligible why an appeal to the evidence of the senses or to inference would have been ... almost self-contradictory in the Vedānta... Hence, a doctrine which undertakes to prove that the manifold world, presented to us by the senses, is unreal, could not well appeal at the same time to the evidence of the senses, nor to inference which is founded on it, in support of truth or right knowledge, though it ... does readily acknowledge their importance for all the ordinary transactions of life.[16]

But this still leaves the question unanswered in which way the Vedāntin refers to the Scriptures and makes use of them as the final authority or *śruti* if not in the way of an uncritical dogmatism. It is very important to see that, unless we realize that it is not Scripture as such that is being taken as the final authority in Vedānta but only meaningful, non-contradictory Scripture, we shall never come to take the Vedānta doctrine of knowledge as an epistemology worth its name. As Śaṅkara says unmistakably in the Commentary on the *Bhagavad Gītā*, XVII, 66 :

> Even a hundred scriptural texts declaring fire to be cold or non-luminous will not attain the character of authority.

This states clearly that reason and reasoning play a vital part in our interpretation of the Scriptures, and the *bhāṣyas* of the great Vedāntins on the *Brahma-sūtras* are but such reason-based interpretations on their often hidden or figuratively expressed meaning.

But if reason seems to be the critical instance for interpreting and analysing the scriptural revelations, why then should we rely on the Scriptures at all for our striving after *Brahman*-knowledge ? Why can reason as such and in a direct approach not yield us awareness of *Brahman* ? Why, in other words, can *tarka* not replace *śruti* ?

In Vedānta reason is not a *pramāṇa* in the strict sense and meaning of the term, is not a means for a direct approach to the truth; reason functions as a means to discover the untruth, the unreal character of our commonday-world. In order to become prepared for the truth of *Brahman* as the non-dual and only reality, we have to learn by many an act of reasoning, that everything we experience in life and world as existent is but an appearance, a disguised and perverted picture of the Absolute. In this process of learning reason plays the part of analysing the fundamental elements of our commonday-experience (such as nature, the individual self, and the ideas of personified deities in all their shapes and gradations) showing their manifoldness and diversity as being grounded in the uniform unity of *Brahman*. That reason cannot yield us knowledge of the Absolute in a direct approach follows from its being a mediate means of knowledge, i.e. its being dependent on sense-experience or perception. Since sense perception, however, is restricted to the empirical world of *vyāvahārika*, reason—as based upon sense-perception—is also restricted to the realm of appearances and cannot offer us metaphysical truth.

Now according to Vedānta philosophy it is the Scriptures, especially the *Upaniṣads*, that embody the metaphysical truth as experienced by the ancient seers and sages, experienced however in an intuitive non-sensual way, which means that such an intuitive experience or *anubhava* transcends the realm of appearances, sublates it in the direct awareness of *Brahman*. Thus sense-perception and reasonable inquiry or inference are necessary stages on the way to *Brahman*-awareness.

But here, someone trained in the schools of Western thought, especially in the Kantian school of a critical or transcendental philosophy, would immediately pose the question whether man, being himself part of this world of appearances or *vyāvahārika*, can at all become aware of

what is *pāramārthika*, reality as such (*satyasya satyam*); whether the infinite can be realized by means and in terms of the finite; whether the one without attributes and qualities (*nirguṇa-brahman*), being thus the indefinite and unlimited, can be defined and hence limited by any means of the human mind. When the *Vedānta* states that no affirmative proposition or statement is permitted with regard to *Brahman*, because propositions and statements make sense only in relation to worldly objects, I think that we have to extend this assertion to any proposition or statement, even the negative ones, because even propositions or statements which are meant to express what something is not presuppose a foregoing knowledge of the *definiendum*. When I say, for instance, "The neutron is no material thing", I must at least be able to give some plausible evidence that and in how far the neutron is something which cannot be defined in terms of material things, thus being something immaterial, — though I need for that purpose not be in a position to state what it actually is. Hence in saying "Brahman is not this, not that" (*neti, neti*), I must have some reliable evidence why *Brahman* cannot be this or that, why *Brahman* cannot be one of the worldly things nor their totality, — which means, however, that I must have some kind of a foregoing insight into *Brahman*. Lacking completely in such an insight would not even justify me to say that no proposition or statement on *Brahman* is permitted. Going one step further in our argumentation we might say that according to Vedānta the proposition that *Brahman* is neither this nor that and similar propositions are concerned with reality, moreover with the only true reality which, however, by definition lies outside the reach of rational-discursive reasoning and hence beyond the realm of the human understanding; from which it follows undoubtedly that such propositions are in fact no propositions at all for the reason that any proposition or statement consists of notions, concepts, terms which are, however, elements of the faculty of the understanding

and which are thus applicable to worldly things only, i.e. to what *Brahman* is said to be not. This could be a Westerner's critical remarks to the Vedāntin's thesis of direct *Brahman*-awareness. In trying now to argue against this from what I take to be the standpoint of the Vedāntin, I would draw my opponents' attention to the at first sight seemingly paradoxical passage of the *Kena Upaniṣad* (II, 3) where we read :

> Brahman is known to him to whom It is unknown, while It is unknown to him to whom It is known.
>
> It is unknown to those who know, and known to those who do not know.

And here we come to what I have called in the beginning of this lecture the second essential difference between the Vedānta and almost all Western epistemological doctrines, i. e. the Vedāntin's identification of *Brahman*-knowledge with *Brahman*-realization. In order to understand this identification properly we have to reflect briefly on the relation between subject and object in the process of knowledge.

It is commonly agreed that in the process of knowing (at least insofar as it relates to the empirical world) knowledge is based upon the relation between a subject as the knower and an object as that which is to be known, and according to the two main standpoints of philosophical world-view, *viz.* realism and idealism, knowledge is either defined as the comprehension of the as such existing subject-object-relation (thus assigning to the subject or the understanding a more or less receptive if not at all passive role) or as the establishing of this relation through the cognitive faculties of the subject which thus plays a predominant active part in the process of knowing. It was Kant's particular merit in the history of philosophy to have shown that the subject-object-relation is valid only in the realm of appearances, does make sense only as a relation between the knowing subject and phenomena in space

and time whereas it is completely senseless and therefore nonsense to talk of such a relation in the realm of metaphysics or things-in-themselves and as such, since the very term thing-in-itself or thing as such indicates its entire and essential independence of any limiting instance other than a metaphysical one.

As far as this restriction of the subject-object relation to the empirical or natural world is concerned, the Vedāntin would certainly have no major objection to the Kantian doctrine, as can be seen in Śaṅkara's definition of the possibility of existence, given in *Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya* II, 2, 28:

> Whatever is apprehended by perception or some other means of cognition exists; whatever is not apprehended by any means of cognition does not exist.

This definition given in Śaṅkara's argumentation against the Buddhistic theory that consciousness alone exists can be interpreted in a twofold manner. It can on the one hand mean to say that only objects of the realm of *vyāvahārika* proper exist and that phenomena of the *prātibhāsika* (such as the snake-illusion in the snake-rope simile) or phantasmagorial creations such as the hare's horn, the sky-lotus or the circular square do not exist. The above mentioned definition of existence can, however, on the other hand and in our present context more significantly serve for denoting the difference in ontical status between *pāramārthika* and *vyāvahārika* insofar as the term "existence" indicates a lower grade of being, reserving the term "reality" for *Brahman* exclusively. Taken in this latter sense, Śaṅkara's definition would mean to state that whereas empirical objects are apprehended by our means of cognition, *Brahman* cannot be apprehended by any cognitive means and thus not within the scheme of the subject-object-relation.

It is at this stage, where cognition is at a loss, that we are better prepared to grasp the meaning of the

Vedāntin's conviction that to know *Brahman* is to realize *Brahman*. In giving my assessment of this, let me narrate in short a parable which was often used by Sri Ramakrishna to explain the difference between *vidyā* and *avidyā*. A young king once was impressed by the serenity that radiated from the faces of a great teacher's disciples; he therefore approached the teacher requesting that he also be shown the way to truth and bliss. The teacher smiled at him and said, 'Return to your kingdom, but remember from now on to see God in everything.' The young king, now convinced of his being aware of the secrets of life and world, began to do as the teacher had told him, — he began to see God in the beauty of nature and in the deeds of men. While one day being absorbed in seeing God in the exquisite loveliness of a luxuriant forest, his vision was abruptly disturbed by the appearance of a fierce elephant whose mahout shouted : 'Give way. The elephant is mad from heat and will harm you.' The king, however, proud of his new-found knowledge and taking for granted that the elephant could not harm him since God must be in him, too, ignored the mahout's warning, whereupon the demented beast rushed at him and hurled him headlong into a slimy swamp After having picked himself up with all the grace he could muster on that occasion, the king hurried to see the teacher and to complain about the inefficacy of his teachings The wise man patiently listened to the king's complaints and then said : 'I certainly advised you to see God in everything, and God is, indeed, in you as well as in the elephant. But tell me how come it did not occur to you to see God also in the mahout's warning voice ?'

The king in this story has obviously heard the teacher's advice but, as is proved by his behaviour, not really understood its meaning. His approach to the world and to *Brahman* still takes place within the framework of the subject-object-relation ; he is still under the impression that in order to gain true knowledge one has only to extend the realm of knowledge from the things

already known to the whole of creation, still being convinced that it is the individual subject who holds the clue to unlock the doors to every chamber of our knowledge of reality. He is not yet aware that it is *Brahman* that perceives, thinks and acts in him, that to see *Brahman* in everything means to realize *Brahman*, to experience *Brahman* (not only in the acts of cognition) as manifest in the whole of creation, including one's own individual self. The Supreme is neither transcendent nor immanent; it is transcendent immanent. Not being identical with man or any creature, it is never the less immanent in man and the whole of creation. The supreme, the light of light from which all things derive (*jyotiṣām jyotiḥ*), is in us. But *Brahman's* self-revelation in various forms and shapes in and as the realm of worldly things or, in other words, the appearance of the non dual *pāramārthika* under the forms of the manifold *vyāvahārika* does not at all indicate a real change of *Brahman*. With reference to this F. Max Mueller states :

> There is no idea of claiming for the rope a real change into a snake, and in the same way no real change can be claimed for Brahman when perceived as the world. Brahman presents itself as the world, and apart from Brahman the world would be simply nothing. If, therefore, Brahman is called the material cause of the world, this is not meant in the sense in which the clay is the material cause of the jar. Even the apparent and illusory existence of a material world requires a real substratum, which is Brahman, just as the appearance of the snake in the simile requires the real substratum of a rope.[17]

But this example does, of course, not quite satisfy us since in the simile of snake-rope both belong to the empirical world of the *vyāvahārika*, although to different stages of that world, and thus our knowledge of this relation takes place within the subject-object-scheme; whereas the relation of *Brahman* to the world (and of *Brahman* to the individual human being) goes essentially beyond this scheme. It is for this reason that, as far as I know, the precise relationship between *Brahman*

and the world is nowhere in the *Upaniṣads* or the *Brahma-sūtras* stated as one that can be expressed and explained by any means of cognitive and hence empirically limited knowledge, and thus cannot be expressed in any proposition. And here the question arises why we should try at all to conceive of *Brahman*, to speak of *Brahman* by means of propositions and statements. Are there no other means than verbal speech to demonstrate and communicate our experience of *Brahman*? In *Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya*, III, 2, 17, Śaṅkara indicates this highest, non-conceptual and non-verbal form of communication when reporting from the Vedic texts the story of Bādhva, being asked by Bāṣkali about the nature of *Brahman*. On Bādhva's keeping silent, Bāṣkali asked him for a second and for a third time, whereupon the sage finally answered: "I have already spoken, but you do not understand. This Self is silence."

4

ASPECTS OF VEDANTA ETHICS

If metaphysics or ontology is the investigation of the structure of reality, and if epistemology or the theory of knowledge inquires into our capability of knowing insofar as it aims at generally valid criteria of knowledge, what then can ethics be said to deal with?

One could say that ethics was concerned with human conduct which would, however, be an insufficient definition since other sciences, such as psychology, sociology, ethology, history are also concerned with human conduct. But whereas these sciences are concerned with human conduct in a predominantly descriptive or idiographic way, ethics deals with human conduct in an exclusively prescriptive or nomothetic way, i. e. in formulating rules and principles of human conduct which demand at least relative, particular or even absolute validity, — relative, particular validity meaning that such rules or principles are valid only at certain times and in certain places, whereas absolute validity indicates their universal applicability, at any time and in any place. It seems to me, nevertheless, that the establishment of such a catalogue of rules and principles should only be regarded as the result of an investigation which I consider the crucial task of an inquiry into ethics, this task consisting in the discovery of the metaphysical and rational foundations

of such rules and principles; and this makes evident how strongly and closely ethics is linked up to metaphysics and epistemology. This means in our present context that the moral teachings of the *Bhagavad Gītā* are but a special performance of the general world-view of the *Upaniṣads* and cannot be understood apart from this world-view.

Now it has become quite common among those Indian philosophers who find it more rewarding to ponder over the essential difference between Indian and Western thought instead of trying to discover their common ground to say that philosophy in the West was predominantly theoretical, whereas philosophy in India could be called practical on the whole. A prominent witness for this view is Santosh Sengupta who in his essay *Is Philosophy a Theoretical or a Practical Study?*[18] writes:

> It is no exaggeration to state that it is on the basis of (the) issue over theory and practice that we can profitably draw a distinction between Western Philosophy and Indian Philosophy.

I know myself in agreement with such distinguished Indian thinkers of our days as Nikunja Vihari Banerjee and Margaret Chatterjee[19] in calling this a gross misunderstanding, since it is not at all difficult to think of a fairly reliable history of Western philosophy under the aspect of *praxis* or to compile an equally reliable history of Indian thought from the point of view of *theoria*; I would call this only a matter of selection and evaluation. To me the basic difference of philosophy in the West and in India rests upon the historical fact that in the West, since Aristotle, a rather clear-cut distinction has been drawn between *Mythos* and *Logos*, whereas in Indian thought such a distinction has never been introduced; it is, on the contrary, important to note that Indian thought is essentially based upon the idea that such a distinction would confine philosophy to the realm of phenomenal entities and logical analysis and hence put it on the same level with the sciences.

Among Western thinkers an equally gross and fatal misunderstanding finds expression in the view (put forward, for instance, by such an eminent scholar as Albert Schweitzer) that in Hinduism world- and life-affirmation had never succeeded in getting the mastery over world- and life-negation, and that thus Hinduism had always been lacking in an applicable moral philosophy. As against this criticism of the official Hindu philosophy alias Vedānta Schweitzer mentions the *Tirukkural* as the laudable example of a down to earth world- and life-affirmation, justifying perseverance in active life by the idea of moral deeds, an idea of which, according to him, nothing can be found in Brahmanism and Gita-Hinduism.[20] Well, one need only reflect on the real meaning of *Karma-yoga* and *Bhakti-yoga* in the *Gītā*, not to mention the universal extension of *ahiṁsā*, in order to see how grossly Schweitzer (and he is but a prominent representative for similar opinions held in the West) misinterpreted and misrepresented the practical aspects and implications of Vedānta. By the way, I personally cannot see in how far the leading ideas of the *Kural* should be taken as so entirely different from those of the *Upaniṣads* and the *Gītā*, and I hold that Dr. V. A. Devasenapathi is absolutely right in stating in the beginning of his Thirumathi Sornammal Endowment Lectures :

> The Tirukkural has been acclaimed as a world classic and its author...as a bard of universal man... It is generally listed among the ethical works in Tamil and is considered to be the greatest of them. Its chapters are...dealing with the first three out of the usually accepted four Ends of Life— *Virtue, Wealth, Enjoyment* and *Heaven* or the state of Release. The reason for the omission...of Heaven or the state of Release is said to be this— that as Heaven is beyond the ken of thoughts or words, its nature cannot be dealt with except in relation to what leads to it — viz., Asceticism. However, if Heaven or Release is not necessarily a *post mortem* state but can very well be *here and hereafter*, if Heaven is the quality of our life, if the Kingdom of God is within us and, if release is a matter of release from egoism or self centredness, from the sense of 'I' and 'Mine' I submit

> that this Heaven or State of Release is the underlying theme of the whole work.[21]

And this is precisely the central teaching of the *Gītā* too. None other than the revered Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan has convincingly refuted the charge that there was no place for ethics in the *Vedānta* in his thesis *The Ethics of the Vedānta and its Metaphysical Presuppositions*, which was written more than 70 years ago.

On deeper investigation we find that the real source of a misunderstanding of Hindu ethics, such as beforementioned, lies in the misconception of *māyā* in Hindu philosophy in general. As I have tried to show in my lecture on Vedānta ontology, *māyā* has undoubtedly the qualities (or should we even say the teleological function) of concealing and misinterpreting true reality; it is beyond doubt the principle of cosmic illusion as well as the infinite power of the creative self-expression and self-manifestation of the Absolute under the aspect of finitude. But on his way to *Brahman*-knowledge and thus *Brahman*-realization it is man's essential task to discover in how far *māyā* is not true reality, to discover what *māyā* or our empirical world actually is as against the reality of *Brahman*; but as such a process of discovery necessarily deals with the world of *māyā* and as *māyā*, it is surely wrong to say that Hinduism teaches world-negation; on the contrary, the acknowledgement of the spatio-temporal world of causation is a necessary presupposition, a *conditio sine qua non*, for reaching the final goal of *Brahman*-realization, from which it becomes clear, again, how closely in Hindu thought ontology, epistemology and ethics are interrelated. Once more in the lucid words of S. Radhakrishnan :

> The world is not a deceptive facade of something underlying it. Since the Supreme is the basis of the world, the world cannot be unreal. *Māyā* has a standing in the world of reality. Sankara says that after filling our sight with wisdom let us see the world as Brahman....In Hindu thought, *māyā* is not so much a veil as the dress of God.[22]

The *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* teaches that true knowledge, knowledge of the Supreme, can only be achieved step by step, through analysing the empirical world and inquiring into its essential structure. Is it matter? Is it life? Is it mind? Is it human intelligence? Is it spirit? It is as a result of such a process of investigation that we become fit for knowing the Supreme.

Now if nescience or ignorance is the cause of our bondage, the cause of our being barred from *Brahman*-realization, it is but consequent to admit that knowledge (*jñāna*) is the means for attaining release. But man's way from nescience to wisdom, from *ajñāna* to *jñāna* is not to be conceived of as a linear in the form of gradually moving towards a strange and unfamiliar aim; it is rather a process of the individual's realization of what it always has been though it had lost sight of it, namely the individual's primeval and essential identity with the Absolute. Hence the individual's *Brahman*-knowledge means but the self-realization of the Absolute in terms of the relative, at which final stage, however, terms such as "absolute" and "relative" (and likewise all other terms) before the stage of *Brahman*-realization no longer make sense; they did only serve as the individual's figurative means to denote reality as such.

But if it is the case that according to Vedānta and especially *Advaita* knowledge is the means for release or *mokṣa*, which role are we to ascribe to moral actions within this system, since that they play a significant role in Vedānta cannot be denied and is proved by the eminent position the *Gītā* holds in Hindu world-view? One of the central sentences of the *Gītā* (II, 47) reads thus:

> Action (*karma*) alone is thy proper business,
> never the fruits it may produce;
> let not the fruit of action be thy motive,
> nor your attachment to mere inaction (*akarma*).

With this one of the three main paths to man's self- and *Brahman*-realization has been described, the path of *karma-mārga* or *karma-yoga*, the two others being *bhakti-mārga* (the path of devotion) and *jñāna-mārga* (the path of knowledge).

Now it has to be seen that neither of these paths alone and as such leads to *Brahman*-realization and thus to release from the bondage of *māyā*. They only indicate different aspects, denominations—as it were—of the one and only way to salvation. The divine instructor of the *Gītā* (V, 4-5) explains this fact thus to Arjuna:

> There must be a difference between theory (*sāṁkhya*) and practice (*yoga*), so say the simple-minded, not the wise. Apply thyself to only one, whole-heartedly, and win the fruit of both.
>
> True, the men of theory attain a high estate, but that same state achieves the man of practice, too; for theory and practice are all one: who sees that this is true, he sees indeed.

The two ideals of *pravṛtti* (being involved in the world-process) and of *nivṛtti* (turning away from the world and from action-performance) together open up into the supreme spiritual state of *Brahman*-realization, i.e. non-difference of the individual self from the universal Self. As to that, R. Ramanujachari remarks in his essay *Vedanta as a View and a Way of Life* [28]:

> Of one whose actions are all done without desire for fruits and without confounding the *ātmā* with the body and its *guṇas*, wise men say his karmas (past good and bad deeds) are burnt up by the fire of thought (of the *ātmā* as he is). If one does action in this manner, even though he may be fully engrossed in action, he verily does not action (...). He is practising only the thought of the *ātmā* as he is. If the thought of the *ātmā* is at the back of every action done as *karma-yoga*, in due course, true knowledge is realised.

This, then, is the meaning of *Bhagavad Gītā* IV, 18:

The one who sees inaction in action
and action in inaction
is wise among his fellow-men,
fit for release,
performing all prescribed duties.

There could be no better indication for the intimate interrelation between the theoretical and the practical attitude towards life and world than the very last words of the *Gītā*, proclaiming that there is righteousness and good fortune where the wisdom of Krishna is combined with the practical efficiency of Arjuna.

Another significant testimony against the thesis that Hinduism is world-negating is the fact that the attainment of release or *mokṣa* from the bondage of the empirical world or the state of *saṁsāra* is no goal that can be reached only after death (as the early *Vedas* seem to have taught) but one which is to be achieved in this very life itself. This is the meaning of the concept of *jīvanmukti*, and thus the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* states, II, iii, 14 :

When all desires that shelter in the heart
of man are cast aside,
then the mortal becomes immortal;
here he attains Brahman.

It has sometimes been said that out of the three paths only the one of *bhakti* or loving devotion could truly lead to actual *Brahman*-realization, thus—for instance —by Robin C.Zaehner in the Introduction to his translation of *Hindu Scriptures*;[24] and if one refers to such verses of the *Gītā* (XI, 54) as the following

But by worship of love addressed to Me alone
can I be known and seen
in such a form as I really am

there seems to be much in favour of such an understanding. Others, such as Sarasvati Chennakesavan in *A Critical Study of Hinduism*, have held that the pathway of knowledge, though the most difficult, is at the same time

the most desirable one.[25] I have already indicated that I consider the three pathways only as different aspects or denominations of the one and only way to salvation, and I find this opinion somehow confirmed by Zaehner when he declares :

> On reading and re-reading the Gītā...it seems each time more clear to me that, although a distinction is made between the contemplative and the active life, there is no hard and fast line that divides them from the life of love and devotion to God. It is love, on the contrary, that brings both to fruition.[26]

This interpretation finds its justification in that passage of the *Gītā*, which Sri Krishna himself marks as his *supreme world, the most secret of all*, thus carrying the final message of the *Gītā* (XVIII, 65) :

> Fix your mind on Me,
> be devoted to Me,
> worship Me and bow to Me ;
> so shall you without doubt reach Me.

Deed and action as such mean nothing, they are useless and meaningless unless they are performed out of love for *Brahman*-knowledge and *Brahman*-realization. But *Brahman*-realization and hence self-realization (as becoming aware of the non-difference of the individual self from the universal Self) is not being achieved by simply turning away from the world but by acknowledging this world of ours as the temporal manifestation of the eternal *Brahman*, by which acknowledgement man becomes aware of his (metaphysical and moral) deficiency, an awareness that makes him fit for his ascendence to pure Being and perfection as such. It is the misunderstanding of this intimate interrelation or even interdependence of thought and deed, the contemplative and the active attitude to life and world in the *Vedānta* that has become responsible for another misinterpretation of Hinduism, i.e. it so frequently being blamed for not having produ-

ced any sound social ethics. Thus such a renowned scholar as A. C. Bouquet writes, for instance :

> ...the world-renouncing ascetic is the type universally admired, and his renunciation is in no sense altruistic or philanthropic, but is purely self-regarding, since it is every-man's business and licence to look after his eternal welfare ; and to be concerned with delivering oneself from the... chain of rebirth, and from the cycle of biological existence, is not considered to be a blemish on one's character. Gandhiji was nobly inconsistent when he made unselfish service of his fellow-men part of the discipline to which he subjected himself in order to free his soul from the bonds of the flesh, since self-forgetful service of others is a Christian, not a Hindu idea.[27]

What is to be thought of such a rebuke, thus I ask ? Although the Hindu outlook on life and world is essentially *Brahman*-oriented and hence not regarding the empirical realm of our common-day experience as valuable *per se*, it is wrong to say that world-renunciation would be the logical consequence of such a world-view. As I have already mentioned, release from bondage which is identical with *Brahman*-realization presupposes the acknowledgement of the world as a necessary condition for transcending it towards the only true reality. Consequently there can be no doubt that in the world-view of the Hindu altruistic concern for others has always been of no lesser value than world-renunciation ; on the contrary, due to the basic doctrine of Hindu ontology that every single being and the whole of creation are but phenomenal manifestations of the one and only absolute principle, man as the only creature capable of realizing that principle (by means of his theoretical and practical bestowals) is not only ontically related to all other beings but also ethically responsible for their well-being. Based upon such most significant passages as the one of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* where the *Ātman* in man is said to be the very same as the vital force in the elephant, the gnat, the ant, the four quarters

of the world, in short part and parcel of the whole universe, the *Gītā* declares unmistakably that those whose sins have been washed away, whose doubts have been dispelled by knowledge, whose minds are firmly established in God and who are actively engaged in promoting the welfare of all beings, will attain *Brahman* (V, 25). And again, in *Gītā* XII, 3-4, we read that for a man to act means essentially being even-minded towards all and devoted to doing good to all creatures. Elsewhere (III, 12) man's duty towards the gods is even linked up to his duties towards others :

> Fostered by sacrifice,
> the gods will surely bestow on you
> unasked all the desirable enjoyments.
>
> He who enjoys the gifts bestowed by them
> without giving anything in return,
> is undoubtedly a thief.

If this moral duty of ours is confined not only to other human beings but does even extend to all creatures, then it should go without saying that it cannot be restricted to any particular class or caste either,—neither on the part of the doer nor on the part of the beneficiaries. And indeed, I have not come across any straightforward statement in the Scriptures that calls the membership of a certain class or caste, or even of any class or caste, a necessary condition, a prerequisite for the attainment of *Brahma-vidyā* and *mokṣa*. The story of Nahusha, which Śalya relates to Yudhiṣṭhira in the *Mahābhārata*, can serve as an excellent testimony for the view that it is not so much parentage that makes a *Brāhmin Brāhmin* but character and conduct :

> Birth and learning do not make one a Brāhmin.
> Good conduct alone does.
> However learned a person may be,
> he will not be a Brāhmin
> if he is a slave to bad habits.
> Even though he may be learned in the four Vedas,
> a man of bad conduct falls to a lower class.

The same is expressed in the *Anuśāsanaparva*, 143.6:

> A man whether he be a Brāhmin,
> Kṣatriya, Vaiśya or Śūdra,
> is such by nature.
> By evil deed does a twice-born
> fall from his position.
> The Kṣatriya or Vaiśya
> who lives in the condition of a Brāhmin
> by practising the duties of one
> attains Brāhminhood.

One more example may be given to confirm the thesis that according to the ancient texts it was first and foremost the moral and spiritual qualities that made a man a *Brāhmin*. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (IV, iv, 1-5) tells the story of Satyakāma, son of Jabālā, who is eager to become a disciple of Gautama Haridrumata. On being questioned by the master about his *gotra*, he tells him frankly and following Jabālā's advice that his mother, who in her youth had moved about much as a servant, was not sure by whom she had conceived him. Thereupon Haridrumata gives the significant answer: "One who is not a *Brāhmin* would be unable to speak out like this," thus leaving no doubt that Satyakāma, whoever his father might have been, proved his *Brāhmin*-hood by his conduct.

Even in Manu's *Mānava Dharma Śāstra* we are told that each man is born a *Śūdra* but can become a *Brāhmin* through his good moral and spiritual behaviour, if not in this life then at least by regeneration in a future state of existence. This all may be summed up in the statement of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, IV, iv, 5, proclaiming the lapidary message that

> As a man acts, as he behaves
> so does he become.

The parallels of these doctrines of moral conduct with the Christian message that it be a man's god-given

duty to take care of the whole of creation, of which the commandment of love for our fellow-men is but a particular case; the parallels with the Platonic doctrine of good action as being based upon right knowledge, with Kant's principle of practical reason that it is the maxim alone and not the action as such or its outcome that decides about the moral value of an action, and with Albert Schweitzer's postulate of an all-embracing reverence for life,—these parallels are too obvious to point them out in detail here. So whatever the practice in the historical development of Hindu society may have revealed, there can be no doubt that Hinduism has produced a sound system of social ethics which could truly lay claim to universal validity.

I have tried in these lectures to present a concise survey of what I consider to be some of the main doctrines and problems in Vedānta thought, its theoretical and practical aspects. In so doing I was not bold enough to expect that my deliberations could enlighten such a learned audience; they were mainly meant to demonstrate how somebody who had not been brought up in the *Vedānta* tradition has nevertheless made some serious effort to understand the meanings and consequences of basic *Vedānta* teachings. While preparing these lectures, studying the scriptural sources and many an enlightening interpretation of them, it became clearer and clearer to me that Vedānta is not a closed system with principles and maxims laid down once and for all in the past; it is an open system in so far as the teachings of the Scriptures and of the great thinkers, all of them put forward in a highly sophisticated, many of them in a rather mysterious way, pose a perpetual challenge to every new generation to discover (in the sense of uncover) their original meaning anew, to adapt them to the intellectual and moral needs and tasks of a certain historical situation, or better to adapt the historical situation to those great perennial thoughts. Thus the *Vedānta* is to me a most eminent example of *philosophia perennis* meaning that the

great and everlasting problems of life and world are being kept alive in man's permanent and unprejudiced search for the truth, a search which is a theoretical as well as a practical objective. It is thus idle to ponder over the question whether philosophy is predominantly a theoretical or practical performance. The question is rather, whether the results of one's theoretical inquiries bear fruit in a conduct the moral integrity of which is consistent with the clarity of one's intellectual insight, or—once more in the words of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan:

> The vision of the philosopher is the reaction of his whole personality to the nature of the experienced world.[28]

NOTES AND REFERENCES

1. *Invitation to Indian Philosophy*, New Delhi 1974, p. 409.
2. Quoted from *Basic Writings of S. Radhakrishnan*, (ed. Robert A. McDermott), Jaico Publ. House, Bombay, 2nd impr. 1975, p. 96 f.
3. *l. c.*, p. 78.
4. New York 1963, p. 255.
5. I think that nowadays scholars would agree that there is no vital difference in the central teachings of the *Upaniṣads*, the *Brahma-sūtras* and the *Gītā*; hence when referring to one of these sources, I mean the essential statements of the *prasthānatraya* in general.
6. Cf. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* II, i, 20 and the entire *Aitareya Upaniṣad*; see also *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* VI, xi-xiii and *Maitrī Upaniṣad* VI, xv-xvii.
7. T. M. P. Mahadevan, *Upaniṣads*, New Delhi 1975, p. 31.
8. *Die ontische Auszeichnung des Daseins liegt daran, dass es ontologisch ist.*
9. *Essentials of Indian Philosophy*, 1st Indian reprint Bombay 1973, p. 152.
10. A good and concise comparison of Advaita metaphysics, especially the concepts of appearance and reality, with the Hegelian doctrine was presented by K B. Ramakrishna Rao at this Centre's All India Seminar on "Advaita Vedānta and Western Thought" in April, 1971. It has been published under the title "Relativity and Spiritual Experience" in *Indian Philosophical Annual*, VII/1971, pp. 50-59, University of Madras, 1973.
11. *l.c.*, p. 189.
12. Cf. Santosh Sengupta in *Indian Philosophical Annual*, II, p. 197, University of Madras, 1966.
13. Cf. Madhusudan Reddy *ibid.*, p. 261.

14. In his subtle study on *The Concept of the Vyāvahārika in Advaita Vedānta*, University of Madras, 1969, Dr T. P. Ramachandran comments on the status of the *vyāvahārika* thus: "...the Advaitin proceeds on the principle that what is absolutely real is never sublated by any subsequent experience and what is absolutely unreal is never cognized at all. By this standard, the absolutely real is Brahman and the absolutely unreal are mere words like the hare's horn, the circular square, and the sky-lotus. The world of appearance occupies an intermediate position between being and non-being. It is neither uncognizable nor unsublatable, and hence it is neither unreal nor real." (p. 5).

15. In *Essays in Philosophy* (presented to Dr T. M. P. Mahadevan on his 50th birthday), Madras 1962, pp. 384-394.

16. *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, 4th ed., Varanasi 1971, p. 147.

17. *ibid.*, p. 159 f.

18. In *Philosophy—Theory and Practice* (Proceedings of the International Seminar on World Philosophy, Madras Dec 7th—17th, 1970), University of Madras, 1974, pp. 569-583; quoted from p. 571.

19. Banerjee, *Some Thoughts on the Problem of Peace*, *ibid.*, pp. 36-46; quoted from p. 37. Chatterjee, *The Concept of Action*, *ibid.*, pp. 6-18; quoted from p. 9.

20. *Das Christentum und die Weltreligionen*, 1924. (Christianity and the Religions of the World) *Die Weltanschauung der indischen Denker*, 1935. (The World-View of the Indian Thinkers)

21. In *Thirumathi Sornammal Endowment Lectures on Tirukkural*, part I, University of Madras, 1971; quoted from p. 323.

22. *Basic Writings*, p. 224 f.

23. In *Philosophy—Theory and Practice*, pp. 507-518; quoted from p. 516.

24. London (Everyman's Univ. Library), 1966, p. XVI.

25. Bombay (Asia Publ. House), 1974, p. 116.

26. *l.c.*, p. XVI.

27. *Comparative Religion*, Penguin Books, 5th ed., 1956, p. 147.

28. *An Idealist View of Life*, ed. London 1962, p. 182.

CORRIGENDA

Page	Line	For	Read
2	19	30	25
3	20	that principles	that the principles
4	13	However	however,
4	17	Buddhism	Buddhism,
7	6	which	instead of taking pains to discover or even invent new problems which
8	7	*Sūtras*	the *Sūtras*
8	20	Śaṅkara,	Śaṅkara, the
9	13	of reality	of reality,
9	27	in	in the
10	13	reality as such	reality, reality as such
11	12	illusion."	illusion.
11	28	whether there are	whether there is only one realm of Being or reality, or whether there are
13	18	imaginative	imagined
15	29	qualities	qualities;
16	32	interrelation	interrelation,
22	5	*Brahman* realization	*Brahman*-realization
22	13	*Brahman* know-	*Brahman*-know-
23	30	on	of
25	32	o	of
28	23	swamp	swamp.
28	26	teachings	teachings.
29	10	transcendent immanent	transcendent-immanent
29	11	never the less	nevertheless
40	30	*Brāhmin Brāhmin*	*Brāhmin* a *Brāhmin*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born 1926 at Duesseldorf, West Germany, Dr Herbert Herring studied Philosophy, Psychology, History, and Germanistics in the University of Cologne from 1946-51. He was then the first German "recognised student" at Oxford, 1951-52, during which time he also attended Dr S. Radhakrishnan's lectures which awakened his interest in Eastern, especially Indian thought. Soon after returning to Germany, he obtained his Dr Phil. (magna cum laude) at Mainz University in 1953 and was working from 1954 to 1957 as editorial staff member of the Philosophical Quarterly *Kant-Studien* and at the same time for the revival of the Kantian Society.

In 1957 Dr Herring was appointed founder-director of the Extramural Studies Institute at Buederich-Meerbusch and in 1961, in addition to it, he took over the directorship of the International Cultural Centre at Duesseldorf. Both positions he held till he joined the Goethe-Institute in 1969 and was sent to Madras as director of the Max Mueller Bhavan. Since 1975 he has been in charge of the German Cultural Institute (branch of the Goethe-Institute) at Copenhagen, Denmark.

Among Dr Herring's publications the following deserve special mentioning: *Das Problem der Affektion bei Kant*, 1953; new French-German editions of Leibniz's *Monadologie, Principes de la Nature et de la Grâce*, 1956, and *Discours de Métaphysique*, 1958; new German edition of Hume's *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, 1967; first German edition of Ayer's *Language, Truth, and Logic*, 1970. Concentrating mainly on ontological problems and the philosophy of history, he has a large number of articles and essays to his credit, published mainly in leading German periodicals, some of them also in the *Indian Philosophical Annual* and the *Journal of the Madras University*. The teachers who have influenced him most were Heinz Heimsoeth (Cologne), Gottfried Martin (Cologne and Mainz), and Herbert James Paton (Oxford).