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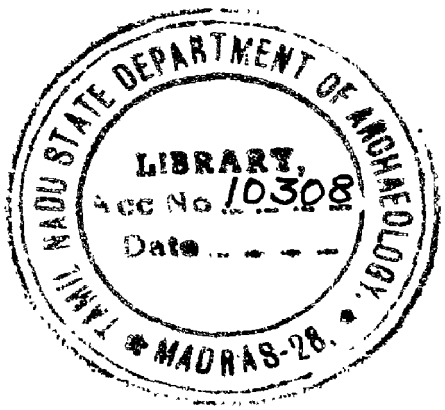

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PREFACE

We have great pleasure in presenting the Volume XXIII of the ***Indian Philosophical Annual*** to the world of scholars and students. Part one of the volume consists of Endowment Lectures delivered by very eminent scholars from India and abroad. Part Two contains special articles.

We take this opportunity to thank our Vice-Chancellor, Rev. Fr. Dr. S. Ignacimuthu, S.J. who evinced keen interest in bringing out this volume. Our thanks are also due to the Director, Publications Division, University of Madras, for making necessary arrangements for the publication. We thank Dr. L. Anthony Savari Raj and Dr. M. Venkatachalapathy, Lecturers in the Department of Philosophy, University of Madras for rendering all editorial assistance. Last but not the least, we wish to thank M/S Pavai Printers, Chennai – 600 014 for their neat execution of the work.

Chennai – 600 005

R. Gopalakrishnan

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PART TWO

SPECIAL ARTICLES

1

ON THE LOGIC OF INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS*

AMITABHA DASGUPTA

A. Presuppositional Concern:

The idea of inter-religious dialogue is not a new concept. Far from being alien it occupies a very significant position in our social and intellectual life. It's need has been widely felt particularly when there is a systematic effort to understand the true essence of religion. The knowledge of true essence of religion will enable us to see that sharability and communicability among religious worlds are not impossible. This, indeed, gives rise to a new understanding of religion.

The main objective of this paper is to explore the logic of inter-religious dialogue which seeks to answer the question: How is inter-religious dialogue possible?. But one may question this objective, and may accordingly argue, why should the possibility of inter-religious dialogue be established? This is particularly relevant when the importance of inter-religious dialogue has been widely recognized. The very recognition implies the possibility of inter-religious dialogue. This is where we need to distinguish the following two situations. One is the inter-religious dialogue as logical concern and the other is the inter-religious dialogue as a practical concern. Recognition of the importance of inter-religious dialogue may arise out of practical and emotional needs. One may think inter-religious dialogue to be an ideal to be fulfilled by every religion. Or, inter-religious dialogue may be a practical need

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* L.D. Swamikannu Pillai Endowment Lectures - 1997 - 98.

arising out of conflicting social/political situations. But even after accepting all these one can still question: How is inter-religious dialogue possible? The reason is the possibility of inter-religious dialogue does not lie in adopting certain practical strategies. The question of possibility is not a matter of practical concern. The matter involved here is logical. For inter-religious dialogue to be possible certain conditions are to be satisfied. These conditions constitute what may be called the logic of inter-religious dialogue. What is meant by logic here is the structure or skeleton which is presupposed in the actual form of inter-religious dialogue. This structure is thus necessary for inter-religious dialogue to be possible. We can now see why the possibility-question is a foundational question. Exploration of the logic of inter-religious dialogue involves a different order of inquiry - an inquiry which may be better characterized as presuppositional or foundational.

In view of the stated objective, my task in this paper will be to delineate the logic presupposed in inter-religious dialogue. This logic/ structure involved here has two principal components - ontology and semantics. Accordingly, the main focus of this inquiry is directed towards two themes. The first is concerned with religious ontology or ontology of the religious world. To be interested in the inter-religious dialogue implies to find out whether rational discourse is possible between different religious worlds. But in order to do this we must have a clear idea about the nature of these religious worlds, the world views they represent and the differences they exhibit among themselves. These constitute the idea of a religious ontology. Unless we have a distinct knowledge about the religious ontology we cannot meaningfully talk about the inter-religious dialogue - it's problems and prospects. The ontological understanding prepares the ground for the semantic considerations involved in inter-religious dialogue. At the semantic level the basic problem that threatens us is: How is rational discourse possible between the different religious worlds? The question that is posed here will be unintelligible without the necessary clarification of the religious ontology. The semantic questions take us to the heart of inter-religious dialogue. It is really the problem of meaning which matters most while we try to explore the possibility of having rational discourse between different religious worlds.

The logic of inter-religious dialogue thus involves both ontological and semantic dimensions. They together form the structure or the pattern that makes the inter-religious dialogue possible. This is how they become the necessary presuppositions to the whole enterprise.

There can still be a question to be clarified. We have so far clarified the presuppositional role that ontology and semantics play in the inter-religious dialogue. But this is not enough particularly when we are interested in the question of the possibility of inter-religious dialogue. In order to show that such a dialogue is possible one needs to show the kind of ontology and semantics that we need for this purpose. We need to characterize the right kind of ontology and the right kind of semantics that can make inter-religious dialogue possible. This is especially true in view of the contemporary attact against religion where the notions of ontology and semantics involved played a negative role. The choice of ontology and semantics is thus exceedingly important for inter-religious dialogue to be possible.

At the background of this thematic layout, this paper is going to address three problems. First, contemporary notions of ontology and semantics are completely inappropriate for the purpose of inter-religious dialogue. Second, the traditional notion of ontology is the only means through which the ontology of the religious world can be explicated. And, third, inter-religious dialogue is possible only on the basis of a new semantic understanding which assumes metaphor at the centre of the relationship between language and reality.

I

Religion as a Philosophical Concern :

A talk on inter-religious dialogue may not be successfully carried out unless we have a clear idea about the status and the role of religion in modern analytic philosophy. This will help us to understand why there is a need for establishing religion on its own ground. Religion demands a ground - an ontology of its own.

The study of religion has never been a serious philosophical concern in the contemporary analytic philosophy. It is a stand which

is sharply different from the earlier stand point of the traditional philosophy where the study of religion was an important philosophical concern. The pursuit of religion was possible because metaphysics in the traditional philosophical thinking was held in high esteem. This was the metaphysics centered conception of philosophy where the study of religion was never separated from philosophy because both had the same concern - the concern for the ultimate nature of reality. Due to this similarity of concern philosophy and religion formed an inseparable relationship.

But this relationship was lasted as long as the primacy of metaphysics was granted. It is well known that with the advent of positivism the whole notion of philosophy went through a drastic change. Metaphysics was dethroned on the ground that it was not a genuine and legitimate philosophical concern. Scientific/empirical knowledge was celebrated as the paradigm of all knowledge. The basic standpoint that is expressed here is the scientific standpoint which demands that philosophy must be scientific and not metaphysical in nature. The idea of philosophy as speculation is thus replaced by the idea of analysis. Analysis of concepts and the clarification of meaning become the sole activity of philosophy. Consequently philosophy took a new turn. It was a turn from reality towards language. This is popularly known as the linguistic turn in philosophy where philosophy is identified with the analysis of meaning.

In view of this radical conceptual shift in philosophy there are two notions which become central to the present inquiry. These notions are: the notion of the concrete and the notion of the literal meaning. The former characterizes the notion of an ontology and the latter characterizes the notion of a semantics as understood in the contemporary analytic philosophy.

A philosophically significant discussion on religion is possible only when we have a proper conception of ontology and semantics adequately matching with it. They provide the necessary support by supplying the structure within which religion as a body of doctrine and as a form of experience can be understood. Without an adequate conception of ontology we cannot form the idea of a religious world - the constituents forming such a world. Similarly, without an adequate

conception of semantics we will fail to understand and appreciate the meaning of religious statements. Considering the structural aspect of religion involving the right conception of ontology and the right conception of semantics it is now easy to understand the indifference shown by the analytic philosophers towards religion. The indifference is the outcome of having a vary restricted notions of ontology and semantics by the analytic philosophers. It is no wonder that in a world where the sole concern of ontology is only with concrete, tangible facts and semantics is only with literal meaning, religion as a proper philosophical conern will not have a significant place. In view of this what could be the prospect of inter-religious dialogue can be well imagined. The whole issue involving inter-religious dialogue may be seen mostly as a practical concern arising out of conflicting socio-political situation. Theoretically, on the other hand, it can be at best seen as a problem of theology and certainly not of philosophy. As said earlier, the problem of inter-religious dialogue at its core may be seen essentially as a problem of ontology and semantics. If that is so, then our next problem is to see what is wrong with the prevalent notions of ontology and semantics that prevent religious discourse, in general and inter-religious dialogue, in particular, to be possible.

Ontology : The Study of the Concrete:

It has been earlier pointed out that the notion of ontology has gone through a drastic change in the modern time. In the analytic tradition of philosophy, ontology is characterized as the study of "what there is". This is a phrase used by Quine which summarizes the entire pursuit of contemporary ontology. As the Quinean phrase indicates, ontology as a study is thus taken to be at par with the scientific investigation of facts. It is, for him, a branch of Zoology concerned with the logic of facts. Accordingly, the notion of the world has been projected solely from the consideration of facts. The world is thus said to be consisting of facts and the different possible worlds, on the other hand, consist of different sets of counter-facts.

In continuation of this scientific pursuit Quine distinguishes the two important issues in ontology. In Quine's reading, talking of ontology implies talking of objects. This is how ontology is essentially

taken to be a linguistic enterprise. We talk about objects by using sentences. Sentences are thus ontologically committed to definite objects. In view of this relationship between language and ontology, the problem now is what should be the language through which ontological commitment can be best expressed. Given this project the two issues of ontology are: First, how to determine the ontological commitment of a discourse and second, to give an account of the term 'object'. The first issue is concerned with the formulation of a criterion of ontological commitment. That is, in order to determine the ontological commitment of a discourse we require a criterion to do so. This is necessary because for a sentence which is ontologically committed to an object, the object must exist for the sentence to be true. Quine formulates a criterion using the resources of modern logic, namely, the quantification theory. As he claims, ontological commitments can be best expressed through the use of the existential quantifiers. My commitment to the existence of neutrons, for example, can be explicitly stated by saying "There are neutrons". Without going into any details, Quine's method is: the sentences having ontological commitment to objects of a certain kind be paraphrased into the language of first order logic which involves quantification over objects of the kind mentioned in the sentences. Quine could avoid the mystery of the earlier idea of naming relationship which says that to each name of a theory there corresponds an entity named. The obvious problem arises here with names of non-existent objects. To account for this situation the existence of non-existence objects was accepted. The main argument is that such objects exist in a special way. Quine dispels the myth of naming by offering an alternative account where the medium of ontological commitment is the existential quantifiers rather than names.

The important thing to note here is that modern ontology, such as, inaugurated by Quine, is based on the particular notion of language which may be described as extensional approach to language. The central to this approach is the notion of truth and not sense or meaning forming the semantic core of language. Instead of meaning being prior, it is truth which is prior to meaning. The meaning of a sentence is thus determined by its truth conditions. The contemporary attempt of how to replace meaning by truth is based on the consideration of how to be scientific in our approach to language, meaning and its relationship to the world.

The linguistic concern of ontology continues when we come to the second issue in Quine's formulations of ontology. The second issue is to give an account of object. At this level, our main concern is to decide what should be the domain to be included in our ontology to give a true account of what there is. The whole question here is, as Quine puts it, to decide what ontology to adopt. To decide on what ontology to adopt is to primarily decide what type of objects we should allow in to constitute our ontology. This forms the second issue as mentioned in the beginning, namely, 'object' and 'reference to object'.

Quine approached the problem of object and reference to object from the point of view of language acquisition. The specific question that he has asked is: How do we learn words referring to objects? This is where Quine goes into the complex process involving social and psychological factors that crucially determine the course of a learning process. Quine studied this under the theme called ontologesis of reference where his fundamental concern is to show how do we come to know and discriminate objects at the different stages of our language learning. In Quine's analysis, individual physical objects are the first and paradigmatic examples of objects. As he argues, the words like 'apple' have a greater ontological significance, than worlds like a 'water' and 'red'. This speaks for the primacy of physical objects. This also shows how the notion of 'concrete' forms the subject matter of contemporary ontology. The concern for world views as found in traditional ontology is now replaced by the scientific concern for facts.

Continuing with this same scientific concern, Quine brings the idea of ontological relativity implying the existence of the plurality of ontological schemes. As well known, the idea of ontological relativity is derived from Quine's thesis on the inscrutability of reference which is the part of a general thesis called indeterminacy of translation. There is ontological relativity due to the indeterminacy of referent and of reference. The referent, such as, the native expression 'Gavagai' is first of all preconceptually given and is descriptively indeterminate. Being descriptively indeterminate it may not be translated in only one way. There can be always alternative translations of the same expression possible depending on the manual of translation you hold. Thus, depending on the translation manual the expression 'Gavagai' can be either translated as 'rabbit' or 'rabbit-stages' or as something else. The

notion of ontology involved here is thus relative to the framework or manual used. Accordingly, commitment to an ontology will be found. It could be an ontology of rabbit, rabbit-stages and so on. As we see ontological relativity is though posed as a linguistic problem is essentially an empirical problem. The empirical problem is casted in linguistic terms and thus the idea that there can be different ontologies is grounded on empirical considerations. There is no trick language due to which there is ontological relativity. The notion of ontology as the study of the concrete is thus not disturbed by the presence of ontological relativity.

In no uncertain term, the situation clearly tells us that there is no place for religion in contemporary ontology. But can ontology be so restricted that it cannot study anything other than physical objects? How far is it legitimate to take ontology at par with scientific inquiry?. These questions are raised because ontology in a very important sense includes the study of world views or what is traditionally known as categorical schema. Their role is to make sense of the world. They make the world and experience as a whole intelligible. Ontology as a study of worldviews may not be thus a negation of the contemporary view of ontology as the study of facts. The reason is the former conception of ontology forms a larger segment of reality - the human reality. There is a large domain of human reality which will remain unintelligible and out of reach to us if we ignore those worldviews associated with such domain. Religion as a segment of human reality has its own world views forming different religious worlds. Thus there are ontologies of the different religious worlds. They can be understood not through the extensional language of quantification theory but through categorical schema. Similarly, ontological relativity involved between these worlds and ontological commitment to a particular religious world are based on the considerations to which modern ontology cannot shed any light. The reason is ontology is no longer thought to be a systematic study of worldviews. We will discuss the nature of religious ontology in the second section. In continuation of our discussion on modern ontology as the study of the concrete we shall now discuss the contemporary idea of semantics as the study of the literal meaning. The two - notions the notion of the concrete and the notion of the literal meaning are complementary to each other.

They together constitute the critique, questioning the possibility of inter-religious dialogue.

Semantics : The Study of the Literal Meaning:

At the outset, it is important to make a distinction between the positivist and the post positivist stand on semantics. The reason is the conception of semantics is not same in the two standpoints. It is true that in the positivist tradition semantics has been identified with the study of the literal meaning. However, the same is not true of the post - positivist tradition where the notion of meaning was not identified only with the notion of the literal. The notion of meaning is much larger than the literal because of the presence of non literal meaning in language. Considering this, how could we identify semantics as a whole with the study of the literal meaning? The justification that we offer is the following. We accept the differences between the two standpoints. But at the same time we hold that there is a continuity between the two. The continuity between the two can be asserted on two grounds. First, both the standpoints grossly ignore certain important uses of language, such as, metaphor. Second, the indifference to metaphor as the use of language arises because of the deep seated belief that the notion of meaning is essentially concerned with the notion of the literal. The only difference to be noted here is that in the post positivist tradition the notion of literal meaning has not narrowly conceived. But the essential motivation is the same. There is an entrenched positivist view about language due to which analytic philosophers by and large ignore religious language. The use of religous language is a special use and thus the study of it demands a frame work of its own. Metaphor is one which can provide a framework and through such a framework we can explain how is inter-religious dialogue possible.

Meaning and the Literal-truth Paradigm:

The primacy of literal meaning may be asserted on two grounds. The first is on the ground that our conceptual system is essentially literal and the use of literal language is the evidence to this nature.

Literal language is the best medium through which we can express meaning precisely and by virtue of being literal truth claims of the assertions can be made in explicit terms. The notion of literal and the notion of truth together form a paradigm which due to its assumptions allows only one function of language. We thus come to the second ground which says that the function of language is only to describe reality - the state of affairs lying outside of language. If the function of language is purely descriptive then the notion of meaning follows from it can not be other than the literal. Further, it follows from the descriptive function of language that either a description is true or it is false. We can thus see that sentences having literal meaning can be characterized with explicit truth conditions.

In this paradigm, non literal use of language has no significance. Non literal use is a deviant use of language. Metaphors, since they come under the non literal use of language, are unquestionably expressions of deviant use of language. Since they do not have any descriptive/ cognitive claim they can not be true or false. A literal sentence, on the other hand, such as, 'Mahabalipuram is 60km away from Madras' may be used in order to communicate some information which is true or false in a strict sense and is theoretically verifiable. But when I say 'Man is a worm' I am not making any statement which is either true or false. If a metaphor has any meaning and truth claim that can only be asserted by making it a literal paraphrase.

In this scenario we can well imagine the semantic prospect of religious language. Apart from a few exceptions, the study of metaphor does not seem to have a significant place in analytic philosophy. The reasons are conceptual. First is the distinction between the cognitive and the emotive functions of language. Religious language does not have any cognitive descriptive function. Second, religious sentences are not verifiable and, therefore they cannot make any cognitive claims. Infact, they are cognitively meaningless. Third, in the context of religious language the relationship between language and reality is not clear. The major problem is: What is the notion of reality figured in religion? and, how could language describe this reality? Since the literal truth paradigm allows only descriptive/cognitive function of language there cannot be any meaningful employment of religious language on the ground that religious sentences do not describe anything called religious reality in concrete terms.

In the later day of post - positivism the literal truth paradigm was questioned. The two cardinal doctrines of the paradigm were challenged. First is the verifiability criterion of meaning. A sentence can be meaningful though it may not be verifiable. Second, cognitive/ emotive dichotomy is untenable in view of the variety of uses of language. Wittgenstein's idea of language game and Austin-Searle's idea of speech act indicate a departure from the positivist conception of language which is too narrow to capture the richness of language. However, there is only one exception where there is no change from the earlier thinking on language. The post positivist philosophers retained the earlier idea of metaphor. As a result they showed the same kind of indifference as their earlier generations to metaphor.

The persistent indifference towards metaphor reveals the positivist influence on the present day thinking on language. This can be easily seen the way the language reality relationship has been conceptualized by the post positivist philosophers of language. It must be admitted that in the post positivist thinking the relationship between language and reality has been conceived in a much more intimate way than what it was thought in the earlier day. It is thus admitted that the concern for reality and the concern for language cannot be treated separately. The main difficulty of treating them separately arises because of the intrinsic relationship existing between the two. This is evident when we find that what counts as reality is largely determined by the categories that we impose of the world which are mostly linguistic in character. We, thus, experience the world through these linguistic categories and accordingly these categories shape experiences. This finally leads to the view that reality is a matter of linguistic decision. There is an important corollary to this view which says that eventhough reality may be a matter of linguistic decision and it, therefore, admits of alternative conceptualizations, this does not suggest that reality is something subjective or subjectively created. Reality, on the other hand, is essentially objective and the experience of it must be necessarily sharable. Nor is the medium through which we understand the world is subjective. Language is social or it is an expression of a social behaviour where the very idea of a private language is, indeed, a contradiction. It is not only language which is social but the same is true of the two other most curcially important components of language, namely, meaning and truth. If an expression is meaningful it must be sharable, because

meaning is determined by the rules which are socially adopted conventions. Similarly is the case with truth. The truth of a sentence is decided by certain objective criteria be it a correspondence or a coherence or, for that matter, any other notion. But the fact remains that for a sentence to be true it must satisfy an objective criterion.

This shows that the relationship between language and reality has never been conceived without the presupposed notion of objectivity. Experiencing of meaning cannot be other than being shareable and communicable. These two constitute linguistic objectivity. Objectivity here stands for transparency. Language must be transparent or literal so that meaning can be clearly stated. The idea of the literal is thus not given up. It is only expressed in a different way. Quite naturally, in this approach to language metaphor will not have a significant place.

Now coming to religious languge one does not know where to situate this discourse and how to account for it in the overall context of language-reality relationship as conceived in the post - positivist philosophy. It is true that religious expressions and sentences cannot be said to be devoid of sense. They are not semantically deviant. They follow the ordinary grammatical order. However, the greatest problem lies with the conceptual/ logical aspect of these expressions. The main source of the difficulty is that one does not know what is the notion or reality which is represented/projected in religious language. In religion, the experience of the real has a completely different connotation than what we normally understand by the word 'real' or 'reality'. It acquires an extraordinary meaning which is not certified by the semantic conventions of language. As a result, religious sentences lack the properties which constitute objectivity, such as, meaning sharability, truth, reference and so on. Equally problematic is the idea of experience in religion. Religious experience, is not sharable because what is experienced, namely, the object, is essentially private to the experiencer or the believer. This is how religious experience becomes incommunicable. Religious language thus defines transparency. We can now see how the modern conception of ontology as the study of the concrete is supported by the modern conception of semantics as the study of the literal meaning. They are complementary and together they constitute the cirtique of religious discourse. In view of this, the philosophical possibility of inter-religious dialogue is rather remote.

Inter-religious dialogue thus remains to be a philosophical problem. My attempt in the next part of my paper is to explore prospects of inter-religious dialogue on the basis of an alternative philosophical frame work supported by different conceptions of ontology and semantics.

For the above reasons analytic philosophers find that it is difficult to give an account of religious language because there is nothing called logical grammer of religious language. However, the only concession that has been given to religious language is that it has an emotive significance. Religious sentences do not have any literal meaning nor they are literally true.

II

Ontology of the Religious World:

To explore the possibility of inter-religious dialogue one must have a clear idea about the nature of religious worlds and the differences exhibited among these worlds. To explore this is to explore a conception of ontology - the ontology which is suitable to a religious world. What sort of ontology do we require in order to understand the nature of religious worlds and their differences? The best way to characterize a religious world will be to see the particular worldview that it expresses. To talk about the ontology of the religious world is to talk about the ontology of the world views.

We have seen that modern ontology is not suitable for this purpose. Ontology in the classical sense can do justice to this sort of study. The reason is classical ontology is concerned with categorical scheme which renders the world intelligible. A religious world is also known by its categorical scheme - the world view that it represents and it is one which makes the particular religious world intelligible. Ontology is thus not the science of the concrete but the science of systems of sense and intelligibility. It is no longer concerned with the justification of empirical facts but with the justification of world views.

Ontology as the study of categorical scheme may be thus most suitable for understanding the ontology of the religious world. In this respect we will address the three following problems:

First : The ontological nature of the religious world
Second : The ontological differences of religious worlds
Third : The ontological commitments in religion.

First: A religious world may be defined by a particular categorial scheme or structure. It determines the sense of the world. On the same consideration different religious worlds have different categorial structures exhibiting different sense structures. A particular religious world is different from the other religious world in that it has a sense structure which is different from the other religious world. As a result what makes sense in one world does not make sense in another. To give an instance, the categorial structure of the Hindu world and the categorial structure of the Christian world are different. The concepts like, "Karma", "Saṁsāra", "Dharma" make sense in the Hindu world. Whereas the same concepts do not make sense in the Christian world. Similarly there are concepts which are intrinsic to the Christian world. The concepts like 'Original Sin', 'Salvation', 'Resurrection', etc., are intelligible to the Christian world but they have no relevance in the Hindu world. The general point is : the sense of a proposition is relative to a given religious world. Unless the world-context is specified the sense or meaning of a religious term will be indeterminate.

A religious world may be thus defined as a system of sense. It forms a coherent system where the sense of a term will never be seen in isolation from the rest of the system. It is a requirement of the system that certain concepts and categories are to be internally related. The concept of individual in the Hindu world, for example, is essentially related to such notions like "Karma", "Samsara", etc. The logical/ conceptual coherence of the system will collapse if they are not so related.

Since the categorial scheme of a religious world is essentially defined in terms of its sense structure, sense or meaning is taken to be more primary than truth. This is a stand which is sharply different from the extensionalist standpoint of modern ontology where it is not meaning but truth which is primary. Thus, meaning is determined by truth or truth conditions. It cannot thus make a distinction between sense and judgment or assertion where the former is concerned with intelligibility and the latter with truth. From the categorial point of view

this distinction follows from the very structure itself. The central to this distinction is the notion of predication. There are two aspects involved here. First, whether predication is intelligible and second whether predication is true. A categorial scheme which determines sense shows which are the concepts/terms in a scheme can be predicated intelligibly. Here the notion of predication is concerned with the notion of intelligibility. In this sense, it is prior to whether predication is true or false. Judgment or assertion is concerned with truth. In the context of religious ontology, intelligibility is more important than truth. I as a Hindu can understand and appreciate many of the propositions of the Christian World without affirming their truth or falsity. What matters here is that those propositions are intelligible to me. But the question of actual truth may not be at all important to me.

There is another important aspect regarding the nature of the religious world. As we know there are different religious worlds having ontologies of their own. From this, does it follow what is true in one world is false in another? This is where again the categorial ontology is different from the modern ontology. In the modern ontology the plurality of worlds is conceived on the basis of differences in facts. There are different worlds because there are different facts. Now what is true in one world is false in another world. The world in which, for example, man is mortal, is different from the world where man is not mortal. The ideal of different world is posed on the basis of counter factual situations. There are facts and counter facts. Hence one is true and the other is false. The plurality of religious worlds is never posed on the basis of counter facts. It is, on the other hand, posed on the basis of different categorial structures. It is sense or intelligibility that defines the entire world. There are different religious worlds which imply that there are different intelligibility structures. What is intelligible to one world is not intelligible to the other world. Truth/falsity question does not arise here because one is not the negation of the other.

Second: It evidently follows from the ontological nature of religious worlds that there is ontological relativity of religious meaning and truth. It has been said that sense is relative to a particular categorial scheme or a religious world. From this follows the relativity of truth on the ground that truth depends upon sense and thus along with sense truth is also ontologically relative. We are thus confronted with a

situation where, on the one hand, we have respective coherent systems of religious ontologies and, on the other, they seem to be mutually incompatible with each other. The notion of incompatibility should be understood more as incommensurability. Due to ontological relativity religious worlds are incommensurable. Incommensurability does not indicate here logical opposition such as, the opposition between the two contradictory propositions. In real terms incommensurability of religious worlds imply that there is no sensemeaning which is common across the different worlds. The same is true of reference. Since reference in a religious world is determined by sense there cannot be any common reference across the world. Ontological relativity in religion thus implies incommensurability of religious worlds.

From the fact of incommensurability an important question arises regarding the relations between these worlds. In view of the incommensurability of religious worlds the central question that arises is: How is inter-religious dialogue possible? To elaborate: How is rational discourse possible between these worlds? These questions take us to the third problem, namely, the nature of ontological commitment in religion.

Third: Certainly, incommensurability thesis appears to be a threat to the possibility of inter-religious dialogue and thus ruling out the possibility of rational discourse between different religious worlds. But is this a real story? If we look at the actual situation the truth seems to be different. In real life there is always exchange taking place between different religious worlds. Hindus and Christians they participate in dialogues. There are also real conversions taking place. One is initiated into a new form of religious life and thereby encounter with a new reality. They strongly indicate that inter-religious dialogue is not so remote and far away as it thought to be. Our task is to give a philosophical justification of this religious phenomena. Inter-religious dialogue appears to be impossible when we cannot come out from the situation posed by religious incommensurability.

At the outset I make a distinction between the two senses of logic. One is the immanent logic - the logic that holds within a religious world. The other is the transcendental logic - the ligic that holds for a world as a whole. The latter is obviously prior to the former. One can even say that latter is the presupposition of the former. To

elaborate their modes of operation in religion I first affirm a world which is different from affirming the internal / categorial structure of the world. In my affirming to a world I subscribe to a particular form of religious life. This is where the notion of ontological commitment enters. I am ontologically committed to a particular form of life. From this first stage the second follows. This is a propositional stage in the sense where I affirm certain propositions constituting a religious system. It may be noted that commitment is not same as propositional affirmation. When I am committed to a form of life it is not mere affirming a proposition of a religious system. I make an existential choice. Similarly when I am committed to Hinduism I am not thereby negating other religions like Christianity or Buddhism. But when I come to the immanent logic of a particular system, such differences become crucial. Either / or opposition works while you have within the system. This happens because of the differences between the categorial schemes. At this level ontological relativity of religious systems prevent inter-religious dialogue.

For inter-religious dialogue to be possible I must come to the realm of transcendental logic. This is a realm where I go beyond the categorial schemes and discover the essence of religious experience. I discover the significance of religion in general. I thus understand the general meaning of faith, religious truth and belief. This allows me to see that different religious worlds though different do not negate each other. The standard logical law like the principle of excluded middle does not hold here. It is a situation where I accept that they all co-exist. This enables me to talk about different religions.

The point that I am making is that when we are involved in inter-religious dialogue we are operating on a different logic. This logic admits of alternative possibilities. This logic is not governed by the principle of bivalence and the principle of excluded middle. It is a higher order logic which transcends the propositional logic internal to a system. As long as we are confined to propositional or immanent logic incommensurability will be an inescapable fact. But we must recognize that incommensurability is a theoretical constraint which has come due to the existence of different religious ontologies. This is like theoretical or propositional clothing of religion. Once we get ourselves free from the theoretical garb talking about other religions is not impossible. A true ontological commitment is one which does not negate other religions.

Finally we come back to language or semantics again. It has been earlier said that we understand and talk about different religions. But how do we understand different religions? What is the medium through which we pass from one world to the other. Here the whole question of language as a semantic vehicle is important. Literal language will pose the same old problem. It will have the same difficulty of how to understand religious reality. This is where the notion of metaphor comes as a vehicle of understanding different religions. But the importance of metaphor may not be so easily established. I shall now show how metaphor is crucial in structuring our experience and thereby they generate new forms of semantic understanding.

III

Experiencing-As: The Basis of Religious Language:

Analytic philosopheres are right when they point out that our experiencing of the world is largely shaped by the linguistic categories. But where they have gone wrong is that they failed to see that the phenomenon of experiencing has its own structure which is prior to language use. All experience has an 'as' structure and this makes all acts of experiencing as the case of experiencing-as. This means, experiencing is always perspectival. It is necessarily accompanied by a form of interpretation imposed by thought. This is how experiencing involves a metaphoric process which is a principle of cognition or thought. Religious way of experiencing the world involves the same 'as' structure, the same metaphoric process as the other modes of experiencing do. If the basis of language use lies in experience then on the same token religious language has the basis in experience which is structurally analogous to other forms of experience. Let me explain the view that experience involes an 'as' structure which provides the basis of all language use including that of religious language.

I shall start with Wittgenstein who has a notion of "Seeing-as" which is certainly helpful in understanding the 'as' structure of experience. Take Wittgenstein's famous case of duck-rabbit problem. I see a given visual array first as one thing and then as another, that is, I see the duck-rabbit figure first as a duck and then as a rabbit. As we can see that there is a shift of perspective which cannot be explained by

the act of mere perception. The act of perceiving involves an interpretation. Or, to put in Wittgenstein's word, "we see it as we interpret it". I perceive a particular configuration on the page and interpret it as duck or as rabbit. To see is to interpret which implies pure seeing is mixed up with an element of thinking. This is the meaning of seeing-as. Further, the considerations on which Wittgenstein thinks that seeing is a matter of seeing-as can be equally found in all other forms of experience. John Hick, thus, suggests that Wittgenstein's concept of seeing-as may be recasted into the concept of experiencing-as.

Seeing-as or experiencing-as has a pervasive character. It is not only applicable to individual physical objects, such as, ducks and rabbits, knives and forks, people and books, but it is equally true of human situations. The same situation may be seen-as or experienced-as in different ways depending on what perspective one takes. Accordingly, the linguistic description or report of the situation differs. It differs because of the interpretive element which is involved in experiencing the situation. Experiencing is perspectival because of the involvement of interpretation. Let us take the present situation, namely, we are having a seminar in this room discussing religious language. One can give a description of the situation in purely physical terms, such as, describing the room, the furniture, the people around, etc. However, there can be an alternative description of the situation. This will be giving a description in non physical terms, such as, describing the situation with reference to philosophical discussions, presentation of papers, lectures and so on. Thus, the same situation is experienced as or seen as in two different ways due to the presence of different interpretations.

This mode of argument can be extended to situations involving moral or aesthetic experience. As we know very well that a particular situation can be described both in non moral and moral terms. This happens because of our different ways of seeing and interpreting the situation. Further, a particular way of seeing-as may lead to a practical dispositional state. Experiencing a situation as moral may imply to be in a dispositional state to behave in a particular way. This will be a moral behaviour that follows from experiencing something as moral.

Aesthetic experience is essentially a case of experiencing-as. Suppose, when we look at a painting we try to find out the meaning expressed through the painting. This meaning is the aspect or perspective that is represented in the painting. Of course, over this notion of

'aspect' there is a possibility of different interpretations. One can always see a particular depiction as this rather than that. There is an important point which is to be noticed particularly in the context of aesthetic experience. The interpretive element involved in aesthetic experience is largely guided by, what Kant calls, our power of imagination. The ability to see a given aesthetic configuration first as one thing, then as another involves an imaginative activity which is subject to the will.

Coming to religious experience, I do not see any reason why it cannot have the same 'as' structure and thereby have the same explanation as that of offered in the context of other forms of experience. In religious experience we find that we experience individuals, places and situations as having certain meaning, namely, religious meaning. Hick has given some examples and it may be instructive to mention some of them. In religious life individuals are experienced as divine, for examples, kings in the ancient civilisation, such as, Rama or Pharaoh in Egypt. There are places which have been experienced as holy, such as mountains, trees and rocks. It is often found among the leading religions of the world that there are places, such as, Tirupati, Banaras, Jerusalem, Mecca, which are experienced-as the places of pilgrimage. But the kind of experiencing-as that may be most significantly felt is the context of human situations. In monotheistic religion it is accepted that God is omnipresent and, therefore, thought that in every situation there is always an unseen presence of God. Any situation may be thus experienced-as having embodied with a particular religious meaning. I am experiencing a situation as one where I am living in the unseen presence of God. On the basis of this brief discussion it may be said that in religion, experiencing is a case of experiencing-as.

In the light of the discussion on experiencing-as we may now reformulate the entire language-reality relationship so that religious language will no longer be considered as uninvited guest to analytic philosophy. It may be said that the relationship between language and reality is to a great extent determined by the 'as' structure of experience. We know what does this notion 'as' mean. It involves an interpretive element which is responsible for experiencing one thing instead of the other. This is a clear case of conceptual shift which is presupposed in my experiencing. Unless there is a shift at conceptual level there cannot be a change in experience. Now this conceptual shift, or,

what is sometimes called gestalt switch, does not follow a linear pattern. On the contrary, it has a relational pattern, in which we understand and experience one kind of thing in terms of another of a different kind. This indeed, is a typical metaphoric situation. Should we then say: Is the 'as' structure of experience a metaphoric structure? Wittgenstein's idea of seeing-as, of course, does not say that it has a metaphoric structure. I think Wittgenstein did not develop this notion. The implications of this notion are very clear: Seeing-as cannot be just interpreted as alternative ways of seeing. It is, on the other hand, a metaphoric seeing where meaning is based upon the project on of one conceptual organisation onto another. This is where metaphor becomes a source of creative insight and meaning. It forms a frame-work. Inter-religious dialogue is possible to a great extent due to this creative work of metaphor.

2

TRUTH, OBJECTIVITY AND REASON IN HISTORY : A DEFENCE OF THE RATIONALIST VIEW OF HISTORY*

R.C. PRADHAN

In this lecture an attempt is made to defend the rationalist view of history which not only demands a strong notion of truth in history but also brings into focus the objective character of historical phenomena. History, according to this view, is not based on fancy or imagination, and is subject to the objective criteria of truth. Therefore there is a clear-cut demarcation between history and myth on the one hand, and history and propaganda on the other. The historian is an objective assessor of the historical phenomena and is very much a pursuer of truth like the scientist, though his method of assessment differs widely from that of the scientist.

The philosophers of history are aware of the fact that the notion of truth itself is not free from difficulties and that the concept of objectivity in the classical sense is challenged more often than not. There is therefore an unending debate as whether there is objectivity in history in the absolutist sense. There is recognition of the fact that history cannot but be a matter of interpretation because the past responds to the queries of the historian the way Nature responds to the scientific quest. The past comes alive in the consciousness of the historian. Thus history is subject to the limitations of time and the framework of the historian. In

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this sense history is neither a completely objective or completely subjective study of the past. It is a rational approximation to the reality of the past in as much as it can grasp it within its limited horizon.

1. The Notion of Truth in History

The idea of truth is common to all cognitive disciplines like science and history. Just as there can be no scientific knowledge of Nature without the notion of truth, so also there can be no historical knowledge of the past without the notion of truth. There are true or false judgments in science depending upon how much the scientific discourse approximates to the facts in the world. There is a domain of scientific facts which needs investigation in the hands of the scientist or the community of scientists. In spite of the fact that philosophers of science like Kuhn[1] and Feyerabend[2] have doubted whether there is an independent domain of facts, it remains the case that no practising scientist can go without facts in his investigation. We begin with a set of facts in any inquiry because the inquiry is meant to explain and understand those facts.

The historical inquiry starts as an inquiry into the events that are past and have supposedly happened in time. Thus the notion of past is already built into the structure of the historical investigations. The sense of time is already a part of the historian's framework. It is because of this that the historical judgments have to be about the past events and actions which have been undertaken by the persons involved. Thus a historian is obliged to compare his judgements with what actually happened in the past. The notion of truth is already presupposed because without it we cannot evaluate whether what the historians say is right or wrong, true or false. The historian is interested in knowing the past as it is. Therefore he is a seeker of truth about the past.

But the historical truths cannot be as straightforward as the truths of sciene since history presents a complex face dotted with twists and turns. The past itself is not present in its pure form because it is already past and cannot be brought back except through imaginative reconstruction. It is because of this that Croce said that all history is 'contemporary history'[3] because it is recreated in the idioms of the present. However, the fact is that history has to be always judged against the past, however it may be twisted and turned in the language

of the present. There is still a residue of the past even in our contemporary interpretation of it. Thus the notion of truth remains a part of the historical discourse. The historian, like the scientist, stakes his credibility on how much truth he discovers. If all the historical judgments are found false, then history is reduced to a fiction. Hence we must accept that truth matters in history as much in any other cognitive discourse.

Let us take a historical judgment such as "India became free on 15 August, 1947". The truth of this judgment depends on the events that took place on 15 August, 1947 and the time before that. The recorded facts of history show that the event of India becoming free took place on that date. Hence this sentence is accepted as true by all contemporary historians. Thus all statements in history have the characteristic property of being true or false. Some are true on the face of it, while others are so when properly investigated. However, no historical truth is *a priori* in character. All are factual truths as they have to be rooted in the historical experience itself.

The notion of historical fact is important in this connection. The notions of fact and truth are logically connected in the sense that to say that a sentence is true is to say that it states a fact[4]. The statement of a fact is entailed by the statement's being true. The statement "India became free on 15 August, 1947" is true if only if India became free on 15 August, 1947. The fact is implied by the above logical equivalence[5]. In this sense the notion of fact is as much indispensable as the notion of truth. It is not that the notion of fact is itself ontologically closed. It is open to the logical structure of the sentence because a fact is a misnomer if there is no corresponding sentence or statement of it[6].

2. Historical Facts: Objectivism VS. Subjectivism

The question of facts in history assumes importance in view of the fact that there is no agreed opinion on what the facts are. On the one hand, there is the view that there are facts in history which are independent of the historian, on the other, there is the view that facts are dependent on the hisotrian for whom they are the facts. For some philosophers who regard objectivity as the main virtue of historical judgements, the facts are there buried in history and have to

be excavated from the ruins of the past. The past for them is the store-house of facts of innumerable kinds which are waiting for the historian's investigation. These philosophers of history can be called the realists who believe that history is a discovery[7] of the past rather than a reconstruction thereof.

The realist philosopher of history argues that the facts are there which we must recognize through our investigation. That is, the facts are the events or situations which did take place in the past and have to be brought to light. For example, it is a fact that Gandhi was assassinated on 30 January, 1948. This fact is there for everybody to see and know; therefore there cannot be any doubt about its independent existence. The historians of contemporary India all agree that Gandhi fell to the assassin's bullet on that fateful evening of 30, January, 1948. This proves that there cannot be any difference of opinion about this fact between two historians. Of course there may be difference of opinion about the interpretation of the reason of this events, but there cannot be difference as to whether such an event happened at all.

The anti-realists, however, differ on the very notion of a fact. For them facts are very much part of the interpretative scheme of the historians. And so there are no facts as such. All facts in history are made rather than discovered. History is man-made and so there is no absolute objectivity in history. Oakeshott, as quoted by Carr, writes: "History is the historian's experience. It is "made" by nobody save by the historian: to write history is the only way of making it"[8]. This is to suggest that there are no facts of history which are not interpreted by the historian. The historian makes every effort to bring the events of history into one scheme or pattern as a result of which the event appears coherent. The fact is non-existent as long as the historian has not put his interpretation on it. If we want to know the facts about Gandhi's assassination, we must know the whole episode of Gandhi's leading the nation to freedom. His assassination is a part of the whole episode. If we look at the facts in this way, we can see the relative existence of facts in the historian's framework.

The anti-realists who oppose the idea of objective history recognize that there are no pure facts anywhere in history, all are contaminated by the historian's categories. The historian starts with certain

assumptions and hypotheses which he wants to test against the events of the past. So he has already taken a particular stand vis-a vis the past. The past is not there under a veil. It is already wearing a particular form which the historian has given it. Thus the facts of history are already made and interpreted. In this connection Collingwood's rejection of the so-called objective history is important. Carr presents Collingwood's view in the following way": The emphasis on the role of the historians in the making of history tends, if pressed to its logical conclusion, to rule out any objective history at all: history is what the historian makes"[9]. It is the historian who is at the centre of the making of history. This view spells out the fact that there is no absolutely objective history of mankind.

In this controversy between the objectivists and the subjectivists about history, one must realize that both are missing something important in the opponent's view. There is neither objective history nor subjective history. It is both man-made and objective because though the historian interprets history, he does not lose the sense of truth of his own judgements. He must apply a standard for evaluating the facts of history. Facts are definitely not manufactured by him arbitrarily. They are interpreted but not manufactured.

Any historical quest is fired by the idea of truth. So objectivity is built into the historian's framework. But at the same time the historian must interpret the facts according to his ideas. He cannot be just one who assembles the facts without a framework. The facts must be systematized according to a plan. For example, those who study the history of India's freedom struggle must understand the inner dynamics of the popular upsurge against the foreign rule. The nationalist fervour roused by Gandhi and other nationalist leaders must form the framework of India's freedom struggle. There cannot be any account of this part of Indian history without understanding the spirit of the Indian people. Even then there is no subjectivity in this account because it is not out of the nationalist fervour that the historian is writing the history. He is objectively and sympathetically bringing out the inner meaning of the external events which are recorded in the annals of the time. History is not a mere recording of those facts or events. It is an objective and fair-minded interpretation of the events. Carr, therefore rightly observes:"The historian without his facts is rootless and futile; the facts without the historian are dead and meaningless"[10].

3. Objectivity in Historical Explanations

Historical explanations are based on the assumption that there is a test for validity of the explanations. This test must be objective and truth-based. No explanation worth the name in history or elsewhere is without the criteria of validity. Explanations must be sound and coherent and based on certain principles. For example, the historian must be able to explain why Gandhi was assassinated and why his life was so easily spared by the Nation which he himself created. The posterity wants to know from the historian as to what transpired which led to his untimely and unfortunate death. Here the explanation must be truth-based and fair to the facts. The historian must be objective so far as his interpretation is concerned. He is accountable to the facts and must write the true story of the events that happened in that context. Thus the historian has an enormous responsibility of telling the truth. He cannot be swayed by any political bias if he has to be a true historian. Paul Ricoeur writes: "We expect history to have certain objectivity-the objectivity which is proper to it, rather than subjectivity, must be our point of departure"[11].This is because we cannot allow history to be a myth or propaganda by making it a product of the imagination and prejudices of the historian.

There is a great difference between history and myth in that there is the sense of reality in history which is lacking in the myths. The latter are the products of imagination while the former is an account of what is real in the past. The historical accounts are meant as responses to the happenings in the past and therefore they do not suffer from lack of objectivity. History, unlike myths, is objective and thus is either true or false. This sense of being either true or false keeps history separate from the fictions which are widely perceived as neither true nor false. Those who deny objectivity to history take the latter as more or less the creations of imagination. The subjectivisits do take history as a free creation of the historian's mind. For them, as Carr puts it, "...' all history is the history of thought' and history is the re-enactment in the historian's mind of the thought whose history he is studying."[12] This view of history reduces all historical accounts to the investigations into the historian's mind. Collingwood seems to have fallen prey to this psychologistic trap when he observes that "to the historian, the activities whose history he is studying

are not spectacles to be watched, but the experiences to be lived through in his own mind; they are objective, or known to him, only because they are also subjective, or actions of his own"[13]. This seems to generate the myth that history has nothing objective about it and everything is a creation of the historian's mind. Nothing could be farther from truth than this.

History is not a psychological investigation at all. It is neither the product of individual psychology, nor the product of the collective hysterical mind. It is not a propaganda at all in the hands of a few ideologies. The propaganda unleashed by a few ideologies loses all objectivity the moment it serves an ideology than truth. Ideology distorts reality and so must be kept off the historian's procedure of investigation. Even the ideologies themselves have to be studied by history; so history cannot be under the sway of ideology.

History does not fall into the category of propaganda because it always keeps open the possibility of revision. All historical accounts are fallible because there may be a better history written in future. The better history is the one which will tell the story in a more authentic fashion. If truth is the sole criterion of historical authenticity, then it will be guided by truth rather than by make-beliefs. It is in that case the job of the historian to know the facts as they are or at least as they appear to be real. In this sense, truth and reality matter in the domain of history. Thus the main concern of history being truth and reality of the past, it follows that we cannot make history into an ideology.

The historical explanations are no doubt not deductive nomological as Hempel[14] supposes because there are no deductive laws in history. Hempel is wrong in suggesting that we can find scientific explanation in history because it is not only difficult but also impossible to discover laws of history which have universal validity. The generalizations in history have only limited applicability and so cannot be taken as universal laws. Because of this fact we must recognize that history is more concerned with human affairs which are spatio-temporally limited than with unlimited phenomena of nature. Thus we must admit that historical explanations have to take into account the human reasons and intentions which operate in the human actions.

4. Meaning and Understanding of History

The aim of historical explanation is the understanding of the historical phenomena. To explain is to understand and vice versa. By explaining a historical action we bring out the reasons, beliefs, desires and intentions operating in the historical phenomena. Thus we are back to the telelogical view of history for making the historical accounts more accessible to the human meaning underlying the phenomena. History is not a bare collection of the facts; it is also a critical evaluation of the facts. Therefore all that matters for history is the inner meaning or what Collingwood calls the "inside"[15] of the events in history.

Collingwood's account of the inner meaning is of relevance here. He opines that the events of history have an inside which consists in meaning or thought which is expressed by the events. They symbolize the inner meaning in such a fashion that if we miss it, we have only events and no actions. It is these actions that have to be explained and not the events unlike in natural sciences. Thus history stands independent of the natural sciences because the notion of meaning is absent in the latter. Meaning is very much the soul of history as it is impregnated with the ideas and thoughts so relevant for understanding history. Collingwood writes:" For history, the object to be discerned is not the mere event, but the thought expressed in it. To discover the thought is already to understand it"[16].

The notion of understanding is very important in history because the historian is interested in understanding the past. The past is there but it is not existing in the present. It was to be recreated in the mind for understanding it. The past has to be interpreted and brought back into consciousness. Thus there is a scope for a hermeneutic[17] treatment of the historical phenomena. The historical documents have to be understood in the present context by bringing out their meaning. There cannot of course be an absolute objectification of these meanings, since the meanings have to be recreated in our contemporary idiom.

The meanings of the historical actions consist in how and why they were done. They lie in the reasons for which the actions were done and so in the motives and intentions which are underlying them. Thus we have a whole host of reasons behind the historical actions. Meaning[18] lies in them rather than in the external happenings

themselves. Thus meaning in this sense is a human meaning that issues out of the historical contexts in which the actions take place and the interpretation which is put on them. Meanings embody the normative significance of the events and actions studied by history. They pertain to the inner motives and intentions of actions. In this sense the exact significance of history can be deciphered only through an empathetic understanding rather than through a mechanical causal analysis.

There are multiple meanings of history in the sense that we cannot decipher the final meaning in a clean sweep. Historical events can provide multiple meanings to the interpreters of history. Thus there can never be tne final history of mankind, nor could there be an absolutely true history. There are interpretations which could be revised in the light of new facts and evidences. As Raymond Aron writes, "The plurality of meaning which results from the indefiniteness of historical entities and the distinction between 'specific' meanings and 'experienced' meanings involves the renewal of historical interpretation; it offers at once a protection against the worst form of relativism; that which is combined with dogmatism".[19] Meanings thus issue from the fact that the historical entities are themselves subject to multiple interpretations. This avoids not only dogmatism but also relativism because meanings are always rooted in the objective structure of history. Aron's message is loud and clear: history is not the prerogative of the elite and the most prophetic, it is also given to the common intelligence of mankind.

Aron's search for the intelligibility of history is a matter of serious importance in view of the fact that history is open to any rational inquirer. History is a rational understanding of the past and so its intelligibility is based on how reason operates in history. Aron writes: "The idea of reason, the goal of History as conceived by critical philosophy, cannot be identified with a coming period or with particular institutions without creating fanaticism and unreason. The search for an intelligibility higher than comprehension or probabilistic determinism, equivalent at the most generalized level to the intelligibility in the development of works of art, remains legitimate."[20] Thus there is a logical link between the intelligibility and rationality of history. We have therefore to search for a rational understanding of history.

5. Reason in History

The search for reason in history begins at the very beginning of the effort to understand the meaning of historical events and actions. The reason that we seek here is not extra-historical, but is immanent to the process of history. It is impregnated into the structure of history. There are two ways in which we can make out the notion of reason in this context. First, the reason is an element of the historical process that connects the historical events such that we have the idea of whole rather than of parts or bits and pieces. Second, the historical events carry a meaning that transcends the immediate contextuality and bring forth the ideal meaning that rises above space and time. As to the first, it can be said that historical facts do not make a juxtaposition but a totality that demands a greater rationality in it. The second refers to the fact that meanings are embedded in the totality rather than in parts. Meaning of history is holistic in this sense. Thus reason is the principle of connectivity that brings all facts of certain kind under one unity. This gives rise to the idea of history being governed by rationality.

Hilary Putnam in his *Reason, Truth and History*[21] suggests that history is a rational inquiry and must have a place for human reason in it to avoid fanaticism and relativism. The fanatics have made history their handmaid in raising the bogey of racialism and absolutism. The facts of history have been twisted beyond reason in pursuance of the ideologies such as Nazism, Marxism and other forms of fundamentalism. Hence reason must play a moderating role in seeing the historical facts in the proper light. Reason liberates us from the pathetic subjugation to unreason and fanaticism. Thus we must look out for the rational interpretation of history by bringing into it the play of truth, objectivity and rationality.

It was Kant[22] and later Hegel[23] who introduced reason into history. For them history itself is the manifestation of human reason. For Kant, it is indispensable that we talk about the universal laws of reason because, unless we have universal and necessary laws operating in history, we cannot make out any meaning of history. History is universal rather than particular in its structure[24]. Thus universality makes history rational according to Kant. Hegel goes further and tells us that history is out and out rational because every event in history is

a mark of the march of Reason towards its absolute form. History is the march of God or the Absolute of Earth[25]. Though Hegel makes history look coherent and meaningful by relating all the facts into one grand system in a metaphysical fashion, it stands clear that he is searching for the intelligibility of history in reason. Reason for Hegal is synonymous with the laws of truth and rationality operative in history.

The rationalist view of history is long estabilished in philosophy. It has successfully established the view that we cannot make history into a subjective and psychological disicipline. It cannot at the same time be relative to the historian or the community of historians. Relativism is not only self-contradictory taken literally, but also is false because it reduces the historical truth to the truth of a cultural cycle or the social setup. Those who defend relativism in history forget the fact that truth cannot be made the monopoly of a group or of a sect or a class. Truth is beyond sectarian interpretation and class-interest. Thus we must make room for the idea that history is out and out rational. Aron rightly points out "The end of history is an idea formed by reason; it characterizes not the individual man but the struggle of men collectively through the course of time. It is the 'project' of the humanity insofar as the latter claims to be rational"[26].

The search for reason in history is no doubt a very complicated one. It is not a search for any single principle in the history of mankind, but for a number of principles which are likely to operate in history. These principles are such as those which relate to how human beings in general behave under certain circumstances. These are vague ways of understanding human mind in general rather any specific laws that must operate in every period of the history. The Hegelian search for the divine laws is bound to fail because we are not likely to arrive at one and only Reason in history. We may not always encounter rational behaviour in the process of history. The wars and the killings are never rational actions; so are not the destruction of cities and civilizations. But that does not deter us from believing that human beings try to be rational in all normal circumstances. Besides, we commonly apply the priciples of rational actions to all historical events in the hope that some actions at least are rational in contrast with many others. Thus history is one of the reason-searching disciplines.

If the model of historical research would not have been truth- and reason-seeking, then we would have been left with nothing

but a collection of disjointed facts and events in the name of history. But history is not a mere juxtaposition of facts; it is a rational pattern of events and actions which embody human wishes and desires, values and principles, and above all the struggle of the human spirit to express itself in unlimited forms of activity. History includes everything man has done in the past. And this includes his spiritual and inner quest for the ultimate meaning of life.

6. History and Beyond History

That history is a connected set of human actions is now a well established view. It is not the creation of imagination but of the historian's interpretations of the events and facts. Thus the real meaning of history lies in going beyond history, that is, in observing history from a detached point of view. The real history is written by those who have never participated in it. Those who participate in it are likely to be prejudiced and biased and so cannot look at it from an objective standpoint. History is recreated by the historian as Collingwood rightly points out, because there is no other way we can approach history. The past is no more present before us in flesh and blood; it is there as represented in the historical discourse. Therefore we are likely to be outside history whenever we try to read the past.

The meaning of history cannot be a product of history; it must lie outside history because it is the one we locate in the collective consciousness of the mankind. The meaning of history is that it is a finite and limited temporal process which is in need of a direction into the future and which is always in need of interpretation. This is not merely the semantic meaning of the historical discourse but the overall significance of the phenomenon of the past itself. The past has to be decoded and made intelligible to us in the language of the human reason. This has to be achieved in the process of interpreting the past events and actions. The rational discourse of man is equipped to make historical events intelligible either in terms of politics, power, nationality or in terms of civilizations, values and religions. There is no one language in which history can be written; there are multiple ways in which human actions can be understood. We may take a purely political view of things and write the political history. But that is not the whole history of mankind: there is economic, social and religious histories to be attended to.

One may agree with Toynbee[27] that the best history of mankind is the history of civilizations, their rise and fall, success and failure, etc. It peeps into the minds and souls of the peoples which it studies. It recreates their spiritual journey and their attainment of perfection of mind and spirit. Thus we cannot avoid writing the spiritual history of mankind if we are real historians and not mere chroniclers of events. The best historian is one who can rise from the exterior of the events and pass into the inner meaning of the events, one who can study the language of the spirit and not merely of the body. The language of the spirit is the language of culture, values, goals, progress, struggle and effort, etc. It is the language of the dialectical development towards the attainment of peace, harmony, brotherhood and universal unity of mankind. Thus to know what history is we have to go beyond history. We have to transcend history in order to understand history.

We are reminded by Hegel, Ranke, Spengler, Toynbee and Collingwood that history is not the study of the events of history as autonomous entities. They tell us that history is not itself an infinite process that can speak of its own meaning. We have the higher order language of the infinite human spirit to understand history as only a finite manifestation of it. The language of the spirit is the language of the transcendent reality that we have to search for in history. The ultimate reason that we have to search for is the human spirit.

To conclude: the inner meaning of history lies beyond history-it is the one that needs a deeper level than is available in the historical discourse. The values and ideals have to be searched for in the human spirit rather than in the historical process.

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3

THE INNER MEANING OF HISTORY: A DEFENCE OF THE TELEOLOGICAL VIEW OF HISTORY*

R.C. PRADHAN

The main question which I will deal with in this lecture is: Is there an inner meaning of history? If so, what is that inner meaning and how can we understand it? These questions are raised by the philosophers of history, if not by the historians themselves. Philosophers of history try to understand history with the assumptions that it presents a connected view of the events and happenings which are the subject matter of the study of history. The idea of the inner meaning of history, though it sounds metaphysical, has the implication that the historical phenomena are connected and that they present a certain pattern which the historians must keep in mind. The historical process has a certain order which is the underlying meaning of that process. It is the task of the philosophy of history to articulate this meaning and order in history.

I shall defend here the view that history is a purposeful pageantry of human phenomena which are driven as much by human passions as by rational judgments. Thus history could be viewed as a progressive manifestation of the human spirit in its multifaceted hues.

1. The Idea of Order in History

The most remarkable fact about the historical phenomena is that they are ordered into a certain pattern because of which historical

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knowledge is possible. If these phenomena would not have fallen into a pattern, they would not have yielded any knowledge at all. Just as natural events and process are brought under laws by the scientists, so also the historians bring the events of history under certain patterns, if not strict laws, to bring out their coherence and consistency. Science and history, though otherwise different in their methods, have at least this in common that they search for stability and order in the phenomena under study.[1] What makes history a scientific study of human affairs is that the historians believe that human beings are more or less rational in their actions and that they enact the human drama with certain goals and purposes. It is this fact that marks history as a teleological phenomenon in contradistinction with the phenomena in nature.

Now the question is: What is the nature of the order in history? Is it immanent in history, or is it imposed on it by the human mind? My answer is that it is neither completely immanent nor completely transcendent. It is somewhere in between in the sense that though the historical phenomena take place according to their inner dynamics, they nonetheless depend on how the historian is interpreting them. The historians' categories and schemata play a very decisive role[2] in the shaping of history, though these schemata have to be tested in the empirical facts. So there cannot be a completely a prioristic history or a completely empiricistic history.[3] Interpretation of history is not possible if there are no *a priori* schemata; so also unless these hypotheses are tested in experience, they cannot contribute to the knowledge of history. Thus history as a study of mankind must adhere to the norms of rational and scientific understanding.

The order in history is partly immanent and partly transcendent in the sense that it is contributed partly by the understanding mind and is partly implicit in the process of history itself. The immanent character of the human history follows from the fact the historical facts are coherent in themselves in that they fall into the causal nexus. The cause-effect relationship is very much present in human affairs. Though the overriding human causes are more or less reasons of some sort, since they spring not from impersonal forces of nature but from the personal motives and desires.[4] At the same time there is a sense in which human reason imposes order on historical

phenomena in the sense that it establishes the connecting links between the different facts and events by its *a priori* schemata. The historical facts themselves are mute and blind as long as they are not interpreted. They speak to the historians if the latter have the right ear to hear. There are no facts of history which are not interpreted by some historian or other. In this sense we cannot conceive of history independently of the historical interpretation.

I agree with Collingwood[5] that the order in history is not necessarily a cosmic or divine order, if by that we mean that there is unfoldment in history of a cosmic plan already set before mankind by the Divine Authority. This acosmic or transcendent view of history does not always work because it shifts the human drama from its cosmic stage to the divine plane thereby diluting the human element in history. History is basically a human drama with all elements of novelty and spontaneity and the elements of tragic and comic dimensions. There are heroes in history who have shot up into brilliance for a while and have again fallen into insignificance as the wheel of time has turned. Today's king is tomorrow's pauper. Thus the wheel of fortune is not always fixed; it goes on revolving. Hence we cannot call this a divinely ordained drama. It is man-made and so has the elements of a human tragedy. But from this it does not follow that we cannot look beyond the human world for divine redemption in the acosmic divine plane. But that will mean transcendence of history.

Arnold Toynbee[6] has shown that the human drama has its culmination in divine salvation, that is, in the divine perfection of man, which is the goal of human history and is never its realized state. Toynbee writes:"Though the goal of mankind's continuous and increasing endeavour is still hidden below our horizon, we know, nevertheless, what it is. We can discern it, without having to divine the future, by looking inwards, for mankind's goal is written in the constitution of human nature."[7] And the constitution of human nature is such that we seek salvation from the history itself because at the end of the day what matters most is the spiritual perfection of man. The tragedies and the catastrophes of history do beckon to the fact that there is a divine dimension to the life of man on Earth.

However, as Collingwood has warned us, history is not to be confused with metaphysics[8] since historical events are particular and concrete events taking place in time. They are subject to empirical

laws, if any, and so do not embody metaphysical laws. All that the historian is concerned to find out is the meaning of the events in the context of the overall history of mankind. Metaphysics indulges in flights of speculative imagination which is its main task, but the historian cannot afford to be so indulgent. He or she has to give a connected view of the events and provide a meaningful framework in which the historical events can be made intelligible. The philosopher of history, not being a historian himself, can always take clues from metaphysics and show that the events of history have an inner meaning which is not explicit but can be made so.

2. Causality and Determinism

The historical events have an order and meaning in the sense that we can connect them in a certain way with the events that are past and the events that are yet to happen. In that sense history is a connected whole. Now the question arises, what is the role of causality in history? Is there causal determinism in history? These questions have relevance insofar as historical events have an order and a connected meaning. It is not the case that historical events and actions are arbitrary and have no rational explanation. They are fully explainable and are subject to analysis and evaluation.

The idea of cause is basically derivable from our scientific understanding of the natural events. Scientists do talk about the cause of the natural happenings. In that context it is widely believed that the natural causes are such that they necessitate the effects that follow from them. Thus the law of causation is established to explain the happening of the natural phenomena. The historical events do obey the law of causation to the extent the happenings in history have a sequential order. But the rigidity of the causal law is lacking in this case since we are dealing with human agents in the case of history, and not with the natural phenomena. There is a gap between human agents and nature as in the former we have the presence of the agential freedom which is lacking in the latter. That is why the causes in history are more like reasons than like the natural causes. The causes in history pass into human reasons because they are surrounded by human meaning and are not fully accountable by the natural laws. For example, the causes of the failure of the First Indian War of

Independence in 1857 against the British are not natural causes; they are the reasons such as disunity amongst the native Indian rules, the lack of mass involvement in the War, the superior military strength of the English Army, etc. These are not causes in the ordinary sense of term; they are rather the reasons or grounds which led to the failure of the Indian upsurge for freedom.

Viewed in this sense we can say that causes in history have a broader meaning which cannot be captured by the natural causes. There is therefore a clear-cut distinction between the causal explanation and the reason-explanation of the events - the first pertaining to the explanation of natural phenomena and the second pertaining to the human actions proper.[9] It is not proper to assimilate the human actions in history to natural phenomena and so there must be scope for reasons than for causes in any historical explanation. Historical explanations are characteristically different from the explanations of the natural phenomena. The former appeal to human intentions and purposes where as the latter appeal to purely natural causes.[10] The historical explanations need the presence of human reasons for explaining why a particular action took place rather than another. History in that sense has an element of unpredictability since we cannot give an ultimate explanation of the historical events. All that we are searching for is an order and a rational pattern in history. Carr writes: "Just as from the infinite ocean of facts the historian selects those which are significant for the purpose, so from the mutiplicity of sequences of cause and effect he extracts those, and only those, which are historically significant, and the standard of historical significance is his ability of fit them into his pattern of rational explanation and interpretion."

The rational pattern of history cannot yield any historical laws. This fact has been realized by philosophers more and more as they come out of the idea that history is capable of deterministic explanations available in science. In the natural sciences there are rigid scientific laws which explain natural phenomena; these laws are well established and tested. So the covering law model[12] of explanation is appropriate in science, that too under certain circumstances. But history cannot provide such explanations for the reason that there are no historical laws. There are only patterns of historical

phenomena and so there is a rational order in history but no rigid laws operating throughout history. That is why William Dray writes: "My chief complaint against acceptance of the covering law doctrine in history is not the difficulty of operating it, in either fully deductive or multifaceted form. It is rather that it sets up a kind of conceptual barrier to a humanistically oriented historiography.[13]

That there is no rigid determinism in history has been emphasized by many philosophers such as Isaiah Berlin[14] who believe that the events in history are not necessitated by any rigid laws. Examining the concept of historical inevitability, Berlin comes to the conclusion that it is an illusion to allude to deterministic laws in history and to believe that history is guided by such laws established by nature or by a supernatural agency. He writes: "The notion that history obeys laws, whether natual or supernatural, that every event of human life is an element in a necessary pattern, has deep metaphysical origins: infatuation with the natural sciences feeds this stream, but not its sole nor, indeed, its principal source. In the first place, there is the teleological outlook whose roots reach back to the beginning of human thought."[15] It is this teleological outlook which is the ultimate source of the deterministic view of history, according to Berlin, meaning thereby that there is the implication that there is a cosmic determination of history by a superhuman agency.

3. Immanent Teleology

Berlin's view on historical inevitability has the negative implication that historical determinism cannot be justified because it leads us beyond history in search of ahistorical agencies or factors that determine history. These forces outside history are beyond the contingencies of history and so are transcendent in character. Berlin thinks that these forces make the human effort totally irrelevant and so cannot explain why human beings act in a certain way. According to the determinist view, as Berlin puts it, "to offer historical explanation is not merely to describe a succession of events, but to make it intelligible; to make intelligible is to reveal the basic pattern; not several of possible patterns, but the one unique plan which, by being as it is, fulfils only one particular purpose...."[16] This rigid view of there being a single pattern or plan throughout the universe makes

it inevitable that things happen the way they happen and that they cannot be otherwise than what they are.

Berlin believes in human freedom and the possibility of human choice. Therefore he rejects the view that human effort has no meaning in history. According to him, there is no way we can explain historical events if we do not introduce free human agency. It is because of human involvement that historical events assume significance. Therefore we have to give up the idea that there is one and only one way in which human beings can act. There are several ways which are open before man and he chooses only one at a particular time. Therefore it is wrong to say that "the more inevitable an event or action or a character can be exhibited as being, the better it has been understood, the profounder the researcher's insight, the nearer we are to the one embracing, ultimate truth."[17] It is true that there is no historical inevitability as the options are still open before mankind not to have done a particular action.

There is no doubt that history is open to the extent human freedom is not denied. We are definitely not like "stones and trees, like bees and beavers."[18] That is to say, we do not behave like the physical objects in nature to which things happen. Things are what they are and cannot be otherwise. Therefore there is reason to believe that human actions cannot be predicted with minute precision. Berlin's contention that human history is morally accountable in terms of human responsibility is justified and acceptable. Any view that denies human freedom must be wrong in reducing history to natural science which recognizes the inevitability of the natural phenomena.

But from this it does not follow that history has no rational order or that there is no causal accounting of the historical phenomena. There is an underlying meaning of history which is captured in the categories of reason and purpose of the human beings involved in history. Human beings think and reason out their plans and projects. Therefore there is always a human meaning in history because without it the historical events look like the events in nature. The human will and intentiions work as the reasons for actions of the human beings. In this sense we cannot deny that there is teleology in history, that is, that there is an inner meaning of the events and processes found in history. This may be called the immanent teleology.

It may be argued that the historical forces are too mighty to accommodate any human planning. In support of this view it may be argued that there forces of history act like a giant before which the human beings are puny creatures. Even the great heroes of history like Alexander, Napoleon and Hitler are nothing but the creatures of their time and cannot be blamed solely for what they did. But this is to overlook the fact that the historical forces themselves are other human factors like the will of the people or the conducive social conditions responsible for the rise of the heroes. Thus there is no escape from the human conditions that prevail in history. These conditions make or mar the prospects of history. Immanent teleology is still operative, even if we deny the presence of the non-human forces in history.

A teleological view of history brings in the much needed idea of human agency into the operation of history. There are historical inevitabilities if the human agents have succumbed to the circumstances and have accepted their own helplessness. But this is due not to the fact that there are superhuman agencies which control history. There are times when the human will is too small to change the course of history. There is the spirit of time or *zeitgeist* that prevails over all human effort. For example, Gandhi's determined will could not prevent the partition of India because other forces were stronger than Gandhi's will. Thus we cannot always count on the human will for the change of history. Certain historical events are inevitable in this limited sense.

4. The Idea of Progress

The teleological view of history defended above implies that history is commensurate with the human desire for progress and that it unfolds the human effort towards progress even if that goal is never achieved. History is dynamic rather than static in view of the fact that there is always commotion in history. There is a disturbed existence of history because there is something or other happening to disturb the so-called peace in world-history. This shows that history moves on even if sometimes that movement does not appear to be towards progress. The World Wars, for example, are in no case signs of progress; yet we count them as steps towards a better world

because we have got rid of the oppressive regimes of Hitler and Mussolini. The spirit of democracy has become stronger because of the crusade against the dictatorships of the past. In this sense we are in need of the idea of progress even in the worst times of world-history.

The sense of direction in history is very important because without that we cannot explain and understand history. As Carr writes: "History properly so-called can be written only by those who find and accept a sense of direction in history itself. The belief that we have come from somewhere is clearly linked with the belief that we are going somewhere. A society which has lost belief in its capacity to progress in the future will quickly cease to concern itself with its progress in the past."[19] Thus the idea of progress brings more light into the way we ought to understand the historical process. Without this category we are left in the dark about the very existence of history as a human discipline. It remains a closed book for most of the time because nobody knows what to do with the historical events as such.

History is a forward-looking movement in the sense that it is directed at some goal even if the goal is still not realized. History makes some effort to achieve it. Even wars have their aims, for example, to establish peace, bring about a new world-order and so on. There are ideological conflicts and also conflicts of interests. In all cases we have a goal. This may be called the progressive nature of historical movements. Even the worst periods in history have their bright sides too. Thus there is always a way of making history meaningful by appealing to the progress it has achieved. Some value is realized in the process of history. So Carr writes: "Progress in history is achieved through the interdependence and interaction of facts and values. The objective historian is the historian who penetrates more deeply into the reciprocal process."[20] Thus progress is a genuine aim of human history.

Progress means reaching a desirable goal within a certain expected range of time. A progressive society is one which aims at such a goal and finds out ways and means to reach it. History therefore is the cumulative effort of mankind to reach a goal which is

supposed to be the desired goal of mankind. For example, liberation from slavery, poverty, hunger and illiteracy is the common goal of mankind throughout the ages. It has been the common goal of mankind to reach a stage of development where all the socio-political and economic problems are solved and man is allowed to live in dignity and honour. Every step in history has been a step towards this universal goal. The history of the liberation struggles throughout the world are a testimony to the progress towards democracy, social justice and equality. The economic progress is very much evident in the world especially in the Western developed nations. The twentieth century definitely has made enormous progress in all spheres of life. Therefore the idea of progress has been translated into action in every stage of the history of mankind.

The idea of linear progress has been very much a part of the Western civilization. It has been believed by the thinkers of the West that society develops in a linear way indefinitely. They have come to believe that mankind can reach the stage of development in all richness and fullness. This was the belief of the eighteenth and nineteenth century philosophers. However, the twentieth century has seen many vicissitudes in history which have brought in the idea of catastrophe as inevitable. Spengler, Toynbee and many others have come to believe that the Western civilization is on the decline and that it will meet with its doom sooner rather than later. The reason is that they have found it inevitable that the scientific civilization of the West has to come face to face with a catastrophe because it lacks spiritual progress and that it is inherently weak because of its excessive materialism.

However, extreme pessimism is as bad as extreme optimism because there is no unhindered progress as there is no lack of progress at all. Progress in no society is absolute or complete; every society lacks in something. Even the most developed societies are not perfect in every sense. If there is material progress somewhere it lacks in spiritual peace. On the other hand, if there is spiritual peace, there is no material progress. In this sense there is progress in a very relative sense. There is no absolute progress anywhere. That is to say, we have to be satisfied with progress is some relative and limited sense.

The idea of progress thus has to be seen in the proper context. It has to be linked with the human aspirations and goals. Human aspirations are always ahead of their time and situation. Man wants to conquer Nature and establish his scientific empire everywhere. This grand scheme of progress has to be tempered with reverence towards Nature and the sense of harmony with the rest of the system. If thus science and spirituality are harmonized, there can be genuine progress of mankind. The present stage of progress is one-sided and has to be complemented by the inner development of man's spirit.

5. History and Spitual Progress

A great many historians have identified human progress with the progress in spirit, that is, the progress in his social and ethical behaviour. True progress has been made synonymous with the spiritual progress. This is the inner meaning of history according to them. Therefore the genuine history of mankind is the history of his culture, religion, art and science in which man's spirit manifests itself.

Hegel[21] in his *Philosophy of History* has held the view that man's spirit manifests itself or expresses itself in various forms. That is to say, it manifests itself in Nature, society, morals, religion and philosophy in an ascending order such that the more progress it makes, the nearer we are to perfection and the divine reality in the world. This way of approaching history, though not fashionable now, is still pregnant with meaning in the sense that we can understand history by looking deep into the inner psychic processes of man. History does not consist of only external physical events, but also of the inner desires, motives and aspirations of mankind. Thus what is happening in the inner world is as much relevant as what is happening in the external world. This only shows that history is basically the spiritual history of mankind, and not an account of wars, conflicts and devastation. It shows how man is struggling to come out of the darkness towards spiritual liberation. This is of course challenged by the opponents of Hegel such as Marx and Engels[22] who opine that history is the struggle for power and the control of the economic forces. The Marxist view of history is too narrow and one-sided and must be treated as inadequate.

The spiritual view of history is not totally repugnant to the modern mind. In our time Toynbee has accepted such a view of history. According to Toynbee, history is a history of civilizations

which are themselves attempts at attaining perfection of the human spirit. This spiritual quest is the hallmark of a genuine civilization. According to him, "Civilization, as we know it, is a movement and a condition, a voyage and not a harbour. No known civilization has ever reached the goal of civilization yet. There has never been a communion of saints on earth."[23] Thus there is an underlying effort in all civilizations to rise to the spiritual level. This is nothing strange or unusual if we find that every society tries to attain to a better level of existence. Toynbee is of the firm belief that only those civilizations are great which make the communion of saints possible. This tryst with the spiritualization of the human race is the goal of the history of mankind.

The critics of this view of history are likely to raise the question that the spiritual view of history is more a matter of prophesying[24] rather than talking about the real history of mankind. The critics of spiritualism in history usually forget that they are understanding the inner life of man rather than the sordid events of the external world. Thus they do not recognize the fact that there is a spiritual dimension to all human activities, be they economic, social or political. The great religions of the world are the attempts at refining the inner life of mankind in various ways. The life of the Buddha or Jesus or Gandhi reminds us of the fact that these great spiritual figures in history are genuine manifestations of the spirit of man. This struggle of the spirit to manifest itself is the true meaning of history. That is the inner meaning of history.

6. Concluding Remarks

The history of mankind is the history of the inner struggle of man to live on Earth with dignity and peace. It is a struggle sometimes grim and dark and yet the goal is the attainment of freedom of the spirit. The goal is grand but the means is the feeble human nature. Man with all his imperfections is making a serious bid to reach a level higher than the present one. Thus the quest for a better life is on.

The failures of man should not blind us to the fact that the inner meaning of history is the underlying spiritual quest for perfection. This search for the unknown is the implicit motto of the human history.

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FROM SAT TO ĀNANDA: SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADVAITA VEDĀNTA*

SRINIVASA RAO

I

The title of this lecture might look strange in the context of the generally accepted belief that (1) there is only one school of Advaita established by Śaṅkara and his followers, and (2) this school has, in all essential aspects, remained unchanged throughout its history. The only difference generally accepted among the scholars is between the school of Vācaspati *(Bhāmatīprasthāna)* and that of Prakāśātman *(Vivaraṇaprasthāna)*. Although Brahman is the one reality accepted by all advaitins alike, yet there are significant differences in their way of talking about this reality. There is also a difference in the way certain questions are raised and answered. Since questions that were never raised by Śaṅkara were raised by his followers, naturally they were answered in a manner that was thought to be consistent with Śaṅkara's position, but this was not always the case. There is certainly a development of thought from Gauḍapāda onwards until several centuries later.

One kind of development in Advaita consists in a shift of emphasis or focus in the exposition of the doctrine of Brahman. Although Brahman is sat-cit-ānanda-svarūpa according to all the Advaitins, yet Brahman as *sat* is focal in the thinking of Maṇḍana while Brahman as *cit* is focal in

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* Dr. T.M.P. Mahadevan Sasthyabdapurti Endowment Lecturers 1996-97.

the thinking of Gauḍapāda and Śaṅkara. Likewise, Brahman as *ānanda* is focal to Madhusūdana Sarasvati. Since such shifts of focus seem to result in distinctive doctrinal innovations as well, I choose to present each one of them here as a different 'type' of Advaita.

Those familiar with the classical writings on Advaita know that Maṇḍana's school is called 'Sattādvaita', Sadadvaita or 'Bhāvādvaita' in contrast to Śaṅkara's 'Ātmādvaita' or 'Cidadvaita'. In emphasising the *ānanda* aspect Brahman in order to harmnonise Advaita with the bhakti tradition of his own times, Madhusūdana Sarasvati may be said to have advocated yet another type that may be called 'Ānandādvaita'. This lecture aims at giving a brief account of the development of these three 'types' of Advaita and their distinctive features.

My contention here is that while Maṇḍana, Gauḍapāda, Śaṅkara and Madhusūdana are all unquestionably Advaitins, yet they are all different types of Advaitins. This is because, while Maṇḍana chooses to use the notion of 'sat' as the leading principle of interpretation, Śaṅkara resurrects Gauḍapāda's approach by adopting 'cit' as the leading principle of interpretation. Madhusūdana highlights the blissful nature of Brahman by choosing the notion of ānanda as his leading principle of interpretation.

If we do not ignore Maṇḍana's greatness as a Mīmāṁsaka, we can easily see why he regards 'sat' as focally characterising Brahman. Maṇḍana clearly admits that there are two types of reals - positive and negative - and states that the admission of negative 'types' of reals (like avidyānivṛtti and prapañcābhāva) does not affect the sole positive reality of Brahman *(Dvividhā dharmāḥ bhāvarūpā abhāvarūpaśceti; tatra abhāvarūpā na advaitam vighnanti, Brahmasiddhi,* page 4). Maṇḍana holds the non-existence of the world and the removal of ignorance to be real (tāttvika) since there are śruti passages which admit these (negative) facts *(Prapañcasya pravilayaḥ śabdena prātipādyate, Brahmasiddhi,* page 157). Thus Maṇḍana's system becomes 'advaita' because there are no other positive reals alongside Brahman and hence, in a strict senses, Brahman is not the only realtiy, but is the only reality of its own (positive) kind.

Maṇḍana's acceptance of negative reals is clearly traceable to his Mīmāṁsā background. Also, his emphasis on 'sat' makes good sense if we consider the fact that earlier to him, Gauḍapāda had attempted to

formulate Advaita on the basis of the *Māṇḍukyopaniṣad,* using the notion of 'cit' as being focal to Brahman. The resemblance of Gauḍapāda's thinking to Vijñānavāda and his use of even patently Buddhistic types of dialectical argumentation had probably given rise to a tendency of perceiving Advaita as a form of Buddhist Vijñānavāda. Some Buddhist writers of those times accuse the Vedāntins of committing the 'little mistake' (alpāparādha) of regarding the ever-changing consciousness as changeless and eternal (See Hajime Nakamura, *A History of Early Vedānta Philosophy*, Part II, Delhi, 1983). Maṇḍana, who might have been aware of such criticisms, appears to be trying to avert Vijñānavāda ingression into Vedānta by shifting the emphasis from the 'cit' aspect to the sat aspect. We must also note that if reality is 'sat' , then it would also effortlessly and automatically negate any form of nihilism ('sūnyavāda').

But the price Maṇḍana had to pay for trying to keep Advaita as a system distinct from the 'advayavāda' of Buddhism was thought to be too heavy by his successors. It made Brahman just one real among several reals and this was deeply objectionable. Maṇḍana's devotion to negative reals *(abhāvanitṛhā),* which comes up for sharp criticism by later writers, makes the removal of ignorance also a kind of being *(sattā)* alongside the being of Brahman who is essentially of the nature of knowledge. In that case, removal of ignorance would count as an entity distinct from knowledge, and knowledge would not constitute the removal of ignorance. This is remedied by shifting the emphasis from '*sat*' to '*cit*'.

There is also this curious fact of Maṇḍanamiśra, an early Advaitin, advocating a theory of perceptual error which, upon scrutiny, turns out to be the same as *Viparītakhyāti* of Kaumarilas. Both in the Niyogakāṇḍa chapter of his *Brahmasiddhi* and an independent work on the theories of perceptual error called *Vibhramaviveka* he expounds and defends what is most unmistakably *Viparītakhyāti* of Kaumārilas. If a theory like Anirvacanīyakhyāti does not emerge from Maṇḍana's system while it does from the system of Advaita, there must be a good reason for it. It might be worth attempting to unravel this mystery a little.

The system of Maṇḍana is called 'sattādvaita' because in it there are no two (a-dvaita) realities *(sattā)* which are both characterized by existence or being *(sat).* Brahman is the only reality characterizable as '*sat*'. Thus, in the system of Maṇḍana there is *no second positive*

reality alongside Brahman but there are other reals of a negative kind alongside it. That is, Brahman is not the only reality but it is the only reality of its own (positive) kind. Maṇḍana's acceptance of negative reals is traceable to his Mīmāṁsā background. Since non-existence is as much knowable as existence, Kaumārilas had viewed it as a kind of an entity and had even proposed a distinct means of valid knowledge of such non-existence called 'non-apprehension' *(anupalabdhi)*. Since according to Maṇḍana, non-existence *(abhāva)* is as much a fact as existence *(bhāva)* itself, the non-existence of the world that results from the realization of Brahman as declared by śruti is quite real for him and it is not annulled even by Brahman realization. Similarly, the destruction of avidyā that leads to Brahman realization is equally real and it is also not destroyed as a consequence of ultimate realization.

We must note that this is in sharp contrast to post-Śāṅkarites who were in favour of holding the illusoriness of the world itself to be illusory and the removal of ignorance to be indescribable *(anirvacanīya)* or even of a fifth kind *(pañcama-prakāraka)* as in *Iṣṭasiddhi* (se pp. 83 - 93). But this 'allegiance to non-existence' *(abhāvaniṣṭhā)* of Maṇḍana comes up for sharp criticism at the hands of Sureśvara because he sees it as militating against Advaita. Surely, there is some substance in this criticism insofar as Maṇḍana's sattādvaita recognizes the reality not only of Brahman but also of two other negative reals. The argument that these latter two are negative reals which are of the nature of non-existence (*abhāvasvarūpa*) and therefore do not challenge the sole positive reality of *Brahman* who is of the nature of existence *(bhāvarūpa)* is unconvincing to *other Advaitins*. The very fact of allowing reality-status (even of a negative kind) to any entity other than Brahman i.e., the very admission that there is another beside Brahman, was deeply objectionable to Śaṅkara and his followers.

Therefore it seems that by choosing the knowledge or consciousness *(cit)* aspect of Brahman as focal, Śaṅkara made it impossible to regard the removal of ignorance as another (negative) reality beside Brahman. Since the removal of ignorance is nothing but knowledge itself, *avidyānivṛtti* does not and cannot count as a separate reality of its own kind. Thus the unhappy ranking of the 'destruction of ignorance' as another reality alongside Brahman (which led to type-dualism) was avoided. In fact Maṇḍana himself had identified the 'destruction of

ignorance' with knowedge itself since we find him saying: 'Destruction of ignorance itself is mokṣa' *(avidyāstamayo mokṣaḥ, Brahmasiddhi,* P. 119) and also 'Knowledge itself is the removal of ignorance' *(vidyaiva ca avidyānivṛttiḥ,* Ibid. p. 121).

Although these views go against maintaining any kind of negative reals, Maṇḍana still regarded *avidyānivṛtti* as a negative real which is not identical with Brahman since he did not conceive of Brahman as essentially '*citsvarūpa*' but conceived it as '*satsvarūpa*'. Had he conceived Brahman as essentially '*cit*' in character, he could never have been able to accord a separate reality-status to *avidyānivṛtti* because that would have allowed a meaningless distinction between *avidyānivṛtti* which is nothing but knowedge itself and Brahman which is also essentially of the nature of knowledge. Therefore if we find Maṇḍana upholding *avidyānivṛtti* as a negative real it is only because he views Brahman as essentially an 'existence principle' *(satpadārtha)* and not as a 'sentient principle' *(citpadārtha).*

But, then, why did Maṇḍana not choose to highlight the cit aspect of Brahman which would have saved him from maintaining a type-duralism of positive and negative reals which is inconsistent with the spirit of strict non-dualism? A possible explanation could be offered in his case as in the case of the Naiyāyikas and Mīmāṁsakas who valiantly stuck to a realist position if only to avoid any form of idealism of the Buddhist type. Maṇḍana seems to be seriously trying to avoid falling into the Buddhist camp. Wemust take serious note of the fact that by the time of Maṇḍana, 'Vijnānādvaita' of Buddhists was already such a celebrated doctrine that any attempt to show that Brahman of the Upaniṣads was essentially a cit principle was fraught with the danger of takiing Vedānta too close to Buddhism. In fact, several decades earlier to Maṇḍana, Gauḍapāda had actually attempted to show that according to the Upaniṣads (chiefly the *Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad* on which he wrote his work) consciousness was the basic non-dual reality and the criticism of *Bhāvaviveka* that the Vedāntins had stolen Buddhist doctrones (to which we have drawn attention at the beginning of this lecture) seems to be specifically directed against Gauḍapāda. This is all the more likely since *Bhāvaviveka* is known to have flourished slightly later than Gauḍapāda.

Therefore it is quite likely that Maṇḍana, who may not have missed seeing the dangerous closeness of Gauḍapāda's doctrines to Buddhist

ones, chose to avoid following him too closely and therefore he might have preferred not to emphasize the 'cit' aspect of Brahman fearing Vijñānavāda ingression into Advaita. Moreover, in addition to Vijñānavādins there were Śūnyavādins who were believed to advocate that nothing was real or 'non-being' (asat) or the 'void' (śūnya) was the ultimate truth. Both these groups of Buddhist philosophers could be held in check if the emphasis on 'cit' of Gauḍapāda was substituted by an emphais on 'sat' or 'existence' or 'being' itself. This emphasis on *sat* would silence the Śūnyavādin and the non-emphasis on cit resulting from the emphasis on sat would keep the Vijñānavādin at a safe distance. In fact Maṇḍana has quite a few features in common with both Mīmāṁsakas and Naiyāyikas although he criticizes them, one of them being his sharing their aversion to Buddhism.

But the case of Maṇḍana is really a very curious one. He does admit the possibility of something being neither 'real' nor 'unreal' but fails to work out logically the implications of this stand. Rajecting the possibility of any kind of avidyā characterizing Brahman (the jīva is the basis of avidyā for Maṇḍana) he says: "..... it (avidyā) is not absolutely non-existent, nor is it existent; this very avidy is called māyā and illusory appearance ... therefore (it is) indescribable" *(....nātyantamasatīti, nāpisatī; evameveyamavidyā māyā mithyāvabhāsa ityucyate ... tasmādanirvacanīyā, Brahmasiddhi,* p. 9). Yet he held the destruction of such avidyā (which is neither real nor unreal for him), to be real and even sets it up as a negative real alongside Brahman.

Maṇḍana clearly admits avidyā to be neither real nor unreal in character. But then why did he hold the destruction of such avidyā to be real? It is worth pursuring this question a bit. Let us suppose he held such destruction to be unreal. Then this very unreality of the removal of ignorance would establish the eternal persistence of that very ignorance thus leading to a situation where mokṣa becomes impossible. Here the consequences would be similar to one of admitting avidyā as characterizing Brahman itself, the consequences of which Maṇḍana was well aware. If avidyā belonged to Brahman it would be eternal since Brahman is eternal and with avidyā thus becoming eternal, there would be no possibility of mokṣa *(Uktametat jīvānāṁ avidyākaluṣitatvaṁ na brahmaṇaḥ ... anyathā brahmabhūyam gatasyāpi na avidyā nivarteta; tatra anirmokṣaḥ, Brahmasiddhi,* p. 12).

Could he then at least hold the destruction of avidyā to be neither real nor unreal? In that case, since avidyā itself is something neither real nor unreal, if its removal is also neither real nor unreal, there would be an obliteration of the very distinction between avidyā and its removal. Such a situation would also lead to the impossiblity of mokṣa. Hence the removal of avidyā had to be real. Probably Maṇḍana saw this as inevitable. Therefore he seems to have taken care to see that this inevitable reality of *avidyānivṛtti* did not affect the reality of Brahman and he accomplished this by making it a negative real. In this effort the Mīmāṁsā doctrine of abhāva seems to have readily come to his aid.

It must also be noted here that Maṇḍana's system contains all the essential items needed for the development of a metaphysical and even an epistemological theory of Anirvacanīyakhyāti. He accepts that Brahman is the only reality and that the world is an illusion. He admits avidyā as the cause of that illusion. He even admits the two-fold function of avidyā which was first suggested by Gauḍapāda: concealing of the true nature of Brahman and the projection of an illusory world *(Dviprakāreyamavidyā: prakāśasyācchādikā vikṣepikā ca, Brahmasiddhi,* p. 149). He even admits avidyā to be indescribable *(anirvacanīya).* Yet, if he fails to explicitly develop and defend Anivacanīyakhyāti and leans on Viparītakhyāti instead, it should really be the consequence of his adopting a sattādvaita point of view.

We cannot go into the details of the developement of the theory of perceptual error in the realist schools in India, but it can be said that the admission of the reality of the object of error led to difficulties both in Nyāya and Mīmāṁsā. It appears to be a fact that these difficulties ultimately led to the Advaitin's attempt to solve them by supposing the object of error to be other than the real and the unreal. But this solution does not seem to have emerged in Advaita quite early in its history. In the early stages of the evolution of Advaita there seems to have been very little difference between it and certain varieties of Buddhism. In fact some Vijñānavādins called themselves 'advaitavādinaḥ' or 'non-dualists' (see Nakamura [1983]: p. 263). Kamalaśīla, while commenting on the chapter 'An Examination of the Ātman as Imagined by the Upaniṣads' (of the *Tattvasaṅgraha* of Śāntarakṣita), observes that Advaita (of the Upaniṣads) is the same as the Māyāna doctrine except for its 'slight fault' (alpāparādha) of assuming consciousness to be eternal (Ibid. p. 246). The early

similarities between Advaita and Vijñānavāda are so many that it makes *Bhāvaviveka* say in his *Mādhyamakahṛdaya* (8.78) that the Vedāntins have stolen some doctrines of the Buddhists and have incorporated them in their own doctrine (Ibid. p. 227). Since even Akalaṅka, a Jaina thinker of the same period, criticizes Advaita and the Buddhist theories for the same faults (Ibid. p. 253), there must have really been very many similarities between the two schools.

II

The *Māṇḍūkyakārikā* of Gauḍapāda belongs to this early phase of Advaita. It is a work that seems to belong to a period of transition from Buddhism to Advaita and it has such strong Buddhist flavour that it has kept generations of scholars busy debating whether Gauḍapāda was an Advaitin or a Buddhist. Since no Advaitins have criticized Gauḍapāda while the Buddhist philosopher Śāṅtarakṣita seems to be criticizing him (see Nakamura [1983]: p. 254), one must wonder why at all there has been such a fierce controversy in this matter.

We find only a theory of metaphysical error in Gauḍapāda. The absence of any empirical doctrine of error in him is not surprising as he has few empirical doctrines to offer. Therefore it is only on the basis of the notion of superimposition (adhyāsa) of Śaṅkara that the Advaita theory of perceptual error begins to be developed by his commentators in later times. But, Gauḍapāda also did not either evolve or defend anything like Anirvacanīya-khyāti although he was no sattādvaitin like Maṇḍana and when he even actually advocated a form of Ātmādvaita or Cidadvaita. In fact he was the originator of the two-fold function of avidyā or māyā which was adopted by Maṇḍana and all later Advaitins. But he does not conceive of this māyā as being 'neither real nor unreal' like Maṇḍana. For him the world is unreal like a dream and māyā again is non-existent (*Sā ca māyā na vidyate, Māṇḍūkyakārikā,* 4.58). Gauḍapāda operates with only two categories, the real and the unreal, and anything like the 'neither real nor unreal' has no place in his system. In fact he declares emphatically: "What is not existent at the beginning and also at the end does not exist in the middle either. Being similar to illusions the objects are regarded as if real" (*Ādāvante ca yannāsti vartamānepi tattathā; vitathaiḥ sadṛśaḥ santo avitathaiva lakṣitāḥ,* Ibid. 2.6 and 4.31).

For Gauḍapāda everything except Brahman is absolutely unreal and therefore no theory like Anirvacanīyakhyāti emeges from his system.

In fact he holds a position that amounts to maintaining the absolute unreality of the removal of avidyā by declaring that "There is no cessation, no birth, no sādhaka, none aspiring for liberation, none liberated and this is the highest truth" (*Na nirodho na cotpattiḥ na baddho na ca sādhakaḥ; na mumukṣurna vai muktaḥ ityeṣā paramārthatā,* Ibid. 2.32). If, as he says, there is truly no mokṣa, it can be so only because there is no bondage and if there is really no bondage it is only because there is no cause of such bondage (like avidyā) and if there is really no avidyā there cannot really be any removal of avidyā. Hence *avidyānivṛtti* must be unreal. Such being the implication of Gauḍapāda 's position, it is quite likely that Maṇḍana chose to declare *avidyānivṛtti* to be real precisely because Gauḍapāda had earlier maintained it to be unreal.

But the absolute unreality of the removal of avidyā asserted by Gauḍapāda proved as much a problem to the Advaitin as the (negative) reality of the removal of avidyā advocated by Maṇḍana. That was because of the general belief among the Advaitins that ignorance was a fact and its removal by the knowledge of Brahman was also equally a fact. If there is really no ignorance at all as maintained by Gauḍapāda, the very notion of 'knowing Brahman' through the 'removal of ignorance' loses all meaning. But if the 'removal of ignorance' is held to be real as is done by Maṇḍana, there results, as we have seen, a type-dualism posing an awkward challenge to Advaita. Therefore neither sattādvaita of Maṇḍana nor Ātmādvaita of Gauḍapāda (in the form it is advocated by him) seemed satisfactory to their successors. Therefore Śaṅkara advocated a different form of Ātmādvaita and in it we find both the metaphysical and the epistemological doctrines of error neatly accommodated at the core.

We must note that Śaṅkara who restored Gauḍapāda's emphasis on 'cit' was also accused of being a 'concealed Buddhist' (*pracchanna-bauddha*). But Śaṅkara became prominent through his showing that the doctrine of '*cidātman*' being the ultimate reality was embedded in the Prasthānatrayī that were much older than the Buddhist works and there fore was not a doctrine stolen from the Buddhists. Saṅkara has his clear differences from Gauḍapāda but this is not the place to go into them as they are not relevant to our purpose here. The only point to be noted is that Śaṅkara interprets 'cit ' in such a manner that his system does not anymore bear a resemblance to Vijñānavāda as Gauḍapāda's system very much does.

Madhusūdana appears several centuries after Śaṅkara and only in him do we see clearly the shift of emphasis from 'cit' to 'ānanda'. This shift was needed to explain what had thus far appeared, among many Advaitins, to be a somewhat inexplicable trait of bhakti which went back straight to Ādi Śaṅkara himself.

In Advaita as it is classically expounded, even God is just an appearance justifiable only at the empirical level. God is perhaps the 'king among illusions' but is an illusion nevertheless. But this 'illusory god' seems to have completely possessed even some of the greatest of Advaitins. The devotional hymns attributed to Ādi Śaṅkara are of unmatched beauty. Even during our own times in the nineteenth century, we had a Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa who was as great an Advaitin as he was a devotee of Mother Kali. We also had a Ramana Maharshi who, despite being a great Advaitic sage, wrote beautiful stotras in praise of Dakṣiṇāmūrti.

These are facts, but they pose a serious problem: From a philosophical point of view, is not the fact of a person with advaitic realization also being a bhakta quite puzzling? A person has advaitic realization only when he has realized that there is really nothing other than the Self and, if the Self is the only reality, where is the other, the deity, towards whom any devotion could be directed? If bhakti is genuine, Advaita cannot be the ultimate truth because there has to be a real god as the object of genuine devotion. On the other hand, if Advaita is genuine, there is only the Self and hence no real god who could be the possible object of any genuine devotion. Bhakti essentially involves the dualism of the devotee and the object of devotion and where there are 'no-two' as in Advaita, there can be no bhakti. Madhusūdana addresses himself to this problem and attempts a solution to it through shifting the emphasis from cit to ānanda, thus developing a third type of Advaita.

The specific term used by Madhusūdana to designate the ultimate reality manifesting itself essentially as ānanda is 'Bhagavat'. He maintains that at the highest stage of bhakti the *citta* reflects or assumes the *ākāra* of Bhagavat *(bhagavadākāratā)* and since he also accepts the essential identity of the reflection (*pratibimba*) and the reflected (*bimba*), the state of true bhakti reveals nothing but the identity of the devotee and the deity. When, as a result of sādhanā, the mind becomes 'melted' (*druta*) it assumes the *ākāra* of Bhagavat, i.e., a blissful form, that stays on permanently like the form assumed by melted lac. When the *citta* has

thus assumed permanently the form of the Bhagavat, it is impossible for it again to assume the form of any other object.

It is important to note that according to Madhusūdana it is only when ultimate reality is realised as bliss that any kind of superimposition on it becomes totally impossible. That is, while the realization of reality as mere 'sat' or even as mere 'cit' does not rule out the possibility of superimposition, its realitzation as bliss inherently rules out all superimposition. Since this special point of Madhusūdana is not well known, it may be worthwhile explaining it in a little detail.

Let us take the erroneous cognition of a rope as a snake which is expressed as "This is a snake". When the error is realized, the resulting right cognition is expressed as "This is a rope". The rope is what is commonly present in both right and wrong cognition. If so, what is it that distinguishes right cognition from wrong cognition? While erroneous cognition grasps the rope merely as a bare 'this', right cognition grasps it as a rope. When a rope is grasped merely as a 'this', superimposition of a snake on it is possible whereas when it is grasped as a rope, no superimposition of any kind on it is possible. But, in reality, whether a rope is wrongly revealed as a snake or revealed rightly as a rope, what is actually being revealed is *caitanya* alone, but we miss this fact owing to our ignorance. When *caitanya* is not realized, the forms of the snake and the rope are superimposed on it; but when *caitanya* is realized, such superimposed forms are negated.

For Madhusūdana, while 'Brahman' is a manifestation of absolute existence in which consciousness and bliss remain undifferentiated, 'Bhagavat' is the manifestation of pure and unalloyed ānanda. That is, both Brahman and Bhagavat are basically only *caitanya*, but with a difference in manifestation. Brahman or *caitanya* manifesting as mere being or existence (*sanmātra*) makes superimposition possible just as a rope manifesting itself as a mere 'this' makes the superimposition of the snake possible. Just as the rope manifesting itself as a rope makes the superimposition of a snake on it impossible, *caitanya* manifesting as Bhagavat makes any superimposition of forms on it impossible.

But there is an important and subtle point to be noted here. Suppose I had a wrong cognition of a rope as a snake which was subsequently corrected because I cognised the rope as a rope. Does this ensure that I will never again wrongly cognize any rope as a snake? Certainly not. But

why? According to Madhusūdana, the reason is that when I cognise a rope as a rope what I am truly cognising is *caitanya*, but that *caitanya* is delimited by the form of a rope. That is, the rope itself is, like the illusory snake, yet another superimposition. When the illusion of the snake is dispelled, only one level of superimposition is overcome. The fact of the rope itself being a superimposition on *caitanya* is not also realized on the occasion of the dispelling of the snake - illusion. Hence it is perfectly possible for the snake-illusion to reappear many times even after it is initially overcome. But, when the *caitanya* underlying the rope is revealed or realized, such a revelation has to necessarily negate the very form of the 'superimposed rope'. Since the rope is the basis for the superimposition of the snake, when the rope itself is negated through the realization of the *caitanya* underlying it, any superimposition of a snake on it *ipso facto* becomes impossible. While Brahman as sat-cit-ānanda serves as the locus for all superimpositions, Brahman *realized as pure ānanda* (Bhagavat) radically overcomes all superimpositions.

What bhakti needs is not real duality; apparent duality is enough. Perhaps, it is only because the duality involved in true bhakti is only apparent and not real that there is such ecstatic joy in the state of bhakti. There is nothing in true bhakti that can keep the deity and devotee really separate. If Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa was putting the flowers on his own head while worshipping Kāli, and if Ramana Maharshi was enthusiastically joining in the bhajans that were in praise of himself, and above all, if Ādi Śaṅkara wrote all those incomparably beautiful stotras, it does indeed make good sense.

This in brief is the picture of only one kind of development of the Advaitic doctrine resulting from a shift of focus or emphasis on the sat-cit-ānanda aspects of Brahman. There is even more radical development and even basic changes in the doctrine of Advaita that have originated from some subtle confusions concerning the nature of *avidyā, acetanatva,* causality, change and many other basic notions. These confusions have led to the proliferation of the doctrine in several unexpected and even undesirable directions. This development of Advaita doctrine is a very fascinating story but it simply cannot be told in a lecture. Even its brief sketch seems to me to need a whole book in a few volumes.

5

EKAM SAT: A PRINCIPLE FOR RELIGIOUS PLURALISM*

JOHN M. KOLLER

I. Introduction

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, one of India's best known modern philosophers, devoted a great deal of his philosophical effort to the development of a philosophy of religion that would meet the modern challenges of materialism, skepticism, relativism, and interfaith rivalries. Convinced that the ultimate reality sought by religious persons everywhere, regardless of the tradition of faith to which they belonged is the same, even though it is recognized in diverse forms and called by different names in different religious traditions, he sought to establish the truth of this conviction through a comparative study of religion aimed at producing a pluralistic theory.

Dr. Radhakrishnan was convinced that for human beings everywhere the religious dimension of life is the most fundamental and important and he dedicated himself to helping achieve the fullest life possible for all human beings by seeking understanding of this religious dimension in its various manifestations in the differing religious traditions. In his opening essay in *The Philosophy of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan,* entitled "The Religion of the Spirit and the World's Need: Fragments of a Confession," he confesses that his life-long ambition was to show, philosophically, that all life is ultimately grounded in spirit and that to live fully as human beings we all must respond to the spiritual dimension of life. As he says, "My one supreme

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* Dr. K. Ramalinga Reddy Endowment Lectures 1999 - 2000.

interest has been to try to restore a sense of spiritual values to the millions of religiously displaced persons."[1] Recognizing the urgent need of a common world outlook and a sense of the importance of religion in daily life, Radhakrishnan was convinced that without the spiritual values of religion, "All that remains for man to do is to be born, to grow old, and at last to sleep forever, safe in the belief that there is no purpose to be served in life except the mechanical processes."[2]

Although Radhakrishnan talks about religion in a variety of ways, the primary and pervasive sense in which he uses the term is provided in the following statement: "The function of the discipline of religion is to further the evolution of man into his divine stature, develop increased awareness and intensity of understanding. It is to bring about a better, deeper and more enduring adjustment in life. All belief and practice, song and prayer, meditation and contemplation, are means to this development of direct experience, an inner frame of mind, a sense of freedom and fearlessness, strength and security. Religion is the way in which the individual organizes his inward being and responds to what is envisaged by him as the ultimate Reality."[3]

According to Radhakrishnan, it is the ultimate Reality, which he typically calls Spirit, that grounds all existence, and that the different religious ways all acknowledge as the source or ground of everything that exists. It is this ultimate Reality that all religions direct their adherents to recognize, witness, and to respond to with all of their being, even though the different religious traditions conceive of the ultimate Reality in different ways and have different ways of relating to it. Although the differences between different religious traditions are real and important, at their core they are all concerned to show the way to live in accord with the truth of ultimate Reality. It is to this common core that Radhakrishnan refers when he talks about religion in the singular or talks about "a spiritual religion that is universally valid."[4] He understands that different religions have different names for this ultimate Reality, calling it Tao, Brahman, God, Allah, etc., but is convinced that these differences are differences shaped by cultures and history, and are not differences inherent in the ultimate Reality itself.

Underlying his view of religion is Radhakrishnan's conviction that "The fundamental truths of a spiritual religion are that our real

self is the supreme being, which it is our business to discover and consciously become and [that] this being is one in all."[5] This view might be interpreted as being peculiar to Vedāntic Hinduism and thence dismissed as giving Vedānta a privileged place, making it unacceptable as a basis for a pluralistic theory of religion. I think such a dismissal would be a mistake however. The mistake lies in taking the statement "our real self is the supreme being" to be merely a paraphrase of the identity affirmed in the great sayings of the Upaniṣads, *Aham brahmāsmi* and *Tat tvam asi*, sayings which identify Ātman, the indwelling Self of the individual, with Brahman, the indwelling Self of reality itself. It is likely, of course, that Radhakrishnan's insight into the ultimate spirituality of existence and the indwelling of this spirit in each person was inspired by the wisdom of the Upaniṣadic sages, particularly as this wisdom shaped his own experience and thought. But this is no reason to deny that a similar recognition lies at the heart of every religious way. Radhakrishnan recognized that all religious persons have a conviction that their own being is grounded in a being or reality that transcends their individuality, their own time and place, and their own history and society. Anyone who has studied and compared different religious traditions knows that part of the reason, at least, why many religions make exclusive claims—why, for example, it is claimed that "There is no God but Allah," or "Through Christ alone is salvation possible," is that the ultimate sacred reality is held to be universal, grounding the existence of all people, and indeed, the existence of all things. When, however, the religious faith that affirms the ultimacy of the sacred reality that grounds all existence becomes aware of other faiths and their claims to ultimacy, there are basically two types of response available. The first response is to regard the other as somehow—either ignorantly or willfully—believing in a false ultimate reality, or else of not having yet attained to faith in a true ultimate reality (making such persons candidates for conversion). The second response, Radhakrishnan's response, is to see that the ultimate reality can be recognized in diverse forms; that it is culture that differentiates into diverse forms what is in itself undivided. This, of course, is the view taken in the Vedas, where it is said, "*ekaṁ sat, viprāḥ bahudhā vadanti*" ("The one true reality is spoken of in various ways").[6]

The principle of *ekam sat, viprāḥ bahudhā vadanti* was an important shaping influence on the cultural and religious tradition Radhakrishnan inherited, enabling the tradition to recognize plurality and diversity as grounded in different manifestations of the same underlying reality. This, in turn, helped Radhakrishnan to admit the truths of local cultures and traditions, for he could see their relations to each other in terms of a shared ground, the *ekaṁ sat*. And we should not overlook the fact that at an early age he encountered Christian claims that Christianity was the one true religion, an encounter forcing him to work out a view reconciling his experience of the truth of his own faith with the truth of Christian faith. Thus the ground was prepared for a lifetime of comparative work in which he constantly encountered different views of reality, each claiming to be unique or exclusively true. Distinguishing between the underlying reality that constituted the transcendent ground of existence and the local cultural and historical circumstances that mediate the awareness of the actual manifestation of existence, he was able to resolve the tension between competing claims of truth by recognizing the difference between what is shared by people across cultures, and what is peculiar to individual cultures, and indeed, to individual persons.

His main reason for developing a pluralistic theory of religion is that he found religious people everywhere to have faith in an ultimate, sacred reality grounding all existence. In knowing, through faith, that their existence — along with the existence of all things — is grounded in a being or reality that is ultimate, they know that it transcends their individuality, their own time and place, and their own history and society. But of course each tradition takes its own understanding of the ultimate to be true. Respecting the sincerity and integrity of people of other faiths, how can one denigrate their faith? But if we admit the truth of the other's faith, as equal to the truth of our own, what happens to our confidence in our own religious way? How can both ways be equally true? Radhakrishnan did not think that this question can be avoided and was convinced that a pluralistic theory may help us answer it. Furthermore, in doing so it may help overcome the historical antagonisms of different religious ways to each other, and enable them to mutually support and enrich each other, an outcome very important to Radhakrishnan.

What is involved in developing a pluralistic theory of religion, and why it is important? First, any theory of religion worth the name attempts to explain the religious behavior of communities and individuals, including their practices, beliefs, and attitudes. Historically, however, most such accounts have been from the perspective of the religious tradition being explained, assuming, for example, that Christianity is the one true religion, and that therefore all religious behavior can be satisfactorily explained in its terms. A pluralistic theory, on the other hand, recognizes diverse faiths or religious ways as authentically religious, and strives to explain the practices, beliefs and attitudes of practitioners of these diverse ways without reducing them to one preferred way. However, again speaking historically, most comparative attempts have assumed that in order to compare religious ways, it is necessary to find a neutral ground, either alongside of or beyond, the religious traditions themselves to be used as a basis for the comparisons. Some of these attempts have reduced religion to sociology, some to economics, others to biology, and so on, while others, recognizing the unsatisfactoriness of reductionist views of religion, attempted to abstract from the shared phenomena of different traditions a kind of God's-eye perspective from which to conceive a universal, super religion, from which to compare the historical traditions. The reductionist attempts all fail because they fail to respect the claims of truth and ultimacy within the different traditions. The attempt to conceive of religion from a God's-eye point of view fails because no one has such a view. A pluralistic theory, on the other hand, recognizes the authenticity of the diverse traditions, and refrains from superimposing a foreign perspective with claims of ultimacy on any of these religious ways. In other words, it sincerely respects the claims of authenticity and ultimacy found in each tradition, seeking to understand and explain differences and similarities from the perspectives of the individual ways in which they are encountered.

What are the criteria for success of a pluralistic comparative philosophy of religion? The first criterion is that it be acceptable to practitioners of diverse religious traditions. This means, in the first place, that it cannot interpret other traditions from the perspective of a tradition that is privileged over others. But this is, on the face of it, problematic. How, for example, can Radhakrishnan be an Advaita

Vedāntin and not take the Advaitic vision to be true, and thus to have priority over other visions? Can an interpretation that does not give priority to Islam possibly be acceptable to a Muslim? In working out a philosophy of religion we must be sensitive to such questions, for a philosophy of comparative religion which is not acceptable to adherents of the religious ways explained is theoretically unacceptable. In addition to getting its understanding right, this means that somehow the philosophy must make clear that its statements are on a different level—of a different type—than the statements of a Christian theology or an Islamic theology. It must also make clear that these theological statements are themselves on a different level than the statements of faith that provide the framework through which the religious person sees the world.

We have emphasized that a pluralistic philosophy of religion must articulate the forms and dynamics of faith in a way that people who are religious in different ways can accept. But the requirement is more demanding; people of different faiths must find such a philosophy not merely acceptable, but illuminating as well. It will, of course, never become a substitute for faith, for it is of a different logical type, being a series of explanatory statements about the ways of faith

To illuminate and deepen the religious practice of persons in different traditions a pluralistic theory of religion needs to elucidate the concrete ways of coming to realize the ultimate that different traditions emphasize, as well as the broader understanding of these ways that are included in each tradition. Rejoicing and overcoming are the heart of religious life. Can opening up to and incorporating new ways of rejoicing discovered in other traditions enrich and deepen our own ways of rejoicing, making them more adequate? When we hear Gregorian chant, Hindu bhajana, Sufi devotional singing, for example, might we be inspired to incorporate something new in our forma of exultation?

The point here is that if we illuminate the activities that are important in a given tradition in such a way that their counterparts in other traditions are illumined then these traditions can borrow creatively from each other - as indeed many traditions have done historically though usually unintentionally. For example, in most traditions, prayer, song, fasting, good works, meditation, worship,

reverence for the sacred, knowing the ultimate, realizing the community or famlihood of being, realizing the way of the ultimate in everyday life, interpreting revelation, etc., are important religious practices.

If, for example, the dual process of interpreting the authoritative texts in order to guide daily life and interpreting daily life in order to understand the authoritative texts is important in our religious practice, than surely rabbinical practices of interpretation of Torah would be illuminating. But so would Confucian interpretations of the classics, and so would Vedantic interpretations of the Veda. A dialogue about ways of interpretation between religious persons for whom this is a central issue in their lives might illuminate and enrich their own religious lives in significant ways.

Similarly, if worship involving images is central, then a sharing of insights into the techniques and understanding of icon worship in Orthodox Christianity, of idol worship among Vaiṣṇavites, and of identification with maṇḍalas in Vajrayana, for example, might enrich the understanding and practice of worship.

If we were able to listen in on a dialogue on rejoicing in the mystery of existence, we might agree, but note that because of the dynamic interconnectedness of things we actually participate in each others' existence, a realization that manifests itself in a deep and far-reaching compassion. A Christian might note that the deepest mystery we encounter is that of the human person, and that in the divine person of Christ all things are made whole, so that our sharing can become real through following Christ. Shinto may remind us to celebrate the mystery and sacredness of nature, calling on us to live bright and pure lives following the way of the kami.

Or, if we were to listen in on a dialogue between a Buddhist and a Christian aimed at deepening understanding of the place of the sacred, we might discover a Christian tendency to assume a radical distinction between the sacred and secular with the sacred regarded as the incomprehensible, the wholly other source of everything, the creator who is never to be confused with the creature. This Christian tendency to perceive ultimate values and to give ultimate values to things by locating them outside human awareness might be contrasted with a Buddhist tendency to assume that there are no independent units of

reality existing in themselves, that there is nothing sacred apart from the ordinary, everyday reality, but that the everyday is itself the sacred ultimate.

These examples illustrate the kinds of sharing and illumination a pluralistic comparative theory of religion could make possible. To carry out such a project, representatives of the various traditions need to come together to share their understanding of central religious practices by engaging in dialogue and sharing in each others practices, for religious understanding not grounded in practice is bound to be superficial.

But there are serious challenges to a pluralistic comparative theory. Among the challenges to such a theory one strikes me as especially important. In acknowledging that there is no place to stand outside of one's own worldview, shaped by culture and history, and that all understanding is relative to the worldview in which it arises, how do we avoid falling into relativism, and thereby into a position that abandons the very possibility of truth, and all criteria thereto? Relativism can be defined as "...A position which says that all persons and communities are trapped inside their own limited perspectives and thus no one can know what really is true or false, right or wrong."[7]

The reason the issue of relativism is crucial to the comparative study of religion and the call to dialogue, is that these are predicated on a pluralistic conception of worldviews and truth. It is important to show that pluralism is not the same thing as relativism and that it does not lead to relativism. The whole point of comparative study and dialogue is to approach more closely to the truth; if truth is denied under the claim of relativism, there is no point to the endeavor.

If the ultimate reality cannot be known directly as it is in itself, then our claims to knowledge of the ultimate cannot ever be compared directly to the reality, and a correspondence theory of truth that compares our knowledge claims to reality itself is irrelevant.[8] At best we would have to reinterpret a correspondence theory of truth to compare a given knowledge claim not with reality directly, independent of all our awareness, but with reality as known by us in ways that are not here in question, using one part of our conceptual scheme or worldview as a base for the evaluation of claims within other parts,

for all that we can do is to compare one set of claims with another set, establishing a coherence between them.

However, in the same way that we know that we have no God's eye point of view of reality or of God, but only our limited human perspective, we also know that we do not have a God's eye point of view of ourselves as subjects, but only our limited and changing human perspectives on ourselves. This means we have no privileged, *a priori* position from which to pronounce the absence of objectivity and the impossibility of knowledge.[9]

While we must admit that everything occurs in a context—and that there is no privileged (God's eye) view of things — we need not admit that therefore all knowledge is relative, that there are no satisfactory criteria for justifying our claims to truth, and that there fore there are no truths. We must, at least, save the notion that it is true that all knowledge is context relative—and for this we need a notion of truth. Following Putnam,[10] I would like to emphasize our ability to distinguish different conceptual descriptions from each other and to show that they are different descriptions of the same phenomenon. And this requires criteria for identifying something as the same despite differences in descriptions. This means that we have multiple descriptions, which we recognize as being different for the same object, as when, for example, we have ten people, each having five descriptions of an object, with description A5 shared by all ten people, while descriptions A1-4 are not shared by all members of the group. Taking this a step further, we could suggest that a given individual can sometimes take for granted certain structures and content of her world view while calling into question other structures and contents. It is one of the features of consciousness that it is consciousness not only of the other, but also of itself. And because of this self-consciousness changes in worldviews are possible, indeed, inevitable. Our worldviews are open, ever-changing. And while we cannot get outside of our worldview in order to question it in its entirety, we can question parts of it from the perspective of other parts, using the criteria from this perspective to accept or reject the questioned parts.

In what follows, I will subdivide this challenge into four interrelated challenges that postmodern skeptics present to the comparative

philosopher of religion. (1) The first challenge begins with the observation that empirical and historical studies reveal many different religions, each changing over time, each with its own worldview, teachings, and practices. No universal religion which could provide a vantage point from which to judge the truth or adequacy of particular religions has yet been discovered, nor does it seem likely that there could be such a "super" religion; only its adherents would recognize its privileged status, all others would regard it as simply another religious way, probably inferior to their own way. To talk about religion in the singular, this challenge asserts, is an empty abstraction, as is talk about a single reality which the diverse traditions designate in their different ways. (2) The second challenge accepts the plurality of religions, pointing out that each consists in a culturally unique set of symbols, making it impossible for us ever to understand them in their own context, from the inside, as it were, since this would mean not only living in this other culture, but being of this other faith—which is impossible, since one can be only of one's own faith, never of another. (3) The third challenge asks, How does a comparativist ever know if his view, as an observer of another's religious way of life, is correct? This challenge assumes that being shaped by our own cultural context, we can never enter the cultural context of the other, but it raises the additional question of whether any worldview can be adequately interpreted and compared with another. (4) This leads, in turn, to a fourth challenge: How can we ever judge a worldview to be true, for to determine its truth requires comparing it with reality itself. But this requires yet another view in which they can be compared. However, the truth of this second world view requires yet another view, and so on, in an infinite regress. This challenge suggests that we are locked into our own worldview, forever separated from reality itself (a notion taken to be incoherent).

II. Religion of Religions?

The first challenge suggests that we should talk about "religions" in the plural, since people don't simply have religion, but have *a* religion. There is a point to this claim, for we certainly do recognize that different people have different ways of being religious. The point is analogous to the observation that people do not speak language, but that they speak

a language (or, in some cases, several languages). But, of course, this does not prove that there is no such thing as language. Rather it helps us recognize that it is a meta-term, a term referring to the shared characteristics of the languages people use, to the common features of these languages. Indeed, without the generic concept of religion, how would we be able to recognize that a person is speaking *a* language? In a similar way, the fact that people have different ways of being religious does not prove that there is no such thing as religion, but helps us see that this concept functions at a different level.

But there is a more serious issue here. The challenge assumes that religion is something that people *have*, which is an odd assumption. There is something very strange about asking someone—or being asked by someone—"Do you have a religion?" The question suggests that having a religion is like having a car, or an idea, or a view of the world. But a religious person doesn't *have* a religion in such a sense, or in any analogous sense. Rather, a religious person *is* religious in being oriented, in a fundamental way, by his or her faith; this faith is not an object one has, but is part of the subject, being constitutive of the person. To think about religion as an object, an "it" which you can add or delete from your repertoire of techniques for managing your life is to seriously misunderstand the religious life, the life of faith.

This helps explain why Radhakrishnan was not willing to concede that there are many different religions, although, of course, he recognized that people are religious in different ways. Not only are Buddhists religious in different ways from Christians, but Christians are religious in different ways from each other; and so are Buddhists. We may well wonder, with Radhakrishnan, why, if the different ways of being religious that characterize Methodists, Lutherans, and Catholics do not prevent us from seeing them — and they from seeing themselves — as members of one on-going Christian community, should the fact that Hindus are religious in different ways from Christians prevent us from seeing all of them as participating in the same religious life, although each in his or her own way? Perhaps the difference is primarily historical, for we are aware of the historical schisms that have taken place, of the parting of the ways of being religious within the Christian community. But today, as we become increasingly aware that we are indeed one human family sharing our life on this planet with

each other, why can't we self-consciously join each other in the global religious community, contributing to an historical process overcoming the compartmentalizations and antagonisms that have stood in the way of spiritual fulfillment over the ages? To do this we no more have to abandon our different ways of being religious than to be members of the same family we have to give up our individual person hood. The key is to see that these different religious ways are different forms of religion. The historic mistake, as Radhakrishnan recognized, was to think that different forms of religion were different religions, and then to assume their incompatibility. The mistake is analogous to concluding that because we have different views of the world, therefore there are different worlds, incommensurate with each other. But in fact there is one world, no matter how many worldviews we may have.

III. Understanding in Context

The second challenge claims that comparative understanding of religious ways is not possible since other religious ways cannot be fully known by us because of the inaccessibility of their context. This challenge rightly recognizes that another religious way is embedded in its own cultural context with its own continuing history and that we are separated from it by our own way, embedded in our own cultural context with our own continuing history. But it wrongly assumes that to know the other fully — in the full context of its own being — we would have to be the other. However, if we *were* the other (if our identity were the identity of the other) we would not be ourselves, and no knowledge by us of the other would be possible. It is the nature of knowledge that the subject is other than the object of knowledge; the object known is always an other; to insist that full knowledge is possible only when the object of knowledge ceases to be an object—an other—is unreasonable because it insists on the impossible.

This challenge fails to recognize that all knowledge decontextualizes and all thought is comparative. Knowledge is essentially awareness of difference and sameness and we become aware of differences only through comparing different things. But difference always presupposes sameness; unless we can bring different things within the same view we cannot compare them; and to compare is to see what they have

in common as well as how they differ. Difference and sameness are thus complementary opposites that function only in relation to each other. Comparative philosophical thought, like all thought, concerns itself with sameness and difference, although its domain is intercultural rather than intracultural, thus exaggerating differences and increasing the significance of contextual awareness. It is not that when Radhakrishnan emphasizes the similarities found among different religious ways he is ignorant of the differences, including the differences in the contexts in which these differences are located, but rather that he finds it more important to overlook these differences for the time being in the interest of emphasizing the similarities. He is aware that the context of the subject being studied is important to understanding, but he also recognizes that to think about something is always to take it out of its original context and place it in the context of thought. Trying to understand how different cultural traditions have thought about reality and human life, he understood the importance of thinking about this thought in terms of categories broad enough to embrace and learn from several cultures. At the same time, it is clear from his publications that he made every effort to understand different ways of thought and practice in terms of their own context as fully as possible. And this is fully in accord with Ben Ami Scharfstein's insight that "The fullest attempt to understand distant thought may be, in effect, both to insert it into and extract it from context. Local detail and nuance make an object rich in texture but may obscure its shape against its background and make it difficult to compare. If we disregard its nuances and extract it, so to speak, from its context, we get a clear but sparsely textured shape."[11] The advantage of radical decontextualizing is that it enables us to ignore the many subtleties and nuances—the incredible density—of the things we are comparing, enabling us thereby to focus on the more general features. That is, by overlooking the minute details of individual trees and the interrelations between them, we are able to see the entire forest. The disadvantage is that by overlooking the details of our subjects and all of the subtleties of the contexts in which these subjects are located, we miss their richness. If we have no sense of individual trees, and of relations between individual trees and other plants, and of the various forms of life that have as their home the environment of the forest—then our comparisons of one forest with another are bound to be shallow and insignificant. We might then see

differences in relative shape, size and density, but would not be able to understand what these differences mean to the trees and to the rest of forest life. Thus, as Radhakrishnan understood, comparative study of religion requires both detailed study of our subject in relation to its own context and more general studies of the subject located within a larger context of basic cultural metaphors and the hypotheses of comparative thought.

When the subject of our study is a person's living faith it seems inappropriate to contextualize it as a thing, nothing but an object of thought. This second challenge typically assumes that when we try to understand another person's religion we make that person's worldview—the doctrines of her religion or the principles of her metaphysics—part of the data that we are organizing according to our own interests and in terms of our own worldview. Surely we can do better than this; we are capable of sympathetic insight allowing us to look at the world through another person's worldview. What we share as humans allows us to respect each other as human subjects, striving to respond in appropriate ways to the ultimate encountered in our daily lives. It may be that we can understand each other's religious context much more directly and fully than the skeptic imagines.

Morris Augustine shows us one way to enter another's context in our studies of other religious ways. Noting that purely intellectual research into ideas and worldviews does not necessarily lead to any deep understanding or any real feeling of equality and respect for the people studied, he suggests that we need to share human experiences as well as ideas. "Performance," he says, "shared performances, provide a basis for comparing one another's most beloved cultural treasures—including religion."[12]

The performance in which Augustine is especially interested is the performance constituted by the daily living of a monastic life, and while he does a detailed comparison of Buddhist and Christian monastic life based on living experiments in Buddhist and Christian monasteries, he does not elaborate on the idea of religion as performance. But this is such an interesting idea that it is worth reflecting on, at least briefly. What, we may ask, does the religious person or the

religious community perform? Is religious activity the performance of life itself—the co-creation and expression of life in response to promptings of ultimate reality experienced as the divine or sacred ground of existence? If so, we can look at religious activity as the making of life, focusing on the dynamic, creative aspects that constitute the making of life religiously, understanding the religious person's calling as a response to the sacred force of ultimate reality; a shaping of her life in accord with its demands. We might say that the religious person performs the sacred dance of life in beat with the sacred rhythm of ultimate reality itself, in the style or manner the cultural community has shaped as an appropriate response to the music of the sacred. In performing this dance of life the religious person simultaneously shapes his style in accord with the traditional style of the culture and shapes that continuing tradition with his unique response and style, thereby shaping the ongoing tradition even as he is shaped by it. This metaphor helps us appreciate the non-intellectual dimensions of religious life.

Augustine's approach to the comparative study of religion emphasizes both shared thought and shared experience. His thinking is informed not only by the thought of theologians, sociologists, anthropologists, philosophers and historians, but also by inter-faith practice. He was one of a group of seventeen Catholic monks and nuns who lived as Zen monks with Japanese monks in a Zen monastery in Japan for a month in 1983, and earlier, in 1979, had shared Benedictine monastic life with some fifty Japanese Zen monks who had come to Europe to live the life of Benedictine monks for three weeks. According to Augustine, Professor Anzai Nobru's sociological study of the participants sharing their religious life with each other showed that almost all reported greatly increased respect and admiration for their host's tradition and were greatly impressed with the common ground uniting the two religious traditions—despite the many differences between them. This finding is entirely consistent with Radhakrishnan's emphasis on the experiential in his account of the grounds for differences and similarities found among the different forms of religion.

IV. Getting it Right

The third challenge to the comparative philosopher of religion asks how can we ascertain that our understanding of the other is

correct? Part of the answer was suggested above: the investigator must not be merely a detached observer, but must be a participant, sharing in the life being investigated. Nonetheless, we still need ways to verify the correctness of our categories of thought and analyses and the interpretations these categories enable us to make of other religious ways. Surely one appropriate test is to ask the other about the correctness. If our view is unintelligible or unacceptable to the other, then we can be sure we have it wrong. This, of course, assumes that we can correctly interpret what the other person is saying to us. The challenge we are considering however, reminds us that there is another issue at stake here: How do we know that our interpretation of what someone else is saying is correct? Note that this issue cuts across historical, linguistic, philosophical and all other boundaries; it applies to me and my neighbor as much as it applies to persons practicing different religious ways. Thinking about how we know when our interpretation of what our neighbor is saying is correct or incorrect is helpful here, for we all have experience of misinterpreting, as well as correctly interpreting, another's statements. In general, we know that we have it wrong when our interpretation calls for a certain set or pattern of expectations, responses, attitudes, behaviors, etc., and we find a quite different set or pattern. Conversely, if we find the behavior and attitudinal patterns our interpretation calls for, we are satisfied that our interpretation is correct. There may be practical difficulties in doing this, but the only theoretical difficulties I can see are those posed by a demand for excessively precise criteria or for incorrigibility. To be sure, we are presupposing a shared understanding at some level, for I would not know what pattern of beliefs, attitudes and behavior to look for in corroboration of my interpretation unless we shared, to some extent, the same conceptual scheme. And, undoubtedly, I and my neighbor share a conceptual scheme to a greater extent than do I and the Thai monk who patiently explained his meditation practice to me twenty-five years ago in Bodh Gaya. But the mere fact that we are humans gives us a good deal in common, and awareness of something of each other's history, language, and religious practice and teachings gives us a great deal more. The skeptic is inclined to undervalue the features of our worldviews that we have in common. But if we have nothing in common with each other, we must be completely unaware of each other, totally oblivious to this supposed total difference. To be aware of differences

between us is not possible without a simultaneous awareness of similarity, for as noted earlier, these are correlative notions. [We could say, analogously to Quine, that an analytical hypothesis (H) in T (investigator's own philosophical scheme), to the effect that C (a concept cluster in T) is a correct interpretation of F (a concept cluster in a different philosophical scheme, S,), has the form, "the behavior, etc., occasioned by C in T is similar to the behavior occasioned by the utterance of F in S". (behavior here would refer to attitudes, expectations, and intentions, along with arguments, analyses, etc., as well as choice of topics of inquiry, agenda, priorities, etc.) And while H might always be theoretically underdetermined, so that we can not be certain that H and only H accounts for C being the correct interpretation of F, we do in fact have adequate practical criteria to determine when H is adequate and when it is not.]

Even if the skeptic agrees with the foregoing, he may worry that getting the interpretation right by these criteria is not the same thing as full understanding, for A's being satisfied that the interpretation meets his criteria may simply be the imposition of his worldview on B. Some people have noted that certain Christian interpretations of Hinduism are acceptable only to Christian Hindus, and Wilfred Cantwell Smith has remarked that "Radhakrishnan's interpretation of Christianity, some Christians may feel, will become valid only when Christians adopt a Hindu attitude to religion and to Christ."[13] The issue here is whether a Hindu perspective subordinates other perspectives, whether a Christian perspective subordinates other perspectives, etc. How can Radhakrishnan be an Advaita Vedāntin and not take this vision to be true, and thus to have priority over other visions? Can a theology that does not give priority to the Muslim faith possibly be acceptable to a Muslim? In working out a philosophy of religion we must be sensitive to such questions, for a philosophy of comparative religion which is not acceptable to adherents of the religious ways explained is unacceptable. In addition to getting its understanding right, this means that somehow the philosophy must make clear that its statements are on a different level—of a different type—than the statements of a Christian theology or an Islamic theology. It must also make clear that these theological statements are themselves on a different level than the statements of faith that provide the framework through which

the religious person sees the world. (We should also note that a framework looked *through* is different than a framework looked *at*; they function at different conceptual levels.)

We have emphasized that a comparative philosophy of religion must articulate the forms and dynamics of faith in a way that people who are religious in different ways can accept. But the requirement is more demanding; people of different faiths must find such a philosophy not merely acceptable, but illuminating as well. It will, of course, never become a substitute for faith, for it is of a different logical type, being a series of explanatory statements about the ways of faith. Such a philosophy may have been unnecessary, perhaps impossible, until awareness of other ways of being religious developed. But with that awareness it became a necessity, for we need to understand how there can be other genuine ways of being religious and to understand what this means for our own religious understanding and practice. Our exploration of the skeptic's challenge to the possibility of interpreting and understanding other religious ways suggests that though this may be a difficult task, it is not impossible.

V. Views and Reality

The fourth challenge suggests that we can never get outside of our worldview—and that, therefore, we can never encounter reality itself. This question arises because as we become aware of different worldviews we want to compare them with our own world view; indeed, we do not come to recognize that we have a worldview until we recognize others' worldviews. Without that recognition we take ourselves to simply see the world and our framework is not distinguished from the seeing. Only through comparing seeings or views do we come to distinguish between our views of the world and the world itself. Now, however, we are pushed to the opposite extreme; from having naively assumed the identity of our view with the world, we now begin to wonder how we can ever get beyond our view to the world itself. Perhaps all we ever have access to is our worldview, never the world, with each person, epoch, and culture locked into its own worldview — a kind of personal, epochal and cultural solipsism.

Something has clearly gone wrong here. Note that it is only through the process of comparing that we come to recognize that we

have a worldview and that our worldview differs from another's worldview. To compare, of course, we must be able to hold in view both our own worldview and the worldview of the other. And yet this comparison is thought to yield the truth that we can never get outside of our own worldview! Again, we need to recognize that knowledge is essentially awareness of differences; the recognition of differences constitutes our information. But the recognition of differences requires a basis, a basis in sameness or sharedness. Difference and sameness are themselves different, but differences within a larger sameness which allows for their recognition and comparison. If we couldn't compare them we couldn't recognize their difference, but we couldn't compare them unless we could bring them both within the same view. But this is no reason to equate our view of the world with the world—and then to claim a plurality of worlds corresponding to our plurality of views!

Once we make the mistake of equating a view of the world - with the world, thereby claiming a plurality of worlds each separate from the other, there seems to be no way of encountering any of these worlds — let alone uniting them. Each of us is held to be a world unto ourselves, forever separate from all others. This strange view stems from the mistake of taking the individual as the primary locus of being. Once the isolated individual is taken as the primary being and the source of all knowledge, then everything else, including the individual's own body, becomes an object, which as something in itself is forever beyond reach. But this is a mistake. Personal existence is inherently social, our being is intrinsically relational, and our shared and constantly changing views of the world are views, not worlds. It is interesting that the more we focus on "local histories" the more clearly we see that not only are they histories of interrelationships (rather than of independent, separate identities), but also that they are histories of relationships with other histories in an ever-expanding circle that, at its extreme, is global, connecting all things. Even the history of a single cell is a global history, extending indefinitely into the past and into the future.

VI. Pluralism and Dialogue

The recognition of our shared history across both cultures and time supports Radhakrishnan's call for a new religious attitude that

will overcome the provincalisms and rivalries of the past as it seeks, in his words, "a fellowship of religions, based on the foundational character of man's religious experience."[14] Note that he does not call for the elimination of the various historical religious ways in favor of the establishment of a single, universal religious way, but for the fellowship of religious ways and religious wayfarers.

As we have seen, Radhakrishnan understood religion to be a way of life that is rooted in faith in an ultimate, sacred reality grounding all existence. It is a way of life characterized by rejoicing in and celebrating the sacred ground of our being, which touches and moves us in every dimension of our lives. Simultaneously, it is a way of life characterized by sincere effort to realize a fuller manifestation of the ultimate in our daily lives, a struggle to overcome what is recognized as a radical defectiveness. The religious way is not essentially intellectual; it is not primarily a matter of theory or even of belief, but a way of practice. It is a way of becoming real, a way of realizing ourselves. Followers of different religious ways might be thought of as fellow travelers along a path, wayfarers faring the way together.

Religious people everywhere rejoice in and celebrate the sacred power that touches and moves them in every fiber of their being. Their joy in encountering the sacred; the good news that they hear, the sweet nectar they taste, the revelation they behold, the divine presence that touches them — these are experiences to be shared with each other, something each person wants to bring into the lives of other persons. And this for two related reasons: first, simply that they may rejoice together, and second, that both may be lifted out of their unwholeness, that they may be made whole in their realization of the ultimate. Compassion demands that we reach out to the other, and Radhakrishnan was convinced that an understanding that conduces to dialogue helps us to reach out to each other in mutual rejoicing and mutual help.

He was also convinced that every religious tradition needs the nourishment of encounter and dialogue with other traditions in order to live and grow. Sharing with each other provides new insights and practices, opening up newer and deeper forms of realization. Through dialogue, reinterpretation and reform are possible; in self-

reflectively examining our own tradition from the perspective of another tradition we may in fact enrich it in significant ways. Because religious life is a practical matter, a making of our being in the image and likeness of the divine as we have experienced it, at each step of the way we stand on the basis that all of our previous life-making and this includes the whole tradition - has secured for us. This means that there is the constant threat that encounter with what is new and other will destroy what has been made - our life and our tradition, and the fear of this loss may cause us to shrink back from encounter with what is new and different. Balancing this fear, however, is the recognition that the threat of decay and death through failure to renew is equally great, and the hope that through new encounters with the other we will be able to renew ourselves, that it will open the way to greater realization of the ultimate in our lives.

As a comparativist thinker Radhakrishnan understood that our knowledge of reality can never transcend the human limitations of language, culture, worldview, and history. To systematically compare different ways and views of life from an absolute standpoint, outside of our own points of view, is impossible because there is no such standpoint available to us. We have only the views we have, shaped by our time and place in history. If, somehow, we could suspend our own view, no comparisons of any kind would be possible. We can modify our own view, of course, but we can not find a view that is neutral between our own view and another's view - a view that is entirely outside our own view and the view of the other.

Even though each religious way can only envision the ultimate reality from its own perspective and consequently the doctrines its tradition espouses can only be true from that perspective, still we should not minimize the importance of those truths within the religious tradition. Nor should we minimize the importance of the tradition that makes those truths possible. Without roots in a tradition the individual is lost, and society is unable to nurture the sharing required for full human development. Religious tradition is essential to religious practice, for it is a society's memory of its past, reminding the community of the beliefs, attitudes, practices and rules that have shaped and maintained it. It is tradition that guides the actions of communities and of individuals in

those communities, providing the basic values and ideas in terms of which experience can be interpreted and life lived well and fully. And it is tradition that furnishes the place to stand as we renew ourselves (and the tradition) in encounter with the new and the different. But to accomplish this, tradition cannot be abstract and global; it must be local and rich in detail, because religious life is not abstract, but concrete, lived out in the great variety of details, in the incredible density, that makes up our lives. Religious pluralism, grounded in a pluralistic conception of truth, aims to support and enrich the various traditions, not to replace them.

Radhakrishnan understood very well that without roots in a tradition the individual is lost, and society is unable to nurture the sharing required for full human development. But tradition is effective only when it is living, vibrant, dynamic; only when it is constantly re-making itself in the crucible of encounter with the new and the different. Dr. Radhakrishnan saw that every religious tradition needs the nourishment of encounter and dialogue with other traditions in order to live and grow. Through dialogue, reinterpretation and reform are possible.

Religious dialogue means that both parties listen to each other, but without abandoning their own religious traditions. But how is this possible? How can I understand what the other is saying if I am locked into my own tradition, if the meaning of my actions and beliefs are given by the totality of my own traditional worldview? Isn't it necessary that to hear the other I must in some sense transcend my own worldview, that I must silence my own voice in order to hear the other's voice? Are there materials and structures within my own worldview that enable me to transcend to a meta level, from which I can hear—interpret—and compare what the other is saying to what I myself am saying? In doing this do I see myself as the other? Or do I try to see my understanding as the other would see it? Does not the self-reflective nature of consciousness enable us to do this all the time? That is, we not only see what we see, but we are aware of what we are seeing.

Of course one must silence one's own voice in order to hear the other, but this silencing is temporary. It is like making room within one's own speech for the speech of the other—and then hearing the

speech of the other as though it were one's own voice. It is not the abandonment of one's own worldview or tradition, but simply a making room within that tradition or worldview to hear the other. Thinking that we are "locked into" our own tradition, worldview or voice is the mistake; it mistakes the nature of knowing, listening and worldview or tradition. These are not static; they are dynamic, ever-changing, and they are interrelated processes, make up of mutually dependent parts or sequences, which are continuously changing relatively to each other.

This the Hindu tradition has always recognized and celebrated. Hinduism has recognized, from the time of the Vedas to the present, that devotion to truth and commitment to the inquiry and practice that can reveal truth, is the foundation of tradition; only through this devotion and commitment can tradition be renewed and preserved. This understanding is the basis for Dr. Radhakrishnan's claim that "Religious life becomes a cooperative enterprise binding together different traditions and perspectives to the end of obtaining clearer vision of the perfect reality."[15]

Let me conclude with the advice of the holy sage, who in Ṛg Veda 10.191 says:

samāni va ākutiḥ
samānā hṛdayāni vāḥ
samānam astu vo mano
yatha vaḥ susadāsati

(UNITED IN RESOLVE,
UNITED IN YOUR HEARTS
WITH YOUR MINDS TOGETHER
MAY YOU LIVE TOGETHER IN PEACE AND HARMONY)

NOTES

1. *The Philosophy of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan*, ed. Paul Schilipp (New York: Tudor, 1952), p. 14.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 68.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

5. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, *Eastern Religions and Western Thought,* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), p. 32.
6. *Rg Veda,* 10.164.46.
7. Henry Ruf, "Moral Problems and Religious Mysteries: A Cross-Cultural Perspective" *(Dialogue & Alliance,* Vol. 1, No. 3, p. 77),
8. As Huston Smith says *in Beyond the Post-Modern Mind,* p. 10: "To be human is to be finite, conditioned, unique....The hope of rising to a God's-eye point view of reality is misguided in principle."
9. Hahn points this out in the introduction to his book on Kant's Newtonian Revolution: "This essay will suggest that what is mistaken in his critical and theoretical philosophy is the very same error that he made in assessing the idea of a scientific revolution: there is no more a privileged or God's eye point of view of subjectivity that there is an objective knowledge of the object, independent of our conscious states. In denying (1) certain knowledge of the object, independent of our conscious states, Kant believed that he had not abandoned a vision of objective and certain knowledge, by (2) supposing that he could save a meaning of objectivity by revealing the a priori structure of subjectivity. The task of philosophy now, as I see it, seems to be to grant Kant's objection to (1), deny him (2), and then determine how it is yet possible to save a meaningful sense of objectivity....The problem is to deny a God's eye point of view in the object or subject—without reducing thought to "Anything goes."" (*Kant's Newtonian Revolution in Philosophy,* by Robert Hahn. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1988. p. 2.)
10. Hilary Putnam, *Representation and Reality,* p. 109.
11. "The Contextual Fallacy", in *Interpreting Across Boundaries,* ed. Larso and Deutsch, Princeton: Princeton University Press, p. 94.
12. *Buddhist-Christian Studies,* Vol. 6, 1986.
13. Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Towards a World Theology.* Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1981, p. 109
14. *The Philosophy of Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, op. cit.,* p. 75.
15. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, *Eastern Religions and Western Thought* (London: Oxford University Press, 1939), p. 328.

6

NATURE AND HUMANITY IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY*

JOHN M. KOLLER

I. Overview

When we ask how the Indian philosophical tradition views the relationship between human beings and nature, we need to be aware that this question does not carry the usual presuppositions of the European question about the relationship between nature and humans. From the highly anthropomorphized perspective of Western thought, where because of their self-consciousness and thinking ability, their divinely ordained dominion over the natural world, and their capacity to direct their own developmental progress, shaping the history of all creation, human beings are viewed as unique and separate from nature, it might appear that India never came up with the idea of human being. Hegel, for example, was able to say that āman... has not bee positedä in Indian thought, which sees the concrete human individual only as a 'transitory manifestation of the One,' and being without any 'value in itself.'[1] Hegel, of course was the supreme Eurocentrist, championing the supremacy of reasonand the West. But a hundred years after Hegel, Betty Heimann, a highly qualified and extremely sensitive Indologist, in contrasting Indian and Western views of human being appears to echo Hegel's view, although she by no means saw the Indian view as inferior to the Western view. Emphasizing that Indian thought never tried to separate humans from the natural world and the unity of life, she noted that "No human hybris, self-elevation and self-deceit, can

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here develop where man is but another expression of Nature's all-embracing force."[2]

I will go on to develop the Indian view of human being and the relationship of human being to nature in greater detail, but for now let me note certain assumptions about human being that shape the Western view, a highly anthropocentric view, of human and their relation to nature. First, rooted in biblical sources is the view of human beings as divinely and uniquely created by God in his own image and likeness. Second is the Greek view of the power and uniqueness of rationality, the defining attribute of human beings. Third, rooted in two preceding view, is the view that humans naturally, because of their special creation by God, and powerfully, because of the control made possible by their unique rationality, are meant to dominate nature. These three views, views that ground the Western anthropocentrism that underlines Western faith in human supremacy, spirituality, and its emphasis on progress, human dignity, and human rights.

Following Heimannâs suggestion, we might ask, "According to Indian thought, is human existence an integral, though highly evolved, part of nature? Or, has India also developed a view that human existence is radically different from natural existence, even though this radical difference is constituted differently than it is in Western thought?" This two-part question is fundamental and important, for its answer determines basic cultural values and life practices, including the primary aims of life *(puruṣārthas)* and the norms of life-stages and social classes *(varṇāśramadharma)*. As might be expected, tradition does not provide us with a single, univocal answer to this question. Because the Indian tradition is made up of many sub-traditions, each with its own answer, and because these traditions are continuously changing, the answer varies across time, as well as across traditions. Nonetheless, allowing for necessary qualifications, these different answers share the view that both questions are to be answered in the affirmative. That is, the tradition's shared core of understanding across sub-traditions and time is that human existence is both an integral part of nature and that it is radically different. How is the apparent conflict between these two views resolved within the tradition? Is the attempted resolution successful? It is these two questions that form the problematic of this essay.

The view that human beings are an integral part of nature dates from the Ṛg Vedic period, while the view that human beings, in their innermost being *(Ātman)*, are radically different from nature is somewhat later, dating from the time of the Upaniṣads. From Upaniṣadic times on, the tradition strives to reconcile these two view, preserving the first while embracing the second. Thus, our exploration of these two views and our analysis of the philosophical success of their reconciliation is situated within the context of the traditionsâ own central problematic.

II. Humans as an Integral Part of Nature

First of all, the Indian tradition, from Vedic times to the present, views human beings as an integral part of the grand unity of organic existence that extends from the highest gods all the way to the lowliest plant life. Within this unity, embodied human existence is viewed as a natural living process that integrates a complex variety of mental and physical processes. Although they by no means speak with a single voice, the *Brāhmaṇa* and *Āraṇyaka* texts of the earlier Vedic period clearly view human existence as an integral part of nature, classifying human beings as domesticated animals. But they clearly regard humans as very special animals insofar as they engage in abstract reflective thought and international action, most notably in these texts, in their performance of ritual action. The most common word for humankind in these texts, *manuṣya,* is derived from the root *man,* meaning 'to think,' the same root from which *manas,* the word for mind is derived. Humanness *(manuṣyatva)* is marked especially by the intelligence that makes possible reflective thought and intentional action. Indeed, the Satapatha *Brāhmaṇa* tells us that Prajāpati created human beings out of intelligence *(man),* an eloquent way of saying that intelligence is the stuff humans are made of.[3]

The Hymn to the Cosmic Person *(Ṛg Veda 10.90)*, probably a late addition to the *Ṛg Veda,* summarizes a great deal of Vedic thought about the place of human beings in the world and the relation between humans and nature. This text, in describing a primordial world-creating ritual that creates the world out of the offering of a portion of the Puruṣa, the cosmic Person, affirms the underlying unity of the divine, cosmic and human realms of existence. Verses 8 through 14 describe how the cosmic Person, through the power of ritual offering *(yajña)*, was transformed into gods, cosmos, humans and birds and animals. Indra and Agni, for

example, originated from the puruṣa's mouth, the atmosphere from its navel, sky from its head, earth from its feet, and the four classes of human beings, *brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya* and *śudra,* from its mouth, arms, legs and feet, respectively. Birds and animals came from the blessed offerings of milk and ghee.[4]

The Hymn to the Cosmic Person makes four important points that are relevant to our investigation of the relation between nature and humankind. First, assigning the origin of the divine, human, and natural realms to the same source was the Vedic traditionâs most powerful way of establishing their underlying unity. Second, by describing this source as a primordial person, the tradition declares that it regards human existence as the most basic and profound kind of existence. Third, by differentiating the four classes of humans in terms of their origination in different parts of functions of the cosmic person, this text emphasizes the specie-like differences between them. Finally, in describing the creation of existence as the result of sacred ritual *(yajña),* the tradition affirms the fundamental and central value of ritual action. The ritual offering of the primordial Person is the prototype of the ritual action that humans must practice in order to re-create and maintain their existence. Ritual action is of fundamental value of human beings because it is how they open their existence to the deeper powers in which it is grounded. Through the fulfillment of ritual duty humans establish communion with nature and the god, and renew their life from moment to moment.

The continuing tradition enshrines the fundamental Vedic value of ritual and moral duty by making their fulfillment a matter of *dharma,* the first of the four fundamental human aims in life *(puruṣārthas).* Perhaps the single most important clue to the Indian traditionâs view of the speecial place human beings have within the totality of existence is found in the concept of human aims *(puruṣārtha).* According to the theory of *puruṣārtha,* there are four fundamental values at which human beings should aim, namely, *dharma* (the fulfillment of ritual and moral duties), *artha* (success), *kama* (enjoyment), and *mokṣa* (liberation). These aims represent the tradition's view of the most fundamental human values; their accomplishment represents the highest human perfection possible to achieve.

What sets human apart from the rest of nature is their deliberate pursuit of the four basic human aims in life. Only humans engage in the

performance of ritual and moral obligations, and in the liberating quest for self-transcendence. Furthermore, although other animals may be said to pursue success *(artha)* and enjoyment *(kāma)*, it is not clear that they do so intentionally and with future orientation. Nor do they pursue success and enjoyment as circumscribed and determined by *dharma* or in preparation for *mokṣa*, as humans do. Thus, although the tradition recognizes that other animals pursue success and enjoyment, because they lack the requisite reflective and intentional abilities to pursue them as aims in life, even the *puruṣārthas* of success and enjoyment are regarded as uniquely human.

Dharma is regarded as the foundation of the other three *puruṣārthas*. *Artha* and *kāma* may only be pursued in accord with *dharma*; further more, ultimately it is the fulfillment of moral and ritual duty that produces success and enjoyment, both in this world and the world beyond, according to Purvamīmāṁsā, the continuing tradition that embodies the enduring Vedic values and ideas.[5] Even *mokṣa*, although it transcends *dharma, artha,* and *kāma,* cannot be achieved without the perfection of *dharma.*

While the first three *puruṣārthas* embody the Vedic vision of human beings as an integral part of nature, the fourth aim incorporates the Upaniṣadic vision of an inner self *(Ātman)* that is essentially independent of its human embodiment and therefore separate from nature. Consequently, when *mokṣa* became the primary aim of life in the late Upaniṣadic period, although the values of *dharma, artha* and *kāma* were preserved in the first three *puruṣārthas* they ceased to be the primary effective means of perfection. Now it was knowledge that came to be regarded as the primary effective means, for only knowedge was seen as capable of effecting *mokṣa.* With the revolutionary change, what became of paramount value was liberation from nature, from society and from embodied human existence itself, thereby devaluing efforts to attain perfection as a natural, social and human being.

III. Self as Independent of its Embodiment

Since the Upaniṣads, Indian philosophy has been much more concerned with *Brahman,* the eternal, unchanging ground of being thatn with the existence that embodies this ground, and much more concerned with immortal Self *(Ātman)* in human beings than with the human existence

(manuṣya) that embodies this Self. Indeed, embodies human existence came to be seen as *saṁsāra,* bondage to repeated deaths, a condition from which liberation was sought. This is why *mokṣa,* the liberation of *Ātman* from its embodiment, became more important than *dharma, artha,* and *kāma,* the aims of perfecting human existence in its embodied condition.

Although it is true that for most of the Indian philosophical systems it is the pure Self that is of paramount value, embodied existence is of central importance in all of the orthodox systems. Precisely because of their emphasis on liberation of the pure Self from the sāṁsāric bonds of embodied existence, these systems attach great importance to understanding embodied existence as one of the keys to liberation. Because the bonds to be loosened are those created by embodied existence and because the path to liberation is followed by the embodied self, full knowledge of embodied existence is seen as a necessary condition for liberation of the pure Self from its karmic bondage.

In particular, it is important to understand how bondage comes about: what are the processes that make and unmake bondage? The answer, in one world, is *karma.* One of the distinctive features of the Indian worldview is that embodied human existence is seen as a karmic process, a continu-ing process of making and unmaking of personal existence which has no beginning and which is never completed. This kārmic process of person-making is constituted by interaction with other processes in an ever-widening sphere that extends ultimately to the whole world, linking each person to every other person and to all other beings in a web of interconnec-tions that extends to all times and places. Indeed, individual persons are viewed within the tradition as intersections within nature's network, analogous to the knots in a fish net.[6]

This kārmic view of human existence integrates the human and natural spheres of existence, seeing it as a single continuum, similar to the Vedic vision. Now, however, unlike in the Vedic view, nature and human existence in all its karmic dimensions are no longer seen as ultimately real. Now they are transcended by *Brahman / Ātman,* the indwelling ground and Self of being. This is why the highest goal and ultimate value of the orthodox traditions is precisely the liberation *[mokṣa]* of the ultimate Self from its human condition; from the kārmic self enmeshed in natural existence.

From the perspective of the Ātman there is no fundamental differentiation between the human and the natural spheres; they continue to be seen as parts of an organic whole. Indeed, the workings of karma bind all living things together, allowing beings to be born and reborn in this great continuum innumerable times in a great variety of forms, ranging from plants and animals to humans and gods. From the perspective of Ātman, however, the important boundary is not between nature and humanity, but between the karmic realm, which includes both nature and humanity, on the one hand, and the ultimate Self, which transcends both nature and humanity, on the other.

One of the classic formulations of the distinction between the ultimate Self and embodied human existence is found in Chapter Thirteen of the *Bhagavad Gītā*, where embodied human existence is viewed as a field on which the various physical and mental forces interact with and modify each other and where the ultimate Self is viewed as an independent "knower of the field." "Described briefly," says the *Gītā*, "this field, with its modifications, is constituted by the great elements (ether, air, fire, water, and earth), sense-of-self, intelligence, the unmanifested, the ten senses and the mind, the five sense realms, desire, aversion, happiness and suffering, the embodied whole, consciousness and steadfastness."[7] Rooted in Sāṅkyha metaphysics, this is a description of a person seen as a field of interacting energies of different kinds and intensities, a field which is simultaneously interacting with innumerable other fields, integrating the human and natural spheres. The individual person is a juncture or constellation of these interactions, bnorn and reborn out of successively intersecting energy-fields.

From the perspective of the ultimate Self, however, this embodied human existence described as field is merely the instrument of a Self that is essentially transcendent and independent of its embodied condition. The *Gītā* says of this ultimate Self, "the knower of the field:" "This imperishable supreme Self, beginningless and without qualities, though abiding in embodied existence, Arjuna, neither acts nor is polluted."[8]

Like the rest of the orthodox traditions, the *Gītā* regards this Self as being held hostage by the karmically fashioned body-mind, and emphasizes strategies and techniques for its liberation. According to this view, the ultimate Self, essentially autonomous and independent of the

mind-body complex, is held fast by the karmic bonds of passion and ignorance. This bondage, which consistutes the ground of suffering, can be terminated only by liberating the Self from embodied existence. This means that the Indian tradition draws an ontrological line between embodied human existence, viewed in the *Gītā* as the field of body-mind, which has both physical and mental characteristics, and the Self, which transcends both the physical and the mental.

The ontological line drawn between the realm of embodied human and natural existence, which is only apparently but not ultimately real, on the hand, and the ultimate reality of *Brahman / Ātman* on the other, constitutes a continuing problematic in Indian thought. The reason this constitutes a deep problematic is that for *mokṣa,* the liberation of the Self from karmic existence, to be meaningful, the separation between these two realms must be absolute. At the same time, in order for kārmically bound persons to effect their liberation from kārmic bondage, these two ontological realms must be connected because the power that removes karmic bondage cannot itself be part of karmic existence.

IV. Reconciling Ultimate and Embodied Existence

The Upaniṣads contain many interpretations of embodied existence and its relation to the ultimate Self *(Ātman / Brahman).* Most of these provide an organic, holistic account of existence. The *Muṇḍaka,* for example, suggests that even as a spider produces its web, as plants grow from the earth, and hair from a personâs body, so does the universe arise from the ultimate *(Ātman/ Brahman).*[9] Embodied human existence as well as nature arises from that ultimate Self: āFrom That are born life, mind, the sense-organs, and also ether, air, fire, water, and earth, all supported.ä[10]

The *Taittirīya* provides a holistic, evolutionary explanation, beginning with Brahman's manifestation as ether: "From this Self *(Brahman)* arose ether; from ether air, from air fire; from fire water; from water earth; from earth herbs, from herbs food; from food the person."[11] It then goes on to give a picture of individual human existence as an integral, organic layered process, where the physical processes envelop the life processes, which envelop the perceptual processes, which envelop the processes of understanding, which envelop joy, the innermost self, the *Ātman* which is the source and ground of the person.[12]

The *Kaṭha* explanis the Self and its relation to the embodied existence with the image of controller and controlled, using the analogy of a chariot driver and a chariot: "Self should be known as lord of the chariot, body as chariot, intelligence as chariot-driver, mind as reins, senses as horses, and sense objects the paths; The Self, associated with body, senses and mind, is the enjoyer."[13]

Aware of tension between the ultimate and the non-ultimate levels of reality, many Upaniṣadic thinkers make a concerted effort to describe the ultimate as fully present in all its embodiments. For example when Bhrgu asks his father, Varuṇa, to explain *Brahman*, Varuṇa begins by explaning that matter, life, the senses, understanding, and speech are the basic elements of all existence. He then goes on to say, Indeed, that from which these beings are born, by which they live, and into which they enter when dying, endeavour to know that as *Brahman*. 'Here Varuṇa, like most of the Upaniṣadic thinkers, is careful not to view *Brahman* as a separate existence. Instead, *Brahman* itself, as the ground and substance of all existence, is described as comprised of the levels of matter, life, lower awareness, higher consciousness, and finally, the deepest level, bliss. Then, lest this teaching of the highest level of reality as the bliss of *Brahman* be misunderstood to be a repudiation of the lower levels, Varuṇa immediately goes on to emphasize the importance of the lowest level of reality, saying, "Do not speak ill of matter. That shall be the rule. Life, indeed is matter. The body is the eater of material food and life is established in the body."[14]

Varuṇa's explanation, while avoiding the risk of differentiating the ultimate and the non-ultimate into two completely separate kinds of reality, runs the opposite risk of not differentiating *Brahman* sufficiently from the ordinary existence of which it is claimed to be the ultimate ground and inner self. The Cārvākas, for example, rejecting the claimed differentiation of Atman from its embodiment, are infamous for taking the embodied body-mind complex to be the ultimate self, denying the existence of any Self separate from this complex, thereby denying the very possibility of liberation. Because mind is inseparable from body, Cārvākans regard the death of the body as also the death of the mind, and thus, since there is no indwelling Self to be liberated, the final termination of a person's life. Although they were regarded as materialists in the typical Western sense of that term, for they viewed the body of a person as imbued with consciousness.

Because it is not possible to examine all of the Indian systems in the space available, in what follows I will provide two examples of how different traditions have dealt with the relation between the ultimate Self and its embodied existence in the world. Śaṅkara 's Advaita Vedānta, continuing an important Upaniṣadic tradition, will be examined as an example of a system that insists that ultimately there is no duality, that Brahman / Atman alone is real. Sankhya-Yoga, on the other hand will be examined as an example of a non-upanisadic dualistic system that insists on complete differentiation of the ultimate and the non-ultimate, of the ultimate Self and its embodiment in *prakṛti.*

A. Sāṅkhya

The Sāṅkhya account of human existence is explicitly dualistic, for it views a person as the conjunction of two fundamentally different and eternally opposed realities, *puruṣa* and *prakṛti. Puruṣa* is pure consciousness, eternal, unchanging, and self-illuminating. It is the true Self, the pure subject that can never become an object. The prakrtic body-mind, on the other hand is always of the nature of object, in itself unconscious, constantly chaning, illuminated only by the light of *puruṣa.* Experience and knowledge are possible only because *prakṛti* is capable of reflecting the consciousness of *puruṣa.* That is, even though the prakrtic body-mind is itself unconscious, it can become the instrument of a consciousness which shines through it because of its sattvic nature. The metaphysics underwriting this corporeal view of embodied consciousness, though extremely subtle in its details, is simple in its outlines. *Prakṛti,* a unified whole, is seen as constituted by three interpenetrating kinds of energy or force-fields, which are revealed in the tendencies to manifestation found in the experienced world. *Rajas* is the vibrant energy that drives the entire manifestation process, which if the *sāttvic* energy level is high, appears as predominantly consciousness-like, and if the *tāmasic* energy level predominates, as predominantly physical body or object-like. However, these constituent *guṇas* or force-fields are always present together in some proportion in every manifestation of *prakṛti* so that consciousness and physical existence are mutually dependent, always to be found together.

What is especially problematic in the Sāṅkhya explanation is that if *prakṛti* is by nature unconscious, and if consciousness as *puruṣa* is totally

different from the prakrtic objects it is said to illuminate, how can there be any interaction between the two? How can *puruṣa* illumine what is totally unconscious, and how can *prakṛti,* whose nature is to be unconscious, be illumined by consciousness, for these two realities are regarded as ontologically exclusive of each other? The traditional answer is that one of the constituent strands of *prakṛti, sattva,* is transparent, capable of taking illumination from consciousness. But this is also problematic, for either *sattva* is *prakṛti,* and therefore unconscious, or else the strict dualism is given up. The other alternative, that the *sātivic* manifestations of *prakṛti* as embodied awareness *(buddhi)* is not absolutely different from the *puruṣa,* also destroys the dualism. Since *puruṣa* to take the form of *buddhi* means that it cannot be *puruṣa.*

Sāṅkhya philosophers have made many attempts to overcome the problems this rigid dualism present, but they all appear to stumble at the critical juncture, the juncture where supposedly *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* meet. No matter how *buddhi* and *sattva* are construed, as long as they are admitted to be prakrtic, they must be said to be essentially unconscious. This apparently serves the soteriological-metaphysical interest of Sāṅkhya, for it supports the claim that *puruṣa* is never in fact in bondage to *prakṛti,* that the true Self, the *puruṣa,* is always free, and that liberation is simply the realization of this truth.

One of the fundamental reasons for holding this rigid dualism is to account for the fact that there is never experience unless there is an experiencing subject and an experienced object. That is, to account for the self-reflective character of experience in which a person not only experiences, but is aware that she is experiencing, it is thought necessary to posit a transcendent self, a self that remains always a subject totally different from the object experienced. But as we have seen, the very dualism that helps explain the self-reflective character of experience makes experience itself problematic, for experience requires a genuine meeting of subject and object, a meeting this dualism renders problematic.

What is especially interesting about the Sāṅkhya account of embodied existence is that despite the metaphysical problems presented by *puruṣa / prakṛti* dualism, *prakṛti,* including its embodied existence manifestation, is seen as the instrument of *puruṣa,* manifesting consciousness. Indeed, the very first manifestation or evolution of *prakṛti,* triggered by the

presence of *puruṣa,* is *buddhi* (awareness), out of which self-awareness *(ahaṁkāra),* mind and the various capacities for sensation, perception and action evolve - and out of which eventually physical matter and bodies evolve. Clearly this *prakṛti,* as the ground of existence, is not merely material, at least not in the sense of inert or unconscious matter, for it is the ground from which embodied consciousness evolves. Accordingly, if *prakṛti* is taken to be a kind of materiality, it will have to taken as a conscious materiality. We might say it is a consciousness embodied within the very processes constituitive of existence, though from a Sāṅkhya point of view it would be more accurate to say that consciousness embodies materiality, for what are regarded as physical elements or bodies are declared to evolve out of *buddhi* or reflected consciousness, which is the first manifestation of *prakṛti.* On this view, the body and mind are both seen as conscious, and experience interpreted in terms of the play between the various constituents of *prakṛti,* between the more and less conscious, rather than between the conscious subject and the unconscious object. Here we find no hard line between body and mind or between self and embodied existence. Rather, consciousness is seen as a pervasive and integral constituent of bodily existence. On this level human beings are an integral part of nature.

The Yoga system, which accepts much of Sāṅkhyaâs meta physical anthropology and cosmology, focuses on the prakṛtic embodiment of consciousness as it constitutes the experiential life of a person. Drawing out the implications of the Sāṅkhya view of embodied existence as the continuing intersection of the energy fields constituting all persons and things, Yoga notes that human actions have the effect *(karmāsaya)* of changing both the surrounding world and the actor, disposing him or her in manifold ways. These dispositions *(saṁskāras)* condition subsequent experience and action, investing them with the traces *(vāsanās)* of previous acts. These traces or seeds *(bīja)* perpetuate the experiential stream, producing various affictions, memories, and expectations. At death all the as yet unrealized kārmic effects, collected in the subtle body of consciousness, move out of the physical body and enter an appropriate new body at its moment of conception. Thus, whatever is born is already conditioned and disposed by prior actions, for embodied existence is a continuous creative process in which the effects of prior experience are transformed into present life, which, in turn, conditions future experience. The ultimate aim of Yoga, of course, is to destroy the illusion that *Puruṣa,*

the true Self, has anything whatever to do with the prakṛtic world of nature and embodied human existence.

B. Advaita Vedānta

As we have seen, the Sāṅkhya problem of the apparent irrelevance of theories of prakṛtic existence to a theory of the Self is connected to its main problem of explaining how genuine interaction between the dual realities of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* can occur, a problem Advaita avoids with its non-dual stance. Śaṅkara's view, as expressed in the *Upadeśasāhasrī,* for example, is that the pure consciousness *(cidātman)* alone is ultimately real; everything else is only appearance. The Self (Ātman) that I truly am, he says, is "ever free, pure, transcendentally changeless, invariable, immortal, imperishable, and thus always bodiless."[15] Further, being bodiless means that the true self neither experiences nor acts. In Śaṅkara's words, "The false belief that *Ātman* is doer is due to the belief that the body is *Ātman.*"[16] Thus, when a student approached his teacher, a knower of Brahman, and asked how he could obtain release from the suffering of this transmigratory existence, the teacher advised him that he must overcome the ignorance through which he mistakenly thinks that he is an agent, an experiencer and a transmigrator, when in fact he is none of these, but the highest *Ātman.*[17]

From Śaṅkara's perspective, although I frequently identify my existence with my embodiment, this identification *(adhyāsa)* is a mistake, the result of ignorance, for the truth is that I am pure consciousness, *Ātman,* eternal and unchanging, having nothing to do with my embodiment. But how is this mistake to be explained? What is this ignorance wherein I identify with the body and regard myself as actor and experiencer? For the sake of showing that this identification is a mistake, that it results from ignorance, Śaṅkara needs to develop a philosophy of human existence that explains what embodied existence is and how it comes to be falsely imposed on *Ātman.* Thus, he says that if the student seeking the sacred knowledge which brings release from saṁsāra says, "I am eternal and different from the body. The bodies come and go like a person's garment," the teacher should say, "you are right," and then should explain how the body is different from the Self." [18]

This advice is followed by passage in which Śaṅkara explains what the body is and how it comes to be. Positing an unmanifest name-and-

form *(avyakṛte nāmarūpa),* Śaṅkara declares that this unmanifest evolved into the world of name and form as we know it through an evolutionary process according to which it first became manifest as ether, air, fire, water, and earth, in that order. As each of these elements became impregnated with the previous elements, finally earth appeared, as a combination of all five elements. He goes on to say, "And from earth, rice, barely, and other plants consisting of the five elements are produced. From them, when they are eaten blood and sperm are produced, related respectively to the bodies of women and men."[19] He then explains how this body is named at birth, how it gets its student name, its householder name, and also the name of the forest dweller and *sannyāsin.* Repeating that "the body is different from you *(Ātman),*" Śaṅkara says that the teacher should remind the student that the mind and the sense organs consist only of name-and-form, and quotes passages from the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (VI. 5,4; 6,5; and 7,6) which declare that the mind consists of food.[20]

Like the prakṛtic self of Sāṅkhya, this self of name-and-form is said to be unconscious ("like food"), but nonetheless constituted by an awareness enabling it to experience, act, and identify itself (mistakenly) as a transmigrating, experiencing, acting self. Thus, according to Advaita, a person consists of a physical body, made up of material substances; the senses (eye, ear, etc.); mind; agencies of speech, movement, sex, excertion, and grasping; sense-of-self *(ahaṁkāra);* as well as the internal embodied consciousness *(antaḥkaraṇa),* all of which are disposed and conditioned according to previous experiences.

The distinction between physical and subtle bodies *(sthulaśarīra and sukṣmaṣarīra)* is very important, for it recognizes a distinction between mere physicality and humanly embodied physicality. It is a way of insisting on the bodily character of what we think of as mental functions, for the *sukṣmaśarīra,* constituted by the five vital airs, the *buddhi* and *manas* through which the *antaḥkaraṇa* functions, as well as the ten organs (five congnitive-sensory; five conative-motor), is not only itself viewed as a body, but is itself further embodied in the *sthulaśarīra.* Only for the embodied self are the knowledge and action needed for liberation possible (or necessary). The senses are seen as instruments of the mind, linking mind with the outside world, just as mind links senses with reflective consciousness, and reflective consciousness links up with Self. But senses,

vital force, mind and reflective consciousness can function only when embodied; ultimately the inner organ *(antaḥkaraṇa)* cannot function except through the bodily self; through its *indriya* or senses.

To avoid the problems of dualism, Śaṅkara denies that human existence constituted by name-and-form is ultimately real or that it really embodies the Self. For him this account functions to explain only the *appearance* of experience and the world, the realtiy of which is never admitted. This view is deeply problematic, however, as Śaṅkara himself recognized, when he said not only that *avyakṛte nāmarūpa* evolved from *Ātman*, but also that it is different in essence from *Ātman*. How can it be both essentially different from and evolved from *Ātman* in a philosophy committed to *satkaryavāda? Satkaryavāda,* as a casual principle, insists that what is produced, the effect, cannot be a different kind of reality than its cause. Thus *Ātman* could produce only *Ātman,* never *nāma-rūpa,* which is non-*Ātman.*

The analogy Śaṅkara introduces to explain this evolution of *nāma-rūpa* from *Ātman* reveals the problem, for he says, "In this manner this element named 'ether' arose from the highest *Ātman* as dirty foam from clear water. Foam is neither water nor absolutely different from water, since it is not seen without water. But water is clear and fifferent from foam, which is of the nature of dirt. Likewise, the highest *Ātman* is different from *nāmarūpa,* which corresponds to foam; *Ātman* is pure, clear, and different in essence from it."[21]

Clearly, this analogy breaks down, for foam combines two different things, clear water and dirt. Since Śaṅkara cannot admit such a duality, he denies the reality of *nāma-rūpa,* relegating it to the level of *māyā* or appearance, as superimposition on *Ātman* through ignorance. Thus, Advaita confronts a dilemma: though embodied existence must be assumed to account for experience, action and transmigration, to preserve the non-dualism that allows nothing other than *Ātman* to be real, its reality must be denied. As Sureśvara, one of Śaṅkaraâs followers, puts it: "Between worldly existence and the rock solid *Ātman* there is no connection at all except that of ignorance."[22] And with this denial of any connection to the reality of *Ātman / Brahman* embodied human existence, along with the natural and social worlds, is seriously devalued relative to *Ātman.*

In concluding I should point that while I have focused on what I perceive to be problems in the way that Saṅkhya and Advaita have tried to reconcile the discontinuity between embodied, worldly human existence and the ultimate reality of the pure Self, both of these traditions are of the opinion that they have successfully solved these problems. And indeed, if the radical discontinuity declkared by Sureśvara and implicit in Sāṅkhyas *Puruṣa / Prakṛti* dualism can be overcome, then the value of human and natural existence is greatly enhanced, for then they are seen to embody, as their innermost being and self, the ultimate reality. However, if the discontinuity between the ultimate reality and worldly existence cannot be overcome, then it must be recognized that *mokṣa*, the supreme value, devalues human existence, for then it is not liberation *of* human beings, but liberation *from* being human. That is, then the value of *mokṣa* belongs to *Ātman*, not to embodied human existence, which ultimately is no more than the projection of ignorance.

NOTES

1. Quoted by Wilhelm Halbfass, *Tradition and Reflection: Exolarations in Indian Thought* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1991), p. 265.
2. *Facets of Indian Thought* London, 1964, p. 116. (Also quoted by Halbfass, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 265-266.)
3. *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* 7.5.2.
4. See John M. KOller, *The Indian Way* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1982), pp. 42-46, for a discussion of this seminal text.
5. See *Mīmāṁsāsūtra* 6.1.5 (as interpreted by Śabara).
6. *Yoga Sūtra Bhāṣya II. 13.*
7. *Bhagavad Gītā*, 13.5. Unless noted otherwise, translations are by the author.
8. *Bhagavad Gītā*, 13.31.
9. *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*, 1.1.7.
10. *Ibid.*, II. 1.3.
11. *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, II.1.
12. *Ibid.*, II.2.-5.
13. *Kaṭtha Upaniṣad*, 1.3.3-4.
14. *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, Chapter 3.
15. *Upadeśasāharī*, I. 13.3. As translated by Sengaku Mayeda in *A Thousand Teachings: the Upadeśasāhasrī of Śaṅkara* (Tokyo: Tokyo University Press, 1979), p. 132.
16. *Ibid.*, I. 12.16 (p. 130).
17. *Ibid.*, II. 2.50 (p. 235).
18. *Ibid.*, II. 1.12, 13 (p. 215).
19. *Ibid.*, II. 1. 20 (pp. 216-217).
20. *Ibid.*, II. 1.21 (p. 217).
21. *Ibid.*, II.1.19 (p. 216).
22. Sureṣvaraâs *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi.*

7

THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE*

SANAT KUMAR SEN

(PART - I)

Self-knowledge, in some broad sense, may well be said to be a subject common to all major Indian philosophical systems, including the cārvāka. The materialists may have denied Self as an independent entity, but even their theories are results of inquiry into the nature of the Self. (They are proponents of theories of identity between matter and consciousness, mind and body.) The enquiry into the Inner is a characteristic mark of philosophy in general and of classical Indian philosophies in particular. The different systems may have reached or sponsored quite different conceptions of the Self, but it cannot be denied that they all have thought it worthwhile to make investigations in this regard. This constitutes not only a point of unity among the systems but also a point in which the various philosophies may sustain their existence and growth now and onwards. In this they may renew themselves. Since there is always the possibility of renewal in it, the process of self-inquiry has an enduring value.

'Know thyself', therefore, inspite of being a very ancient advice, is never too old. It had relevance when man's knowledge and relations were charging very slowly, as it has relevance in today's fast-moving world and quick-changing relations. That which can thus abide is important; and it seems all the more important, when one

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becomes aware of the consequences of its neglect in modern times. What happens when one always looks outwards and hardly ever looks within? One loses balance, shows lack of sanity, and unwittingly invites frustration and sorrow.

There has been in the modern world phenomenal advancement in science and technology. Material amenities of innumerable kinds have been devised in order to gratify man, reduce his work and increase his leisure. But wants have multiplied faster, and there appears to be-an-unending pursuit of the more in terms of pleasure, power, possession, etc. All these achievements, however, have not really meant increase in peace and contentment. The so-called successful modern man is rather more lonely, more tormented by fear and anxiety - more in need of sleeping pills and tranquilisers. The tragedy seems all the more glaring by the fact of co-existence of affluence on one side, with poverty, hunger, malnutrition, etc. on the other. Killing, both individual and the masses, has become much easier nowadays. In single-minded pursuit of comfort, brutality has increased. Man has made his environment much more polluted and global atmosphere much more poisonous, and thus seems to be moving towards self-destruction.

To say all this, however, is not at all to suggest that there should be a halt to the progress of science and technology. That is neither possible nor desirable. But the miserable condition of man, inspite of remarkable advance in science and its applications, makes it obvious that this is not enough; that something else is also necessary; that one-dimensional development is fraught with danger. Material progress has to be combined with moral or spiritual progress. Along with outer improvement, due emphasis should be given to inner improvement also.

The moral or spiritual aim has been said to be a common characteristic of Indian philosophical systems on the whole. Morality implies self-improvement, in the sense of being not only of the self by itself, but also for the self. Doing good to others here is a means of self-upliftment or purification of the mind. It reduces selfishness and ennobles man. Moral goodness is based on and is intimately related to truth. (Obviously, here we are not speaking of conventional social morality.) In fact, to be moral is to be truthful in ideas, words and deeds. One cannot consciously espouse falsity and be moral at the same time. virtue and wisdom go

together. When it is said "knowledge is virtue", it is primarily understanding of the inner nature of man and his relations that seems to be signified by 'knowledge'. To be set on the path of self-knowledge is to be on the moral or spiritual path. Knowing oneself and being good or free are not divorced from one another. The way of self-knowledge (no matter whether the self is real or illusory) is the way to the highest goal of life. This, it may be said, is one general standpoint of Indian philosophy.

This point of view has firm roots and there is nothing basically wrong with it. Rather a view that would hold that man should unravel all the intricacies of nature but should not at all bother about his own nature would seem queer and one-sided. Anyone, who sees the precarious condition of man in the modern world and goes into its causes, would appreciate the relevance of self-knowledge in this context.

Why is then self-inquiry so neglected? Why are the philosophical doctrines about the self so ineffective in the lives of people? The doctrines conflict and are not nowadays backed by corresponding ways of life. They have rather been reduced to matters of mere academic dispute or question - answers, without any serious practical implication. To know a theory about the self is not self-inquiry; it is rather a matter of memorising and systematisation. Going into the ways of the mind is one thing, and having a pre-formed rounded-up theory about it is quite another. The former is extremely difficult, the natural bent of mind being outward.

Our concern here is rather with the importance of self-knowledge than with theories about the self or with methods of knowing oneself. Knowledge of the inner, we have said, can provide a sort of counterbalance to our knowledge of the external world. We have drawn attention to the crisis generated by one-sided growth of knowledge, as manifest in misuse of technology, loneliness of man, spread of violence, relentless competition, lack of love and compassion, etc. But one may ask: What is the guarantee that a move towards self-knowledge will dissipate the crisis and bring about beneficial changes? Will it not be rather an escape into isolation and indolence, a withdrawal from the world of action into an area that is vague, indefinite, non-sensuous, unknown and unverifiable?

In response to this objection, several things may be said. First, journey within the mind or self does not necessarily mean becoming a recluse or cutting off relation with other people and the world. It is the self or the mind that expresses itself in behaviour, makes or mars relations, sets and pursues goals, considers itself fulfilled or frustrated and so on. Self-knowledge may start with the watchfulness of the mind of its own activities in relation to others. Secondly, understanding one's own nature may give a clue to understanding others - the roots of their behaviour, the ways of their minds. For example, if one has an insight into the nature of fear or desire by attentive observation of these things within oneself, that insight is universal. It not only may enable one to understand others better, but also to transform oneself. Love and understanding go together. It is likely that with deeper understanding, love and compassion would also grow; and with the growth of love, human relations would improve, leading to making the world a better place to live in. Thus through self-knowledge, if one can solve one's own problems, that would also contribute to the solution of world-problems. For world-problems are created by individuals or groups of individuals in their inter-relations. In any case, one has to begin with oneself to put one's own house in order. Whether world-order is thereby achieved or not is not in one's hands.

All this may seem to be romantic fancy or sheer wishful thinking, if there had not been living examples of persons, who have so to speak exhibited the reality of self-knowledge and its concomitants. In saints and men of exceptional wisdom, we have such examples. They demonstrate - in an effortless and spontaneous manner - truthfulness, dispassion, calmness, fearlessness, resoluteness, intelligence, love and selfless action. Philosophies spring to life in such men. They provide, by their lives, cues to others. They are standing testimony of the unity or fusion of thought-systems, of interpenetration of the inner and the outer, and of everlasting importance of self-knowledge.

THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE HUMAN BEING

SANAT KUMAR SEN

(PART-II)

"What is man?" may be regarded as a very pertinent question in Philosophy as embodying man's reflection on himself and his life. "Know thyself" is enjoined in the East and the West - by the Upanishads and by Socrates. Alexander Pope said that the best study of mankind is man himself. The importance of Self-enquiry is admitted in all the classical systems of Indian philosophy - even by those doctrines which deny the existence of any permanent Self. Ignorance or absence of self-knowledge has been held to be the root cause of man's suffering. Noted spiritual teachers of modern times concur in emphasizing the value of self-knowledge. For instance, one such teacher says, "Immaturity lies only in total ignorance of self. To understand yourself is the beginning of wisdom."[1] In a verse Sankaracarya maintains that pilgrimage, penance, making gifts, etc. are all futile for achieving freedom in the absence of self-knowledge.[2]

Man's investigation into his own nature is an exercise in self-consciousness, the capability of which may be said to be his distinguishing feature. Man can and does face the problem "What is Man?" or "What am I?" No other living being is capable of doing this. Such reflective awareness marks man out from all other animals more significantly than the description "rational animal", "an animate being capable of laughing and speaking" etc. For it does not seem to be very clear what 'rationality' exactly is; and there may be doubt if rationality, in some incipient or rudimentary form, is not present in some other species higher animals, lower than homosapiens in the evolutionary scale. Laughing and using language are no doubt peculiar to man; but some higher animals of other types, though they do not laugh or speak, do express their feelings and wants in other characteristic ways such as wagging tails, purring, growling, cowering, etc. Pretending, however, may be said to be a special human ability.

It is customary to describe man as a psychophysical being - a unity of mind and body, which are two aspects of his reality. He is one being or creature having dual aspects. Mental characteristics like cheerfulness, courage, timidity, honesty, etc. are ascribed to him as well as physical ones such as height, breathing, blood-circulation, digestive processes, etc. This obvious commonsense view may be admitted irrespective of hard and fast metaphysical positions of Idealism and Materialism as theories about the nature of Ultimate Reality. Though there are doctrines which hold that man is really an immortal soul or that he is really only an extremely complex bodily being, we would here try to be rather factual and steer clear of extreme or abstruse philosophical positions.

The sciences of Anatomy and Physiology deal specifically with the details of structure and functions of the human organism. Mind is Psychology's concern, but that subject also is regarded as or sought to be developed into an objective science, adopting so-called scientific procedures. Psychology till recently was a part of Philosophy, and Philosophy even today may be taken as a psychological discipline that is not natural science. The field of philosophy is primarily mental or internal - not external nature, though it is not at all denied that the inner and the outer interact. So, going philosophically into the nature and ways of Man or the 'I', the role of outer influences is not denied, but the emphasis is on the discovery of internal structure and functions. We are concerned not so much with explanation ('why' and 'how') of human nature as with the ascertainment of it by factual observation as far as possible.

Now, observation reveals that men differ in many respects, and that inspite of the differences there is much that is common among them. In what do they differ? The primary difference is the difference of bodies. My body is not the same as yours, though both may be affected by the same climate or afflicted by the same disease. Man is so far the most complex being in evolution, and no two human beings are exactly alike - not even identical twins, though they have far greater physical resemblance than others. There are differences in bodily details. No two finger-prints are the same, though fingers may look alike. Knowledge about various types of differences in human organisms and causes thereof may be had in the findings of appropriate biological sciences.

But apart from gross and subtle physical variations in men despite overall similarity of figure and shape, there are numerous other differences. Men differ in dress-habits, in food-habits, in the languages they speak. There are sexual and glandular differences - the ineluctable male-female divide - differences in age, weight, gait and so on. There are dissimilarities because of geographical factors - distinctions between the East and the West; between Americans, Europeans and Asians; between people of the hills and of the plains; between rural and urban types and so on. There is great variety in names, labels, titles, denominations, etc. People are differentiated by such categories as clan, tribe, race, etc.

There are divisions on the basis of economic circumstances and social relations - between the rich and the poor, employer and employed, master and servant, husband and wife, high caste and low caste, landlord and tenant and so on. Superimposed on all these, there are divisions induced by religions, ideals and ideologies - between Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists and Christians; between Shaivas, Saktas and Vaisnavas; between communists and capitalists or between bourgeois and proletariat; between Idealism and Realism or Meterialism; between theists and atheists and so on.

Now, affected or conditioned by such diverse groupings and relations, what is an Individual? Does he remain undivided and indivisible, as the word 'individual' etymologically means? Or is he one only conceptually, but actually terribly fragmented, divided psychologically? Is he not, like a rudderless ship, at the mercy of winds and waves of influences - internal and external? He is not only determined by various physical and chemical determinants, but also by mental factors. Ideas, opinions, feelings, urges, ambitions, aspirations, hopes and fears hold him captive as also his organic constitution and ecological conditions.

One may think that an individual man remains the same from birth to death amidst all vicissitudes of life. Is this borne out by facts or is it a counterfactual speculative belief, fondly entertained against all evidence to the contrary? What remains physically or mentally the same from the stage of a new-born baby to that of a depleted dying man, passing through processes of growth and decay?

Perhaps nothing, except the adventitious name and certain devices of conventional reference and identity like "son of so-and-so", "author of such-and-such", etc.

But this is not how a person generally takes himself to be. He regards himself as a distinctive entity, a self, 'I' or Ego - separate from others - concerned with his own security and survival, his personal wants and cravings, success and failure, joy and sorrow, hopes and fears, power and possessions and all that. He cherishes himself above everything else, overtly or covertly. He regards others as friends or foes insofar as they serve or hinder his interests. There is deep truth in the Upanishadic saying that things and persons are not valued for their own sake, but for the sake of the self. But the enduring self, the Ego or 'I' seems to be an imagined thing, an illusory entity, a psychological myth. This does not mean that it is ineffective or useless. We need the words 'I', 'you', 'mine', 'yours' etc. Otherwise, communication and social life would not be possible. Yet there is great value in seeinig the false as false. It may loosen, if not dissipate, clinging or attachment.

The individual is egoistic. He is a local and localised being, self-centred, confined to his little corner, pre-occupied with his own worries, fears, pleasures, misfortunes, comforts, achievements, recognition, respectability and all the rest. But there is no absolute reason why he must remain shut up in his cell. Occasionally an opening does occur here or there, bringing glimpses of truth to his vision. Out of such glimpses or with such glimpses come flashes of sympathy, empathy, love, care, compassion and creative activities. But the individual soon retreats to his cell. After all, he is accustomed there. Perhaps he finds a sort of safety and security in imprisonment. To some animals, hay is the choicest of foods. Dirt and filth sustain certain insects, which cannot survive elsewhere.

But if, in whatever way or by whatever reason, the individual could look dispassionately and objectively, he would see that sorrow or suffering is not his alone - it is universal; it is the common lot of all human beings. Human beings all over the world, since thousands of years, have been suffering. Deprivation, despair, hope and hopelessness, quarries and adjustments, cruelty and malevolence, craving,

competition, etc. are everywhere - not only in this region or that, this country or that. Individuals fight over fences on their little plots of land, and nations fight over frontiers. Is there any fundamental difference between the two? One modern Bengali rhyme for tiny-tots that became popular says: You scold children for quarrelling over and breaking a small oil-bottle. But you childish grown-ups (so-called leaders) break and divide the country - what about that? So there is no basic difference between individual problem and world-problem. The world is made up of individuals or groups of individuals; and if the individual is not at peace, the world cannot be free of conflicts, patchworks notwithstanding.

Can the individual, embroiled in his pettiness, become the human being? What is involved in that? That means a total change of attitude - a psychological revolution - concomitant with seeing the wholeness of human condition in which all participate. It signifies a transformation from tribal mentality to global mentality - not just theoretically but in one's flesh and blood - in which false separation from others is done away with, a radical change from fixation with 'I' and 'mine' to the mutuality 'we' and 'all'.

ayam nijo paro veti gaṇanā laghucetasām
udāracaritānāṁ tu vasudhaiva kutumbakam

Can a superficial mind become an oceanic awareness? Can Ratnakara really become Valmiki? Yes, the wise would say, if man understands himself in *toto*.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

* This paper derives from the wisdom of great minds, but the principal indebtedness is to the teachings of J. Krishnamurti.

1. J. Krishnamurti : *Freedom From the Known, p. 12.*
2. *Carpaṭapaṇjarika*, Last verse.

8

KARMA IN BUDDHISM AND JAINISM: KARMA, REBIRTH, AND THE QUESTION OF THE TRANSFERABILITY OF KARMA*

FRANK J. HOFFMAN

Introduction

Karma (Pali *kamma*) is fundamental for understanding both Jainism and Buddhism. Recent literature has called attention to the question of the transferability of karma. The transferability of karma is not admitted in Jainism. However important the transfer of karma is in the historical development of Buddhism, and however oddly it may crop up even in early Buddhist texts, it is logically incompatible with the structure of early Buddhist philosophy.

That action has consequences is one of the basic moral lessons that each generation teaches to the next. In India, this insight about action is linked to a belief that the human person is not limited to a linear development on timeâs arrow that begins with birth and ends with death. The result is that karma and rebirth, taken together, articulate the underpinnings of a view that entials both ethical and metaphysical beliefs. One of these beliefs is that moral responsibility may be ascribed across lifetimes linked by a stream-of-consciousness that is not the self-same substance nor entirely different. In metaphysical terms what this entails is a process (not substance) conception of self; in ethical terms, a view of moral responsibility that is individualistic but is not limited to a single lifetime.

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* The Indian Philosophical Congress Endowment Lectures, 1998-1999.

(1) Comparison of the Heterodox Schools reveals that Jainism is closer to Cārvāka on the point of the nature of the kārmic process as material, in contrast to early Buddhism wherein the kārmic process is not material. Specifically, in the "heterodox systems" of Buddhism, Jainism, and Cārvāka, karma ("ction") receives a considerable amount of attention. Cārvāka denies both karma and rebirth. Jainism is close to Cārvāka in that the kārmic process is material, in contrast to Buddhism in which the kārmic process is not material. regarding that which continues, Jainism is closer to Buddhism than the annihilationist Cārvāka is close to either as regards what happens after death. Buddhism is opposed to Cārvāka in that the latter deny karma and rebirth, but in the case of the death of the Tathāgata there is no question of continuance in Buddhism.

(2) Regarding that which ordinarily continues across lifetimes, Jainism is closer to early Buddhism than the annihilationist Cārvāka. For consciousness depends on conditions, and when these are gone it makes no sense to say that the Tathāgata went north, south, east, or west. So in this latter respect Buddhists earn through a series of lives what Cārvakins take as the obvious lot of all without rebirths.

(3) Regarding the issue of continuance in the case of the Tathāgata (the "thus-gone," liberated saint), in its doctrines of anattā ("non-substantiality") and parinibbana ("final enlightenment") Buddhism is closer to Cārvāka than to Jainism with its heaven of kaivalya (final emancipation) or mukti (liberation) in which the soul (jīva) is perfected. That the Buddha refused to say that Tathagata does not exist after death only indicates his refusal to engage in speculative matters.

(4) Hence on the nature of the kārmic process Jainism is closer to Cārvāka than early Buddhism, while on the rejection of permanent soul Buddhism is closer to Cārvāka than Jainism. (By 1, 2 & 3).

I. Karma in Jainism

The topic of karma in Jainism is a complex one, and I cannot survey all of its compexity here. One of the most detailed treatments of this topic in English is in K.B. Jindal, and the reader is referred there for additional details. (Jindal: 1988, 141-186). That the topic of karma is related to the topic of *Jīva* (soul) is evident; as N. Tatia observes: "The greater the defilement of the soul the less its purity, and the less the purity the looser is the bondage of the auspicious *karmans*. And, therefore, the greater the defile-

ment of the soul, the less is the intensity of the fruition of the auspicious *karmans.*" (Tatia: 1951, p. 235).

Jaini points out that it is a "basic Jaina doctrine that a soul is exactly coterminous with the body of its current state of bondage *(svadeha - parimāṇa)*" (O' Flaherty: 1980, 219). Mysore Hiriyanna says of the *Jīva* that : It is capable of expansion and contraction according to the dimensions of the physical body with which "it is associated for the time being. In this respect it resembles a lamp, it is said, which though remaining the same illumines the whole of the space enclosed in a small or big room in which it happens to be placed. It means that like its other features, the *jīva's* non-spatial character also is affected by association with matter. The Jaina thus denies the unalterable nature of the jīva which is commonly recognized by Indian thinkers (Hiriyanna, 158). This is useful exposition, except that it does not follow from the jīva being "variable" in size that the jīva is "non-spatial."

M. Hiriyanna mentions seven principles by which to understand how the *jīva* gets associated with *karma* and how it can be released from kārmic bondage. These are : *āsrava, bandha, saṁvara, nirjara and mokṣa plus jīva and ajīva. Āsrava* indicates "the forgoing of the fetter of karma" (defilement), and we should not think that there was ever a time when the jīva was free from this karmic accompanyment." (Hiriyanna 169). Here ignorance and passion lead to the movement of kārmic particles toward the *jīva.* Then when the particles actually infiltrate the *jīva,* there is *bandha.* When, through right knowledge and self-restraint, the influx of new kārmic particles is stopped, there is *saṁvara.* When the shedding of kārmic particles already in the *jīva* occurs, there is *nirjara* (a condition facilitated by training but which even without this would occur after samvara). After *nirjara* there arises *mokṣa,* in which the bond between soul and matter is entirely broken and the jīva "transcends *saṁsāra* and flies up to its permanent abode at the summit of *lokakasa.*" (Hiriyanna, 169) Thus, the whole aim of life in Jainism (i.e., *mokṣha*) is to get disentangled from *karma. (5) Transferability of merit is not admitted in Jainism.*

Gombrich has emphasized that the Jaina view of the universe is of something with limited dimensions and a clear top and bottom by contrast to the "open-endedness" of the Buddhist universe (p. 38). Jaina cosmological diagrams of the universe bear this out.

In Jainism, the term for "self" is *jīva*, and negative particles of *karma* are said to obscure the vision of the jīva. Although, on one level, all action or *karma* is thought to have some negative effect according to Jainims, negative jīva-obscuring effects are especially pronounced in the case of wrong actions. Jains have a doctrine of *ahiṁsā* ("non-violence") - an histocially influential one that influenced Gandhi, among others - and this *ahiṁsā* (literally, not harming) view holds that it is morally wrong to take life or cause suffering. The *ahiṁsā* view is connected to views of *jīva* and *karma* in that when hurful or fatal actions take place against a sentient being, the *jīva* of the person doing the harm receives negative kārmic particles that obscure its vision. So in order to see rightly it is thought necessary to wipe the *jīva* clean. The way in which this is done in Jainism is by not disturbing sentient beings any more than is necessary, and by doing good works and penances that counteract the effect of wrong actions. Mortification of the body is thus seen as contributing to spiritual perfection by enabling the *jīva* to see more clearly. This is not achieved by ritual sacrifices as in brahmanism but by actions that have a moral quality.

Most well-known philosophical accounts of Jainism call the way in which the negative particles of karma adhere to the *jīva* thus obscuring its vision a "material" process or a "quasi-material" process. It is thus more a "what" than a "how," since there is a substance (material stuff) involved rather than a fluid process.

Karma in Early Buddhism

This paper states and critically discusses the views of *karma* (Skt., "action"; Pali, *kamma*) in Jainism and Buddhism. In doing so the work of Richard Gombrich in the chapter of his *How Buddhism Began* called "How, not What: Kamma as a Reaction to Brahmanism" is highlighted against the background of other scholarship on the subject.

- M. Hiriyanna: Buddhism discarded both Hinduism and Jainism (p. 154, last 2 sentences)
- An III 108 = I 263 eliminating *rāgadoṣamoha* is eliminating karma (Gombrich, 52-3)
- 4 noble truths presuppose karma (Gombrich, p. 33)

- Gombrich, p. 38 karma operates in an open-ended universe in contrast to Jainism (point made above already)
- in what sense of "explanation" does karma explain? (ref. Lamotte via p. 49 in Gombrich & McDermott's concluding chapter in book)
- problem of the transferability of karma (Gombrich, p. 57 & Herman, *Community*)

When we turn to kamma (i.e., the Pali language term for "action") in early Buddhism, the emphasis is on the "how" not the "what" as a Jainism. In Buddhism, *patticcasamuppada* (causality) is understood as a natural process of casual operation according to which morally good actions have good consequences either in this life, in some future life, or both. (It goes without saying that this cannot be falsified or verified, since the view is entirely open-ended.) Unlike in Jainism, there is no physical mechanism posited or process of adhesion. *(6) Similarly, transfer of merit is not admitted in Buddhism.*

Comparison, Contrast, and Assessment

Gombrich writes:

> We can see that the Buddha was not even alone in opposing the brahmin concept of karma as ritual act with an ethical view: the Jains too held that karma had an intrinsic ethical value. For the Jains, however, karma was not simply good or bad; to a greater or lesser extent it was all bad. They conceptualized karma as a kind of dust or dirt which clung to the soul, which too was material, wherever one acted. The dust weighed down the soul and kept it in this world, eventually to be reborn in another body. Bad deeds were worse than good deeds, producing worse kārmic dirt, but to attain liberation one had to expunge all karma from the soul so that it could float, weightless, to the top of the universe. (p. 50)

Interpretations

(7) Karma in early Buddhism and Jainism is an individualistic matter. (By 5 and 6). Jainism is close to Cārvāka in that the kārmic process is material, in contrast to Buddhism in which in early Buddhism the kārmic process is not material. Regarding that which continues,

Jainism is closer to Buddhism than the annihilationst Cārvāka as regards the afterlife. Buddhism is opposed to Cārvāka in that the latter deny karma and rebirth, but in the case of the death of the Tathagata there is no question of continuance. So in this latter respect Buddhism comes full circle around to extinction through the elimination of passion, hatred, and confusion.

Transferability of karma in early Buddhism is logically incompatible with individual merit characteristic of the early view-point. This is so, but that does not mean that texts are entirely consistent on the point (McDermott: 1984, 36). Speaking of the harmonizing of popular beliegs and practices with official doctrone, McDermott states: In the case of the belief in the effectiveness of transfer of merit as a means whereby the suffering of the shades (peta) can be alleviated, the partial harmonization was effected by position the existence of several classes of petas. Only shades of one type could be aided in this way, and then only when the evil kamma which had resulted in their suffering had been expended.'' (McDermott: 1984, 146).

Richard Gombrich makes three important points about the transferability of merit.

> "First: Buddhologists have tended to ignore the importance of such transfers in brahminical texts, where they are documented from a very early period .... The Theravada came to accept the transfer of merit, but apparently tried to evade the problematic notion of transferring a process, karma, by taking over this piece of Sarvastivadin terminology. This is my second point; I am not aware that it has been noticed before. In Pali, therefore, what is said to be given is not merit but 'possession' (of merit) - *patti-dana*. Though all Theravadins use the term patti (= Sanskrit *prāpti*), I suspect that hardly any of them know just what it means (as distinct from what it refers to), since it was borrowed from another school. ... My third point is that this transfer of a reified karma seems to me to be what is crucial in turning Buddhism into a religion in which one could be saved by others. It is thus the transfer of merit which takes the place in Buddhism which divine grace occupies in Christianity." (1996: 56-57)

Connected with Gombrichâs last point is the most detailed recent treatment of the transferability of karma of which I am aware, viz. the chapter, "Transfer of Merit and the Law as Juridical" in Bruce Reichenbach, *The Law of Karma*. He writes: "In short, the advocate of the law of karma might abandon the notion of individual karma in favour of pools of kārmic residues to which the agent and others can contribute, but from which the agent alone draws. Further, to comport with the claims of justice, it must be stipulated that others can only add merit to a pool characterized by demerit. But these two broadening stipulations have several important consequences." (Reichenbach: 1990, 158). Reichenbach sets out three such important consequences in some detail, the main points of which are as follows: "First, they imply that a completely naturalistic, causal account of the operations of karma is no longer adequate." (Reichenbach: 1990, 158) The problem here is that if merit can be transferred but not demerit, the explanation of how karma operates can no longer solely by put in terms of dispositions and tendencies or moral qualities that adhere to the agent and a theistic administrator must be supposed who governs the process. "Secondly, this broadening weakens the kārmic preoccupation with the principle of universal justice." (159) Here the principle of universal justice becomes subservient to a higher ideal of mercy and compassion, and the emphasis is on salvation rather than building moral character. "Thirdly ... it means that the law of karma no longer provides the neat moral explanation of good and bad experiences, for my experiences are no longer the deserts of my own actions, but the products of the actions of many who have contributed to my pool of karma." (159) Here the upshot is that other explanations must be appealed to in discussing why pain, pleasure, fortune, and misfortune arise. (160) F.L. Woodward (1914) had earlier noted places in the canon where the transfer of merit is mentioned, as noted by others (McDermott (1980, 190).

Bruce Reichenbach takes up the question of whether the law of karma would be violated if one admits that kārmic merit may be transferred (158). He shows that there are several problems with the idea of transfer of merit: how could it occur, can demerit also be transferred, and is transfer of merit consistent with justice? (153-157) He believes that if we change the law of karma to say that our kārmic pool of merit can be affected by what others do, then the transfer of merit does not violate the law of karma (158). It can also be changed to stipulate that only

merit (not demerit) can influence our pool. (158). The consequence of these stipulations is unhappy, however, since a complete naturalistic, casual account of karma is inadequate and must employ a "thestic administrator who is awar of the karma accumulated and who can transfer merits as account can be transferred from one person to another." (159) A second untoward consequence is that the broadening of the concept of karma āmeans that the principle of universal justice is subservient to a higher ideal of mercy and benevolence."(159) A third unhappy conse-quence is that "the law of karma no longer provides the neat moral explanation of good and a bad experiences, for my experiences are no longer the deserts of my own actions, but the products of the actions of many who have contributed to my pool of karma."(159) The upshot of all this on Reichenbach's view is to show insufficiency of the law of karma in contrast to the view that it is of fundamental importance.

(8) Early Buddhism does not slide down the slippery slope Reichenbach envisions which lands one in a non-individual pool of karma with the several unhappy consequences therein. However, what Reichenbach has inadvertently shown is the superiority of what is generally held in early Buddhism about karma, viz. that it is an individualistic matter. On this view one does not slide down the slippery slope Reichenbach envisions which lands one in the pool of karma with the several unhappy consequences therein.

In taking up the issue of whether the law of karma is a juridical rather than a moral law, Richenbach argues that it is the former. First, it applies whether what we know we have done or are morally accountable. Second, without recollection of past lives the doctrine of karma cannot affect our present moral attitude toward the past in specific terms. And it does not require that we change to become virtuous. Third, the juridical nature of the law of karma can be seen in that "our motive for helping other is not true altruism or genuine concern for their pleasure, but rather our own avodance of future pains."(162) Finally, the law of karma itself leads not to salvation but to a juridical outcome, there being a dualism between a salvation system and a juridical system.

In trying to make this point stick in the case of Buddhism, Reichenbach drives *a wedge between karma and rebirth that cannot be maintained without doing violence to early Buddhism.*

(9) As Gombrich shows, there is no wedge between karma and rebirth. (By 7 & 8) Recently, Richard Gombrich has shown that severing the ethical and the soteriological in Buddhism rests on an historical as well as a doctrinal misinterpretation (Gombrich: 1996, 49-50). The historical mistake is to think that the salvation orientation and the karma orientation have separate historical roots. The doctrinal mistake is to think that there is a paradox or a contradiction between karma and enlightenment. Gombrich's exposition just mentioned above shows the second way in which Reichenbach's very worth-while attempt is defective. For the latter relies on a disjunction (he calls it a "dualism") between karma and rebirth that he develops by relying on parts of Conze's *Buddhist Thought in India.* (Reichenbach: 1990. 163-165) This turns into a *false dichotomy* between "two qualitatively different knids of persons, ordinary people, who still operate within the kārmic system, and saints, who function on the supramundane plane of existence." (Reichenbach: 1990, 165).

(10) As Gombrich shows, it is a false dichotomy to think of Buddhism in terms of saints concerned with nibbana and laypersons concerned with karma.

(11) Buddhist atheism with reference to an absolute Creator God together with its denial of permanent soul are logically incompatible with the belief in a "theistic administrator" to control karma. (By 4 and 8) Transferability of merit is not countenanced in Jainism.

Conclusion

(1) Comparison of the Heterodox Schools reveals that Jainism is closer to Cārvāka on the point of the nature of the kārmic process as material, in contrast to early Buddhism wherein the kārmic process is not material.

(2) Regarding that which ordinarily continues across life times, Jainism is closer to early Buddhism than the annihilationist Cārvāka.

(3) Regarding the issue of continuance in the case of the *Tathāgata* (the thus-gone, liberated saint), in its doctrines of *anattā* (non- substantiality) and *parinibbāna* (final enlightenment) Buddhism is closer to Cārvāka than to Jainism with its heaven of *kaivalya* (final

emancipation) or *mukti* (liberation) in which the soul (*jīva*) is perfected.

(4) Hence on the nature of the kārmic process Jainism is closer to Cārvāka than early Buddhism, while on the rejection of permanent sould Buddhism is closer to Cārvāka than Jainism. (By 1, 2, and 3)

(5) Transferability of merit is not admitted in Jainism.

(6) Similarly transfer of merit is not admitted in early Buddhism.

(7) Karma in early Buddhism and Jainism is an individualistic matter. (By 5 and 6)

(8) Early Buddhism does not slide down the slippery slope Reichenbach envisions which lands one in a non-individual pool of karma with the several unhappy consequences therein.

(9) As Gombrich shows, there is no wedge between karma and rebirth. (By 7 and 8)

(10) As Gombrich shows, it is a false dichotomy to think of Buddhism in terms of saints concerned with *nibbana* and laypersons concerned with karma.

(11) Buddhist atheism with reference to an Absolute Creator God together with its denial of permanent soul are logically in compatible with the belief in a "theistic administrator" to control karma. (By 4 and 8)

Therefore, Reichenbach's argument to the effect that karma is not central to Buddhism from a moral point of view falls down. (By 9, 10 & 11)

Postscript

Reichenbach has attempted to argue against the sufficiency of the karma view in Buddhism *(inter alia)* and the need for a "theistic administrator." But as was argued above, transferability of karma in early Buddhism is logically incompatible with individual merit characteristic of the early viewpoint. Consequently transferability of merit need not be maintained by Buddhists wishing to adhere to early Buddhism. Ironically, Reichenbach's very detailed philosophical analysis has

inadvertently shown the superiority of the individualistic early Buddhist perspective on karma. For what is generally held in early Buddhism about karma, viz. that it is an individualistic matter, is better able to account for logical difficulties, even without a "theistic administratior," than subsequent developments in the history of Buddhism.

N.B.: The supposition of a theistic administrator brings up a host of difficulties well-known to philosophers of religion. It is not my intention to survey them here. Suffice it to say that, if karma theory must be rescued by the supposition of a thestic administrator to govern the process of karma, then this is tantamount to "explaining" one imperfectly understood concept by another that is at least as obscure.

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9

MORALITY, PRUDENCE, AND VIRTUE IN EARLY BUDDHISM*

FRANK J. HOFFMAN

I. Introduction

Let us begin with an introductory question: "How can one understand the distinctive nature of Buddhist ethics, particularly the selflessness that is sometimes so unusually expressed?" Consider, for example, the self-immolation of Vietnamese monks and nuns during the Vietnam conflict, such as that of the Buddhist nun, Chi Mai related in Eppsteiner.[1] Can a distinction be maintained between self-centered suicides and other regarding suicides? If so, would this distinction prise apart cases like Chi Mais suicide from the more recent ones in California of "Heaven's Gate" people?[2] Whatever the particular cultural belief, the Pali Canonical writings oppose suicide.

The reflections that stimulated this paper in the first place have to do with how to understand the doctrine of causality (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) in relation to morality *sīla*. It seems that the main motivation for moral livinig is because of what will happen if one does (and does not) follow the moral path. Various painful and possibly long but nevertheless temporary *niraya* ("purgatory") rebirth states await eveil doers. Conversely, various pleasant (or at least not unpleasant) states of rebirth await those who do good. At the villager's level this dichotomy may be understood in terms of 'merit and demirit (*puñña* and *pappa*). There is also the goal of final enlightenment *(parinibbāna)* especially relevant to the aspirations of the monk (bhikkhu) and nun *(bhikkuni)*.

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* The Indian Philosophical Congress Endowment Lectures - 1998 - 1999.

The thesis of this paper is that (1) *Buddhist ethics is not based on prudence in the sense of self-interest.* It is a separate question whether ethics must be based on something, that is, whether some form of ethical foundationalism is true. But I do not take up that question here. In what follows below I attempt to prove this thesis in a step-by-step manner.

James Rachels says Kant's *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1875) expresses the Categorical Imperative as follows:[3]

> Act only according to that maxim by which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.

The philosophical literature is replete with discussions of how many formulations of the Categorical Imperative may be found in Kant. Pojman, for one, distinguished three formulations.[4] It goes beyond the purpose of this paper to deal with this issue. The focus here is on Kant's way of distinguishing what he called "counsels of prudence" from "moral laws". Kant writes.[4]

> The different kinds of imperative exercise a different kind of *necessitation.* This different may be marked by describing them as rules of skilll, *counsels* of prudence, commands (or *laws*) of morality. Only *commands* or laws are basolutely binding.

(1) *Kant distinguished prudence (in the sense of following self-interest) from morality (in the sense of doing duty for duty's sake).* Although this claim does not entirely summarize Kant's view, it is one way getting to the heart of the matter. Surely Kant also emphasized concepts of "disinterested action," "good will,ãã and so forth.[5] In the Groundwork, Kant says that reason "recognizes as its highest practical function the establishment of a good will."[6]

As the case of Buddhism shows, morality does not have to consist in a course of action devoid of self-interest. Prudential considerations of the sort that Kant descries may be powerful motivators to do the right thing. Nevertheless, the right thing can be the right thing just because that's the way things are, and not *because* of the prudential considerations. In Buddhism things are as they are, *dhammata.* Morality requires neither a theistic administrator nor a philosophical basis that values prudence in the sense of self-interest.

(2) In any case, *Buddhist ethics looks like prudence rather than morality from a Kantian view.* This is because it is easy to interpret attention to merit and demerit in the kārmic scheme of things as a spiritual analogy to crass materialism of "the one who ends life with the most toys wins the game." The theistic parallel to this might be called "browine points in heaven." So cover yourself, don't throw away your chances, as the following parody of a religiously inadequate form of theism exposed by Rush Rhees shows:[7]

> Is the reason for not worshipping the devil instead of god that God is stronger than the devil? God will get you in the end, the devil will not be able to save you from his fury, and then you will be for it. "Think of your future, boy, and don't throw away your chance's. What a creeping and vile sort of thing religion must be.... The power of god is a different power from the power of the devil. But if you said that God is more powerful than the devil - then I should not understand you, because I should not know what sort of measure you used.

Early Indian Pali Buddhism resists compartmentalization. Some recent attempts to specify it are: Utilitarian and Pragmatist (Kalupahana). Altruistic, Qualified Absolutism, Naturalist, Teleological, but not Consequentalist (Keown), and Virtue Ethics based on Detachment (Swearer & Sizemore).

II. Asian Conceptual Background to the Development of Ethics

In Indian thought, the development of a concept of order to a concept of *duty, truth, and doctrine* goes as follows:

Vedas	Upaniṣads	Pāli Nikāyas
ṛta ›	*dharma*	*dhamma*
moral world order	duty	truth
eternal law	doctrine	truth (of Buddhism),

The Early Buddhist Context

In early Indian Theravada Buddhism of the Pāli tradition, the eightfol noble path may be summarized under the headings of *sīla, samādhi,* and *paññā* or morality, concentration, and wisdom respectively.

III. Morality, Prudence, and Virtue

A. Morality

I. Western Terminology

Sometimes the term "ethics" is used as the equivalent of "morality"; at other times, ethics means that branch of philosophy concerned with the articulation and defence of principles of right human conduct by contrast with moral rules that are of a lower level of generality.

2. *Buddhist terminology: Some Main Buddhist Ethical Concepts*

a. *Sīla, Samādhi, and paññā* ("morality, concentration, & wisdom")

The usual translation of sīla is morality but it may also be translated as virtue. Usually it is associated with the five precepts of the layman and the ten precepts reserved for monks.

b. Indian › China › Japan

A trans-cultural concept of *meditation practice* linked to morality *(sīla)*

Indian Buddhism	Chinese Buddhism	Japanese Buddhism
› *dhyāna* meditation	› *ch âan* meditation	› *zen* meditation

c. *Ahiṁsā* or "non-violence" (quotation in H. Saddhatissa)

d. *Metta* or "loving-kindness" (quotation in H. Saddhatissa)

e. "Benevolence" (quotation in G. Misra)

f. In the Mahayana, the *pāramita,* are virtues: generosity, morality, patience, vigor, meditation, and wisdom.

g. Soteriology and Buddhist Ethics

(3) *Buddhist ethics is oriented toward salvation.*

Because Buddhist ethics is soteriologically oriented, it is clear that what makes an action right is whether it is conducive to liberation (skillful or *kuśala*).

B. Prudence

I. Western Terminology

Prudence is often considered a virtue. But it was Immanuel Kant who used counsels of prudence in contrast to moral laws. In this way, Kant distinguishes between moral action and self-interested action.

2. Buddhist Terminology

Bruce Matthews writes.[10]

āThe Sutta Piṭaka is explicit about what makes up virtue (sīla). Usually it is associated with the frive precepts (pañcasīla) of the layman, and the ten (daśa) precepts reserved "for monks or, as Saddhatissa puts it, for the more pious of the laity who could remain unattached to their families." Apart from the morality of the Eightfold Path, comprehensive lists are provided guarding against killing (pāṇātpāta veramaṇī), stealing adinnādāna, sexual misconduct (kāmesu micchācāra), lying musāvada, intemperance surāmeraya. These are the "five precepts" Other precepts augment this. They also proscribe speech that is slanderous (pisnṇāvācā), impolite (parusāvācā), or frivolous (samphappalāpa); covetousness (abhijjhā); malevolence (byāpāda); and heretical views (micchdiṭṭhi). In M. 1.345 these virtues are set in the context of a positive exposition of the good life for the one who can adhere to them. Such a person is usually a monk or a novice (sāmaṇera) willing to abstain from violence and impropriety of any kind, from harming even seed and vegetable growth.[7] He speaks only with discrimination (sāpadesa) and taste, avoiding egocentric or frivolous talk. Understandably, his wants must be few; but with these virtues he is as free as a "bird on the wing" (pakkhī sakuṇo) and, taking these things with him wherever he goes (D.1.71), having this "noble body of virtuousness" (ariyena sīlakkhandhena), he lives blameless, with mind cleansed of covetousness (abhijjāya cittaṁ parisodheti). Certainly as described here refers to a wholesome conative attitude in the ordering of life. It supposes that one does not start with a good conduct automatically, but one must work at it with discipline and energy. By itself, however, virtue cannot produce wisdom. It can at best provide merit puñña, even though it becomes part of a casual chain and in this way contributes to the process which culminates in wisdom.

For the Buddha, of much greater significance that the actual performance of virtue was the intention underlying virtuous conduct. Thus in the continuation of M. 1.345 (and in other texts as well, for instance, M. 1.145f and 3. 129f) we are told that the virtuous life leads to restraint of the senses (indriyasamṁvara), which in turn causally conditions the development of mindfulness (satisampajañña), and thence the arising of wisdom.

Although the Buddha (and all contemporary Buddhists I have worked with) urge self-control and the exercise of will power in the pursuit of a wholesome ethical life, it should be emphasized that this is not for any ascetic or puritanical motive. Rather, it is always informed by the ultimate ambition of training the mind through meditation. Hence the senses are controlled, resentment and other hindrances of will removed, unconscious roots of malevolent conduct understood and thus destroyed, and craving of any kind dissolved. This is efficacious only as success is attained in the contemplation of reality, in cutting through ignorance and experiencing for oneself the great truths of impermanency. Without the final accomplishment of wisdom or insight pañña), meditation, even at its highest level, cannot yield enlightenment - the cankers cannot be completely eradicated, and the craving disposition will sooner or later resurface.ãã

Insofar as Buddhist soteriology is concerned with final liberation, the process of making merit towards a better rebirth or final liberation is a process of self-interested activity (even if the self is forgotten in the process). As such it is prudential activity. With the vow of the Bodhisattva to save all sentient beings first, Mahayanists introduced the idea of a principle rather than a prudential way.

C. Virtue

I. Western Terminology

Virtue in the West are qualities of the moral person. The person of prudence may also be a moral person, but not in Kant' s sense. For Kant there is a radical distinction between morality and prudence. Morality consists in doing duty for duty' s sake without hope of reward (and is in that sense "disinterested") in accordance with the good will, which is alone good as a thing in itself rather than as a means.

2. Buddhist terminology

Application to the Problem of Caste-based Thinking

In the Pali Buddhist text, *Majjhima Nikāya* I 84 *(Madhura Sutta)*, there is a discussion of caste (Skt., *varṇa*; Pali, *vanna*; lit. "color"). Here it is asserted that there is no such thing as brahmanical superiority: (a) that prosperity and consequent *economic power* over others comes irrespective of caste; (b) that those who are "complete rotters" have *bad rebirths* irrespeective of caste; (d) those who are criminals receive *punishment* by society irrespective of caste; and (e) those who lead holy lives receive the *approval* of society irrespective of caste. Consequently, King Madhura Avanti-putta was converted to Buddhism by Maha-Kaccanaâs talk, whereas previously he was worried about whether what Buddhism said about caste made good sense.

There are Buddhist virtues.

(4) From a prudential point of view in Buddhism an action is right if and only if it is conducive to liberation (i.e., is "skillful" or kuśala).

(5) *The motivation for achieving salvation is self-interest.* (By 4)

(6) Buddhist ethics is an expression of a realization of the interconnectedness of things (*paṭiccasamuppāda* i.e., "dependent coarising," "interbeing").

(7) *That the motivation may in a particular case be at least partly self-interest does not imply that Buddhist ethics is based on self-interest.* (By 6)

(8) *Thus, whatever Buddhist ethics is based on, if anything, it is not prudence in the sense of self-interest.*

IV. Concluding Postscript

A. Comparative Philosophy and the Human World

Is it possible to pigeon-hole Buddhist ethics as a *kind* of theory while doing justice to the full range of its texts and traditions? Is the drive to *categorization* as important as the goal of *understanding* the other, in the hope of gaining insight into the point or significance that certain activities may take on for a person?

B. Continuity Without Identity

Is selfnessness without a (metaphysical) self an intelligible idea as Buddhists believe or is the Hindu supposition of *Ātman* (i.e., a permanent, blissful, center of consciousness) logically required to make sense of moral responsibility? Does the use of reflexive pronouns such as "myself" and "yourself" assume the existence of a metaphysical self? Does the strength of a cord always consist in the same thing running end to end, or does it sometimes consist in overlapping and criss-crossing fibers?

C. Recapitulation: the main argument and thesis

(1) Kant distinguished prudence (in the sense of following self-interest) from morality (in the sense of doing duty for duty's sake).

(2) Buddhist ethics looks like prudence rather than morality from a Kantian view.

(3) Buddhist ethics is oriented toward salvation.

(4) From a prudential point of view in Buddhism an action is right if and only if it is conducive to liberation (i.e., is "skillful" or *kuśala*).

(5) The motivation for achieving salvation is self-interest. (By 4)

(6) Buddhist ethics is an expression of a realization of the inter-connectedness of things (paṭiccasamuppāda i.e., "dependent coarising," "interbeing").

(7) This interconnectedness of things implies cause and effect (*kamma and phala*) for the individual stream-of-consciousness; and (especially in Mahayanna) the interconnectedness of all sentient beings

(8) That the motivation may in a particular case be at least partly self-interest does not imply that Buddhist ethics is *based on* self-interest. (By 6)

Thus, *Buddhist ethics is not based on prudence in the sense of self-interest.*

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10

HUMANISM AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF ADVAITA*

V.C. NARAYANA DAS

I

The modern age is characterized by an increasing interest in man. Consequently there is an emphasis upon a humanistic approach to the various individual, political, ethical and such other problems. Ever since the period of European Renaissance, there has been a stress on the study of man. Petrarch, a Renaissance scholar boldly proclaimed when medieval christianity and its theology was dorminating Europe, that all our knowledge is useless "unless we also know the nature of man, the end for which we are born, whence we come and whither we go."[1] The poet, Alexander Pope revealed the temper of the age when he sang that the proper study of mankind is man. In spite of all the great achievements of science and technology with all the benefits and comforts, man looks dissatisfied and bewildered evermore. He is desperately in search of his true identity. He is longing for a genuine knowledge of his reality and for the fulfilment of his aspiration. The European Reniassance marked not only the dawn of a new era but also the beginning of an enduring revival of man's interest in himself as a unique, dignified, creative and free being. As a result, a number of humanistic philosophies have been developed in the West. This spirit of humanism could not be confined to the West; it had its influence

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* Dr. T.M.P. Mahadevan Shasthyabdapurti Endowment Lectures, 1997-98.

on thinkers all over the world. The modern Indian thinkers were no exception to this trend. In fact, one of the most distinguishing features of the modern Indian thought is its humanistic orientation. Modern thinkers of India could perceive the positive aspects of the new development and interpret their own tradition from a humanistic standpoint.

Humanism, in one form or other, finds its place in the philosophical views of all modern Indian thinkers. Though most of them remained ardent followers of the Vedantic tradition, they were also fully conscious of the developments in the socio-cultural set up of modern age. Consequently, their approch to the whole question of philosophy reveals an intense desire to interpret the Vedanta, and particularly the Advaita system as truly relevant to the contemporary human situation. It will be my attempt in this lecture to have a brief look at the humanistic outlook as found in some of its most important expressions in the West, as well as in India, in order to enable us to discover the essential requirements of a genuine humanistic out-look on man, and to examine as to how these requirements could be satisfactority fulfilled in an integral humanism rooted and grounded in the insights of the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta.

II

Humanism as we all know, is an outlook which regards man as the centre of all interests. It considers man to be the sole object of all its concern. The general welfare of mankind is its goal. In brief it is an expression of man's concern for himself and his fellowbeings. In a sense, it may be said that a certain degree of humanistic outlook in some form or other was present in all stages of man's social and intellectual development. Though the history of humanism as a philosophical out look has been traced back to the sophists and particularly to the protogorean dictum, "man the measure of all things (Homo Mensura)," the term was adopted in a technical sense only by the sixteenth century. The renaissance scholars looked back to the Greek classics and discovered their humanistic ideal as the development of well-balanced personality. Gradually during the course of time, the term acquired different shades of meaning and significance in philosophy and literature. In the modern times, however, it has been taken to mean a

philosophy for which man is the centre and sanction of everything. Its goal is the emancipation of man, and so, every humanist tries to formulate a philosophy which he considers as the right answer to the individual and social problems of his age. Thus we have a number of humanistic philosophies in the West. They include Religion of Humanity, Marxism, Evolutionary Humanism, Democratic Humanism, Ethical Humanism, Socialism, Scientific Humanism and Religious Humanism. However, all these expressions of humanism, expect Religious Humanism are characterized exclusively by materialistic, secular and atheistic tendecies. It was August Comte who propounded a philosophy for modern man, the man of scientific age, which he called Religion of Humanity. According to him man has passed the primitive stage or religion, the intermediate stage of metaphysics and now entered the scientific stage. Hence he argued that the time has come to discard religious beliefs and metaphysical speculations and to adopt a positivist attitude based upon the findings of science. He subsituted the traditional concept of God with Humanity which alone deserves our worship, love and service. Karl marx with his humanism based upon Dialectical Materialism rejected religion as the opium of the masses and tried hard to bring about a socialist society. Another great thinker of the present century, Sri Julian Huxely introduced what he believed as a comprehensive humanistic philosophy on the basis of "the facts, insights and inferences of evolutionary science". He called his form of humanism as Religion Without Revelation. The exponents of these varieties and other secular forms of humanism aim at the perfection of human civilization within itself with the aid of science and reason. Thus one of the notable humanists comes to the conclusion that "In the last analysis science and practical reason have a pragmatic justification and vindication, because they are most instrumental to life activity individually and socially". "Therefore", he adds, "any philosophy applicable to contemporary life must take them as guides for our valuational choice."[2] There need not be any reference to a transempirical or transcendental realm of reality. The spirit of humanism has been so powerful and widespread in the modern age that Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru could observe that "Humanity is its God, and social service its religion."[3]

The Modern Western Humanists seem to believe that science has demonstrated the nature of the universe as self-contained reality. They do not find any necessity to postulate a supernatural ground. Man as a natural species is treated as self-sufficient. He is no longer regarded as a being with a spiritual dimension. A strong antisupernatural bias together with an excessive emphasis upon the material and the rational are the dominant attitudes behind the various forms of Western humanism. The advocates of these versions of humanism dream of realizing a glorious humanity getting rid of all ideas about man's supernatural origin and destiny. One may wonder as to whether this antisupernatural bias finds any justification either in science or common human experience. Similarly their exclusive emphasis upon the material and rational aspects of man seems to underestimate and misrepresent the human reality. Any system of thought which refuses to take into account all available facts of human experience, whether it be physical, mental, psychological or spiritual cannot claim itself to be an adequate philosophy of man.

A clear understanding and appreciation of the essential structure, values and possibilities of human reality is the basic requirement in the formation of a genuine humanism. Most of the expressions of humanism in the West appear to have failed in their attempt to assess and interpret man in the whole magnitude of his reality and values. Man can never be comprehended fully from a point of view which lays exclusive emphasis upon some or other aspects of his being. He is a living unity of matter, mind and spirit. He is endowed with various capacities such as sensation, emotion, reason and intuition. He is an individual person with an inwardness which is objectively unknowable. He comprehends in himself the individual, social and political dimensions of his personality. As a material being he is subject to the laws of nature, but as a living, thinking and creative person he is free. The complete man is a harmonious and coherent unity of the material, biological, psychological, rational, ethical, religious and spiritual aspects with infinite possibilities. Again, if we look at him from the standpoint of values, we are led to a similar conclusion. It is true that all forms of humanism uphold self-realization as highest value. However, one finds it difficult to accept a narrow interpretation of this ideal. As far as the secular humanists are concerned, the realization of values pertaining to the here and now exhausts what they consider as

self-realization. As a dynamic and self-transcending being with infinite possibilities, man is capable of infinite fulfilments also. Hence the religious and spiritual values are equally important as the material and earthly values. Similarity, social and individual, ethical and aesthetical, rational and emotional, all values have their respective places in the complex nature of man. Prof. N. K. Devaraja points out that we get the necessary clue for a characterization and definition of man from the ends and values he formulates for himself and for his fellow beings.[4]

III

Thus a humanism built on the basis of a comprehensive view of man's reality and values alone can have claim to genuine humanistic philosophy. The real emancipation of man in its complete sense is possible only through an application of the principles of such a humanism. The modern Indian thinkers have adopted a humanistic approach to the problems of man with a positive attitude to his life here and now. To a large extent, the traditional Indian thought is characterized by an exclusive emphasis upon the spiritual dimension of human reality. The whole concern, therefore, was for the spiritual self-realization of man. When liberation from the imperfect and trancient existence becomes the all-important consideration, quite naturally the life in this world is ignored. Of course, the traditional view on the values and ideals was quite comprehensive in principle, since the four-fold ideal (Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha) was supposed to take care of all aspects of the being of man. But in practice the excessive emphasis upon the spiritual self realization led to the development of an indifference to man's life in this world. As a result, philosophy appeared to be unrelated and irrelevant to the mundane existence of man.

The humanistic orientation of philosophical thought in the modern India can be seen also as a reaction against the ascetic and other-worldly tendencies of the traditional outlook. The modern thinkers have been able to recognize the futility inherent in such world-negating tendencies resulting from an exclusive emphasis upon the spiritual dimension of human reality. Hence they tried to provide us with a philosophy of the whole man - a philosophy in which all aspects of man's being are given their respective places. They admit the fact

that man shall not live by bread alone. But at the same time they have realized that he should not be reduced to a disembodied spirit. They have discovered, further, that a proper interpretation of the Advaita concept of reality would make it clear that this kind of a comprehensive approach is definitely implied in it. It is this modern outlook which is expressed by P.T. Raju, "But what is man?" he asks, Is he the spirit *(atman)*, the soul *(jiva)*, mind, life or physical body? "I think", he says, "in the opinion of the Upanisads, he is all these put together in an integral form."[5] The modern thinkers of India could realize that when rightly undrerstood, there is no contradiction between the Advaita concept of non-dual Brahman and the empirical world of science with its social and political set up. On the other hand, they were convinced also that a proper understanding, interpretation and practice of Advaita as a philosophy of the whole man would enable us to realize our ideal humanity. They have, therefore, rightly pointed out that the lofty ideals of humanism, such as equality, fraternity, freedom and self-realization, find a firm foundation and justification only in a world-view which demonstrates the essential unity of all existence in a reality that transcends the phenomenal world. This fact is quite clear from the philosophical views of such thinkers as Swami Vivekananda, Lokmanya Tilak, Rabindranath Tagore, Mahatma Gandhi, Sri Aurobindo and Dr. S. Radhakrishanan. The philosophical views of Swami Vivekananda and Rabindranath Tagore are glaring examples which bring out the implications of Advaita for a genuine form of humanism.

IV

For Swami Vivekananda, humanism consisted not in framing utopian ideals but in a practical life of sacrificial love and service to the suffering mankind. As a fully convinced Vedantin, the Swami saw man as essentially spiritual. While always remaining true to the Advaita position of monistic absolutism, he strongly held that the physical existence is real as long as man ignorantly believed in it. Hence the Swami did not advocate a philosophy of pure spiritualism or anti-materialism. The psycho-physical aspects of man, according to him, must find their fulfilment though the spiritual self-realisation is the ultimate end.

Swami Vivekananda believed in the practical application of Vedanta rather than mere study and preaching. "What is the use of

merely reading Vedanta?" he asks, "We must prove the truth of pure advaitism in practical life." He said further, "Sankara left this Advaita Philosophy in hills and forests, while I have come to bring it out of these places, scatter it, broadcast before the work a day world and society."[6]

Love, equality and universal brotherhood are the key-notes of Swami Vivekananda's humanism. The Universe is one. The absolute spirit *(Atman)* which dwells in all human beings is one and the same. In the light of this truth he finds no justification for the distinctions among men on the basis of caste, colour, creed and nationality. Hence it is the duty of everyone to seek the welfare of all though unselfish service. "Here is the world full of misery" he tells us, "Go out into it as Buddha did, and struggle to lessen it, or die in the attempt. Forget yourselves. This is the first lesson to be learnt. The one lesson obviously to all is the destruction of the little self and building up of the Real Self."

Obviously, a humanism with this message is not only significant for the individuals, but also for the entire society. The awareness of the essential unity of mankind will inspire man towards social life and creative activities leading to the general welfare of humanity as a whole. Swami Ranganathananda has rightly assessed Swami Vivekananda when he said, "Thus viewing man integrally in his physical, social and transsocial dimensions, and with a view to ensuring his total fulfilment, Vivekananda expounds a Philosophy of man, whether Eastern or Western, in which? can feel at home and find the inspiration to achieve total life fulfilment."[7]

Another example for the contemporary Indian humanism based upon the Vedantic tradition can be seen in the philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore. Tagore describes it as the Religion of Man. This form of humanism, which is spiritual in essence and strictly anthropocentric in outlook is another expression of the philosophy of the whole man comprehending the human reality in all its physical, intellectual, ethical, aesthetic and spiritual dimensions. Tagore was so filled with the genuine spirit of humanism that he could declare: "The whole stream of my innermost feeling, so also the entire range of my literary creation have come to reach their final goal in man."[8]

Tagore conceived the universe as a manifestation of God, though the cosmic evolution which began from space and time, progressed through the plane of life culminating in the appearance of man. Since

the process of evolution reached its meaning, value and unity in man, it has turned from the creation of physical objects towards a realisation of freedom and subtle perfection in him.

According to Tagore everything in the world is characterized by the principle of unity. The real unity, however is beyond perceivable unity in physical organism. It is a unity of a spiritual principle, the Universal Man. All men are manifestations of the Universal Man. The Universal Spirit is manifested in the human soul, the Universal Mind in the Human soul, the Universal Mind in the human reason and the Universal physical nature in the individual body. Hence there exists a real unity of mankind in the Universal Man. Prof. N. K. Devaraja tells us that "Tagore's conception of the relationship between man and God is more humanistic than even that of the traditional votaries of monistic Vedanta."[9]

The truth about the Unity of mankind is evident by the fact that we find our greatest delight when we realize ourselves in others. Love is a proof for the essential oneness of all men, and it springs from Truth which is one Great Whole. Hence love inspires us to realize this ultimate truth which is also the Universal Spirit through sympathy, co-operation and service. Supreme religion is thus manifested in love and unselfish service to mankind.

Religion of man, therefore, exhorts everyone to realize that unique freedom which consists in the discovery of the "inner truth of all things, where the endless many reveal the one."[10] In a human world, real freedom is to be found only in the perfect arrangement of interdependence and not in a secluded individualism. Thus true religion is the liberation of our individual personality in the Universal Person,[11] and the practical appropriation of it consists in the endeavour of man to cultivate and express those qualities which are inherent in the nature of Man the Eternal, and to have faith in Him.[12]

V

It is true that the philosophies of Swami Vivekananda and Rabindranath Tagore, the two typical forms modern Indian outlook on man could be characterized as religious humanism. Nevertheless they are the expressions of a genuine and integral outlook on the multidimensional reality, and manifold values and aspirations of man in the modern

age. They embrace both the mundane and the eternal values simultaneously. They have demonstrated the fact that "there is no conflict between religion and a reasonable humanism. The truly religious act in the world, the inner feeling of relation between God and man is bound to issue in the service of humanity.[13] Thus it appears that a genuine humanistic outlook is nothing but a practical expression of the truth of Vedanta. It is also reasonable and far superior to the purely scientific and materialistic attitude of modern Western humanists. It is extremely difficult to understand how man, being an insignificant species evolved in an insignificant planet, as science seems to tell us, could have any claim to dignity and greatness. Similarly, if the evolutionary progress is determined by the laws inherent in the matter itself, one has no right to speak of such values as human freedom and equality. For, our concept of human reality cannot be isolated from our view of the reality in general. Hence the strength and weakness of a form of humanism has to be judged on the basis of the metaphysics on which it is founded. The integral nature, adequacy and relevance of the humanistic outlook of modern Indian thinkers are precisely due to the fact that it is rooted and grounded in the monistic absolutism of Vedanta which is the quintessence of our religions and philosophical traditions.

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11

ADVAITA PHILOSOPHY AS A FORM OF HUMANISM*

(A CRITICAL STUDY OF SRI NARAYANA GURU'S PHILOSOPHY)

V.C. NARAYANA DAS

The Advaita system of philosophy is the most comprehensive view of reality that India could present to the world. Although this system found its complete and final form in the hands of Sankaracarya, for centuries the truths of Advaita remained confined to a few privileged philosophers and saints. Even in their case, very often the whole emphasis was on its theoretical and transcendental aspects. The practical implications of the Advaita system for human life in this world were often ignored. By and large, scholars of Advaita appeared to be concerned exclusively with all kinds of intellectual analysis and justification of its doctrines rather than with the practical appropriation of its insights. Surely, Advaita philosophy is far more than a mere theory formulated for the sake of satisfying man's intellectual curiosity. It claims itself as the ultimate truth about man and his world. As such, it not only reveals the transcendence of man's essential self and its ultimate identity with the absolute reality (Brahman), but also contains within itself all the necessary truths about man's existence here and now. It is the way of life in which man finds the fulfilment of all his genuine aspirations. To look upon Advaita only as a way to final deliverance, or simply as an ideal relating to the hereafter, is to miss its true value and significance. In fact, it contains a philosophy of human existence as a whole, and as such every aspect of human life must find

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its respective place within it. However, stress has often been laid on Advaita only as an answer to man's spiritual quest. Consequently, it was viewed as a doctrine which had little or nothing to do with the life and problems of man on earth. This has resulted not only in reducing Advaita to an individual-centred philosophy but also to an ideology without any concern for the material, social and economic aspects of man's every-day life.

The history of modern Indian thought has proved that the practical implications of Advaita philosophy could not remain hidden for ever. One of the most significant aspects of Vedantic thought in the modern age has been a clear recognition of the need for a comprehensive outlook on man and his multifarious problems. Thus, we can find a number of thinkers during the past two centuries who have tried to provide us with a philosophy of man, a philosophy in which all aspects of man's being are taken into account. They admit the fact that man shall not live by bread alone. But at the same time, they have been able to realize also that he cannot be reduced to a disembodied spirit. They saw him as an extremely complex and dynamic being with all the material, biological, psychological, social, economic, political, ethical, religious and spiritual dimensions of his reality. P.T. Raju points towards this fact when he says, "But what is man? Is he the spirit *(atman)*, the soul *(Jiva)*, mind, life or physical body? I think that in the opinion of the Upanisads, he is all these put together in an integral form."[1] There is no doubt that an over-emphasis on some aspect of his being, or a disregard for some of them, quite naturally results in producing a distorted picture of man. Perhaps, many of the advocates of Advaita in the past were so preoccupied with their concern for the spiritual liberation of man that they were quite indifferent with regard to the problems of life in this world. To a large extent, the modern thinkers and social reformers have been able to overcome this handicap. They could recognize that the need for the hour was humanistic approach to the problems of man on the basis of the message of Vedanta. They saw the practical implications of the philosophy of Advaita as providing lasting solutions to the miseries of mankind as a whole. Thus a number of humanistic philosophies which are rooted and grounded in the religious traditions of India have been expounded by such modern thinkers as Raja Rammohan Roy, Swami Vivekananda, Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo and Mahatma Gandhi.

Sri Narayana Guru was one of the greatest saints who represented this trend in Kerala. The Guru in his own unique way, tried to give expression to a genuine form of 'Religious Humanism' based upon the philosophy of Advaita. Of course he is not so well known to people beyond the boundaries of Kerala, like Swami Vivekananda or Sri Aurobindo. Nevertheless, he is quite significant for the Nation as a whole by the fact he has been able to revolutionize the belief, practices and life-styles of millions of people, on the basis of the truths of Advaita as he understood them.

I

Sri Narayana Guru was born on 20th August 1854, at Chempazhanti, which is situated about 12 kilometers to the north of Trivandrum. His father, Madan Asan was a farmer and village school teacher. His mother, Kochupennu was a very pious and kind-hearted woman. He belonged to the community of Ezhavas who were treated as untouchables by the Brahmins and Nairs during those days. As a young child he was brought up in a religious atmosphere, since the elder members of his family were regular worshippers at a nearby shrine (Manakkal Bhagavati Temple). An intensely religious bent of mind was evident in him from his very childhood. He revolted against the practice of untouchability even when he was a young boy. He was initiated into learning by one Chempazhanti Pillai. He got his early education from his father and his uncle who was a reputed Ayurvedic physician. Recognizing his thirst for knowledge and intellectual abilities he was sent to Kayamkulam in central Travancore for further studies in Sanskrit under one Raman Pillai Asan, a distinguished scholar of those days. It gave him the opportunity to learn the languages and literature of both Tamil and Sanskrit. He could spend only three years there, as he was forced to discontinue his studies due to severe illness. However, he continued his studies at home without the help of a teacher and gained sufficient mastery over many fields of knowledge.

Narayana had developed the habit of meditation from a very young age. He was very fond of undertaking lonely walks. Occasionally he delivered religious discourses at temples. This practice had earned him the title, 'Asan'*. By that time the elders could discover in him signs of deep-rooted ascetic and spiritual tendencies. In order to

bring about a change of mind, they got him married. Though he did not object to the wishes of the elders, he could not lead the life of a householder. His intense desire for knowledge and spiritual self-realization compelled him to leave his home in search of truth. He wandered from place to place visiting temples and meeting scholars and saints wherever he found them. It was during these wanderings that he met Kunjan Pillai, better known as Chattampi Swamikal. The latter took him to one Thykkattu Ayyavu under whom Narayana took training in Yogic practices. But the learning of Yoga did not satisfy him, as his goal was nothing short of the ralization of truth. So he continued his wanderings and meditations in jungles and deep forests.

He travelled all over South India and tried to acquire spiritual insights from saints and scholars. This enabled him to enrich his knowledge of Vedanta as well as Saivasiddhanta. Thereafter he *withdrew* himself to total seclusion in a forest. He spent considerable period of time in constant prayer and meditation in a cave at Pillathadom on the top of a hill called Marutwamalai (it is situated in the present Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu). He came out of the cave only after the attainment of his goal of self realization. This event took place in 1887 and thereafter he was known as Sri Narayana Guru. As a *Jivanmukta* he devoted the rest of his life on earth for the emancipation of his fellow beings. The Guru passed away on 25th September 1928 at Varkala.

II

Sri Narayana Guru wrote a number of works in Sanskrit, Malayalam and Tamil languages. He was equally proficient in all these three languages. His works include prose as well as poems. In fact, he was a poet of extraordinary talent. His major philosophical works on Advaita philosophy are *Atmopadesa-satakam* (Centiloquy to Self) in Malayalam, and *Darsanamala* (Garland of Visions) in Sanskrit. There are also other shorter compositions like *Advaitadipika* (Bright Lamp of Non-dual Wisdom), *Anukampa-dasakam* (Ten Verses on Mercy), *Arivu* (Knowledge) and *Cijjada-cintanam* (Reflections on Mind and Matter) which are intended to provide further clarifications on the subject. He wrote a number of hymns on Siva, Subrahmanya,

and Mother Goddess. His important works on social and ethical philosophy are *Jatimimamsa* (A Critique of Caste), *Jivakarunya-pancakam* (Five Verses of Kindness to Life) and *Municarya-pancakam* (Five Verses on the Way of Renounced Recluse). He has also translated the *Isavasyopanisad* from Sanskrit and *Ozhivil Odukkam* and a part of *Tirukkural* from Tamil. His *Kundalinipattu* (Song of Kundalini) is another composition in Malayalam and it is very famous for its charming melody and conceptual clarity.

Sri Narayana Guru claimed that he had accepted the philosophy of Vedanta as it was interpreted by Sankaracarya himself. "Sankara's point of view is our own", he said to his disciple, Nataraja Guru.[2] However, according to Nataraja Guru, the statement quoted above should be taken along with Guru's further remark: "If there was anything that he, the Guru Narayana, came to teach, it was that there was no room for justification for caste distinctions like Brahmin and Pariah."[3]

Obviously Sri Narayana Guru had no new religion or philosophy to teach. He had realized the truth of Advaita. What he really wanted was the practical application of the philosophy of Advaita to the lives of the individuals as well as to the society. His philosophical treatises are not intended to provide us with any new or different insights into reality. They are nothing but simplified expressions of the Advaita philosophy in Narayana Guru's own unique style.

III

In order to understand and appreciate the real significance of the mission and work of Sri Narayana Guru, it is absolutely necessary for us to have an idea of the social conditions of Kerala during the nineteenth century when he began his work. The practice of untouchability was very wide-spread. It was rather unapproachability. The people of the lower castes were treated so inhumanly that they had to maintain a certain minimum distance from those belonging to the higher castes. Some Namboothiri Brahmins were so orthodox that they were afraid of pollution by the mere sight of a low-caste man. Even among the so-called low castes with their innumerable sub-castes, there were clear distinctions between the higher and the lower

ones. They too observed untouchability and carefully followed the conventions regarding the distance they had to maintain from one another in order to avoid pollution. Education and civilized way of life were totally forbidden to the low-castes. In all their conducts they were supposed to submit to the dictates of the high caste men or to face severe punishment including death. They were strictly prohibited from the vicinity of the temples which were controlled by high-castes. At the same time these down-trodden people were also steeped in all kinds of superstitious practices and strange social customs and conventions. They worshipped their own deities. Animal sacrifices and libation with liquor formed part of the rituals associated with their worship. The practice of black magic was also a common phenomenon.

It is from this background that the life and mission of Sri Narayana Guru is to be understood. There is no wonder that this philosopher-saint, unlike many other similar figures, began his work not by preaching certain doctrines, but by concrete actions for the redemption of the suffering humanity. The blessed experience of the Ultimate Reality as non-dual brahman moved him to find out ways and means to share the bliss with his fellow beings. After his wonderful spiritual self-realization he came from the seclusion of the hills and forests to the valley and lived among the fishermen for some time. Then he moved to a locality called Aruvippuram which is about twenty five kilometers to the south of Trivandrum, and spent a few days in a cave which he found suitable for undisturbed meditation. But when the people of the adjoining villages knew about the presence of a strange man in the cave, they came in large numbers to see him. To their great surprise they discovered him to be a holy man with miraculous powers. Gradually some of them began to look upon him as a God. Sri Narayana Guru was quick to detect the trend and realized the need for a temple for them to worship God. Thus at Aruvippuram on the auspicious night of Sivaratri in 1887 he placed a Siva-lingam and consecrated it according to the tantrik rites and formalities. Very soon a temple was built around that place. This event is known as *aruvippuram pratistha*. It was an unprecedented and startling event in which an untouchable sudra dared to do something which was thus far conceived as the exclusive prerogative of brahmins. However, when he was questioned by certain brahmins about his authority to consecrate the

Sivalinga, Sri Narayana Guru replied in his characteristic humour, "I have installed only an Ezhava Siva."[4]

Very soon, Sri Narayana Guru came to be recognized as the unquestionable leader of a whole community belonging to the castes of Ezhava and Thiyya. It was at this period that Dr. Palpu, an Ezhava gentleman, who was desperately in search of an ideal religious man under whose leadership he wanted to organize and strengthen his community, happened to know about the Guru. Dr. Palpu was an eminent physician, who was denied a government job in the state of Travancore purely on account of his belonging to a lower caste. The meeting of the two men resulted in the formation of Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana (SNDP) Yogam, which served as a mighty social and religious organization for the all-round development of the Ezhava and Thiyya communities.

The *aruvippuram pratistha* was a very important event. Not just because it marked the beginning of an era in which caste distinctions ceased to have any meaning at all, but because it was also the beginning of a historic mission assumed by a great saint. It was significant because it was the indication of the fact that an Advaita philosopher had recognized the real demand of the time to be humanistic and pragmatic in his approach to the pressing problems of his fellow-beings. In fact, the total literary production of Sri Narayana Guru may not exceed two hundred printed pages. But he could revolutionize the lives of about two million people through a life of dedicated service on the basis of the principles of Advaita as he understood them.

The message of Advaita as Sankara interpreted it, and as Sri Narayana Guru realized it, consists in the affirmation of the essential divinity of man, the unity of mankind, and ultimately the unity of everything in the Absolute Reality which transcends all thought and experience. Hence the teachings of the Guru could be summarized in his oft-quoted statement: "One Caste, One Religion and One God for humanity." If the individual self is ultimately identical with the Brahman, then it is essentially divine. Every man, therefore, is potentially Brahman. It follows that all men are equal in essence and so there is no ground for any kind of discrimination between man and man.

In his Jati-mimamsa (Critique of Caste), the Guru makes the truth plain in the following verse:

> Man's humanity marks out of the human kind
> Even as bovinity proclaims a cow,
> Brahminhood and such are not thus-wise;
> None do see this truth alas;
> One of kind, one of faith,
> And one in God is man,
> Of one womb, of one form;
> Difference herein none.[5]

Further he confirms the truth of the above conclusion by citing clear examples from the religious tradition itself:

> In by-gone days of a Pariah woman the great sage Parasara was born
> As even he of Vedic-aphorism fame of a virgin of the fisher-folk.[6]

Commenting on this verse of the *Jati-mimamsa,* Dr. Nataraja Guru states: "Here essentially the plea is that man should realize his true humanity and unitive solidarity, and realize also that terms like *brahmin* and *pariah* are ideas superimposed on the reality that is human nature which is essentially one and fundamentally of one single sameness."[7] In other words, one may say that the divinity, equality, fraternity and unity of mankind are definite implications of the message of Advaita.

"What is the use of merely reading the Vedanta?" asked Vivekananda in one of his conversations. "We must prove the truth of pure Advaitism in practical life." The Swamy says, "Sankara left this Advaita philosophy in hills and forests, while I have come to bring it out of these places, scatter it, broadcast before the work a day world and society."[8] It was exactly the same thing that Sri Narayana Guru did. He travelled from place to place exhorting every one to recognize one's own true humanity. The practical teachings of the Guru enabled lakhs of people to get rid of their useless superstitions and un- necessary rituals and practices, and to come forward to worship God in spirit and truth. Following the *aruvippuram pratistha* he established a number of temples in various parts of Kerala. Further, in order to perform the necessary rituals in

these temples, a number of young men *(brahmacarins)* were recruited and they were given training in philosophy, *mantras and tantras.* Thus, he made it possible for a vast number of downtrodden people, who were prohibited even from coming near to the temples, to worship God in the traditional Hindu manner without fear.

It is important to note that the Guru did not explain away the phenomenal world as illusion. He did agree with Sankara that it is *Maya.* The world is a superimposition, but it must be remembered that it has its basis in the Reality itself. Thus we find him to be very fond of using the analogy of ocean and the waves in order to explain the relationship between the Brahman and the world. In the *Advaita-dipika* he tells us:

> *"That which is in the effect is nothing other than the cause. The wave is nothing other than the water itself."*[9]

In this context, it is also significant that the Guru at times replaces the analogy of the rope and the snake with a fragrant garland and snake. For example, in the *Atmopadesa-satakam* he says:

> *"The world has no separate reality,*
> *For people to say so is mere conjecture,*
> *Even if it appears to the dull-headed as a reptile*
> *Can a fragrant garland become a snake?"*[10]

A positive attitude to the material world has been a characteristic feature in the Advaita Philosophy of Sri Narayana Guru. Hence he made every effort to improve the conditions of human life in this world. He found that the most important factor behind a thorough social reformation and upliftment of the poor masses is education. He, therefore, founded a number of educational institutions including schools for vocational training. He inspired his followers to engage themselves in all forms of trade, industries and agriculture, in order to make themselves economically self-sufficient and to lead a happy life.

Love and compassion for all living beings and the cultivation of an attitude of universal brotherhood have been the key notes of Sri Narayana Guru's teachings. Two of his compositions are exclusively devoted to the praise of the qualities of sympathy and compassion.[11]

Love and service to one another, according to him, are the natural attitudes of man in the light of the truth of Advaita. This is evident from a stanza in the *Atmopadesa-satakam,* where he says that when one reflects upon what is known as this man and that man, one would be led to the conclusion that the basis of such distinctions is one single Primordial Self and so, what one does for one's own happiness must result in the happiness of others also. Hence, he says further, that all those actions which would bring good to oneself and unhappiness to the others are self-contradictory.

IV

Sri Narayana Guru appeared on the scene of Kerala at a crucial period of its history. For self-realization he renounced the world. But once the goal was attained, the Guru came back to the world and assumed the humanistic mission of social and religious reformation and reconstruction. He was an Advaitin who had realized the ultimate Reality as the non-dual Brahman. And yet, he adopted a positive attitude to the world and ephemeral existence of man. It was this such comprehensive outlook on both the spiritual and material aspects of human reality that enabled him to develop an integral humanism, which became a revolutionary force for the emancipation of millions of people.

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1

BONDAGE AND LIBERATION - A NYĀYA - VAIŚEṢIKA PERSPECTIVE

R. GOPALAKRISHNAN

As pluralistic realism, the Nyāya - Vaiśeṣikas analyse methodically the common sense conception of the Universe, i.e. the Universe is not one unified whole as conceived speculatively by the Sāṁkhya and the Vedānta, but diversity is the basis of the Universe. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas uphold identity *and* difference in the sense that reality can be known as parts only and it consists of differences in its bosom. This view of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas is substantiated with reference to their definition and description of the categories. Unlike the Western conception of categories which are logical essentially, the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas' conception of categories is metaphysical in essence.

The word "category" has been referred to by the term '*padārtha*' for the first time by Kanāda, the founder of the Vaiśeṣika system. This term has been conveniently used by the other Philosophical systems to describe their ultimate ontological entities. For example Sāṁkhya refers to 25 *padārthas,* Rāmānuja 3, Kumārila 5 and even Gautama's 16 topics have been referred to as 16 *padārthas* which are essentially epistemological. ''Epistemologically *padārthas (Pada + artha)* connote 'whatever is meant by a word.' As everything whether subjective or objective, real or unreal, existent or non-existent, determinate or in determinate, conceivable or inconceivable that enters or can enter into philosophical discussion must be directly expressible or indirectly suggestible (eg. - by words like 'contradictory,' 'inconceivable,' 'square - circle,' 'meaningless') by some -word or another, it can be at once seen that 'padārtha' is the widest possible term for philosophy. 'Padārtha' would

thus be found in this respect to be wider than the widest classical terms of Western Philosophy, like the 'concept' of Socrates, 'Ideas' of Plato, 'Category' of Aristotle, ' 'Substance' of Prophyry or 'Being' of Hegel."[1]

The main objective of this paper is to make an attempt at explanatory level whether the proper understanding of the categories lead the aspirant towards the path of perfection. For, the soul which is in bondage and which has to experience freedom has been treated as a substance by the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas on par with other material substances. This approach received a lot of criticism from rival schools endangering the very conception of *mokṣa* itself.

Let us state the notion of bondage and liberation according to the Nyāya - Vaiśeṣikas. In the view of N.V. Banerjee, ''the Nyāya - Vaiśeṣikas account of the origin of human bondage is predominently psychogeneric that they regard bondage not merely as *apparent* but as *real.*"[2] According to the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas, the cause for suffering is ignorance, yearning, merit and demerit. For, the soul, due to ignorance, indulges in actions which in turn leads to merits and demerits. The question naturally arises here viz., whether *ātman* or *manas* is subject to *samsāra*? Udyotakara answers to this interesting question thus: "If by *samsāra* you mean the action (of entering and moving from bodies), then it belongs to the *manas;* for it is the *manas* that naturally moves, *saṁsarati.* On the other hand, if by *samsāra,* you mean experiencing (of pleasure and pain), then it belongs to the *ātman,* since it is the *ātman* that experiences pleasure and pain."[3]

Further, Jayantabhaṭṭa in his *Nyāyamañjari* characterises *dharma* and *adharma* as the pillars of the edifice of *samsāra.* The quintessence of worldly life is reduced to pleasure and pain and both *dharma* and *adharma* cause them respectively. Both merit and demerit, the causes of joy and suffering inhere in the *ātman* as *saṁskāras* or traces. These *saṁskāras* are threefold; the deeds (*pravrttis*) done mentally, by word of mouth and with the body.[4] Another interpretation is that the meritorious deeds are due to the sincere adherence to Vedic injunction and the following of prohibitory deeds lead to demerit. The merits and demerits of the individual soul create the unseen potency the *adṛṣṭa.* The *adṛṣṭa* under the guidance of God activates atoms leading to creation so as to

enable the souls enjoy or suffer. Bondage will be there for the souls as long as they engage in actions. If the souls are desirous of getting liberation, they have to cease activities.

Liberation, according to the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika is nothing but absolute cessation from pain for which the souls have to gain adequate knowledge which stops actions. The moment the souls withdraw from activities, fresh merits and demerits do not accumulate and the already acquired merits and demerits are worn out gradually. "The *Vaiśeṣika* system prescribes a yoga of its own, more rudimentary than the Pātañjala, as a means to conquer pain. It is defined by *Vaiśeṣika Sūtra* (V, 2, 16). The activity of the mind stops when the mind becomes fixed on the *ātman*. Then there is no more pain in the body or limited self. In otherwords, yoga, here, is the contact with *ātman* of the mind detached from other objects."[5]

In other words, liberation, according to Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas means the separation of the soul from the fetters of the body mind complex. The qualities of the soul which it acquired in its bound state such as knowledge, bliss etc. will vanish, since the soul, as a substance have these as accidental qualities and in liberation the soul does not establish contact with body and mind. The soul becomes a pure substance devoid of any quality whatsoever. In that case the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas subscribe to the negative approach to liberation. "The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas come to hold that liberation is a purely negative state, consisting in the destruction of the nine specific qualities of the self, namely intelligence (*buddhi*), aversion (*dveṣa*) conation (*prayatna*), righteousness (*dharma*), unrighteousness (*adharma*), pleasure (*sukha*), pain (*duḥkha*), desire (*icchā*) and predisposition resulting from past experience (*saṁskāra*). The inclusion of *saṁskāra* in this list is, however, significant in that *mokṣa*, according to Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas, not only consists in the cessation of experience as such but also in the destruction of latent tendencies which may eventually develop into experience in the future, in virtue of the self's connection with the mind (*manas*)."[6]

In the conception of bondage and liberation, according to the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas, we could see the role of almost all the categories. Now the problem before us is: How for the proper understanding of

the categories culminate in human perfection? Despite several criticisms, the six categories or *padārthas* expounded by Kaṇāda guided philosophical speculation for several centuries. There have been, of course, addition and alternation here and there, but his main scheme has been generally followed in philosophical discussion - yet Kaṇāda's ultimate purpose was not ontological analysis, but to show the way to the attainment of the highest good (*niḥśreyasa*). He mentions that six *padārthas* as those through the proper knowledge of which one can attain the highest good."[7] The highest good mentioned here is nothing but a perfect life of liberation.

However, since liberation is mainly concerned with the soul, the proper understanding of the soul is essential. In the conception of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas, the individual soul is treated as a mere substance and consciousness is not regarded as its essential attribute but as its accidental quality. As the soul is regarded as a substances, it is treated as an object which is devoid of subjectivity. As an unconscious entity or substratum, the soul simply receives consciousness when it comes into contact with the body, the mind and the senses. This task could have been performed easily by any atom. Interestingly, the souls are innumerable each having a peculiarity of its own like atoms. "The Vaisesika conception of liberation as the real state of the soul free from all qualities reduces the soul to a mere nothing. The root fallacy lies in viewing the subject just as an object. To regard the soul as a mere substance is ultimately to explode it. The soul is nothing if it is not a subject and if consciousness is not itsessence. True, the essence of the soul is not the empirical and relative and analytical intellect or understanding, nor isbliss in liberation identical with earthly happiness. Discursive intellect presupposes the foundational consciousness, the transcendental subject, and bliss in liberation transcends empirical happiness and pain alike. This truth has been forgotten by the Vaiśeṣikas and the result has been that we are offered a state of petrification as liberation."[8]

The negative conception of liberation by Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas is due to the fundamental presupposition that the nature of the self is understood in terms of the category of substance and quality. However, the relation of the qualities to the self is adventitious. Hence the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣkas cannot but hold such a conception of liberation -

isolationst view of self-realization. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣkas are seriously concerned with the analytical study of the components of the Universe. To achieve their objective, they have assumed certain fundamental principles as having existential qualifications and called them categories. In their philosophical pursuit they have included mind and soul, the inherent, underlying subjective phenomena as having objective reality and hence they could not maintain the concept of *mokṣa* in a consistent way free from hostile criticisms. Even the idea of God in this system is not of any help since God is nothing to do with the destiny of the individual self. God is used an expedient to solve the logical difficulties araising in accepting *adṛṣṭa*.

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2

A STUDY OF PROFESSOR D.P. CHATTOPADHYAYA'S ANTHROPOLOGICAL RATIONALISM: SOME REFLECTIONS

S. PANNEERSELVAM

I

Born in 1933, Professor Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya studied in Calcutta University and London University School of Economics and Political Science. He studied Law, History and Philosophy at the University of Calcutta. He obtained D. Phil. Degree from the same University and Ph.D. from the London University School of Economics. He was awarded the Premchand Roychand Scholarship for his work on Philosophy of History. He joined the Jadavpur University as a faculty member and later was appointed as Union Cabinet Minister in May 1971 and later Governor of Rajasthan. He was the Chairman of the Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi and presently he is the Chairman of the Centre for Studies in Civilizations, New Delhi and the editor of the Journal, *Sandhān*.

Professor Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya is a well-known philosopher who has international reputation. He has written extensively in the form of books and articles. Some of his publications include: *Individuals and Societies: A Methodological Inquiry* (1967), *Societies and Cultures* (1973), *Individuals and Worlds: essays in anthropological rationalism* (1976), *History, Society and Polity* (1976), *Form,*

Aesthetic Experience and the Beautiful: an introduction to aesthetics (in Bengali, 1981), *Environment, Evolution and Values: Studies in Man, Society and Science* (1982), *Knowledge, Freedom and Language* (1989), *Anthropology and Historiography of Science* (1990) and *Inter disciplinary Studies in Science, Technology, Philosophy and Culture* (1996). Under his editorship, the Project of History of Indian Science, Philosophy and Culture (PHISPC) has brought out many volumes. Social and political philosophy, methodology of social sciences, theory of knowledge and philosophy of language are his main areas of investigation.

The primary aim of this paper is to show the uniqueness of his concept of anthropological rationalism, which he has stressed in many of his writings. This concept is very important in the present social, cultural and historical set up. Let us see how he approaches the above concept and its relevance. I shall proceed as follows.

II

Man, according to Professor Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya (henceforth: DPC) is a multi-dimensional, fallible and semiotic being. He lives and moves not merely in space and time, but also, and perhaps more truly, in a society as an integral part of it. His life is also a part of history; he himself being its author and creature at the same time. He has a past behind him and a tradition to support and regulate him. His very being is embedded, or, one might even say, he is born in a culture, marked among other things by its tradition and modernity, language and myths, science and technology. Wherever he goes or whatever he does, and even if he is a cosmopolite, he always carries his cultural identity and personality with him. Man is a semiotic being, i.e., he is a sign-using animal. He is self-reflective by nature. He cannot help reflecting on what he is and what he is not. Since he is integrally related to the society, his self-reflection entails reflections on such social agencies and institutions like history, culture and language. Since man is sustained by tradition and culture, he questions them both. His sense of values can never be completely dominated and determined by his tradition and culture. He cannot transcend the challenge of modernization. Because of this, he questions his own tradition and

cultural past. DPC very rightly says: "Continuous growth of knowledge, particularly of its scientific form, and advancement of technology often make us question our own traditional heritage and cultural past."[1] Man always has a tradition to support and regulate him. He is sustainable by the present and his culture helps him to look forward. "Man is more a pro-ject than a product", says DPC.[2]

In his interesting paper, "Rationality, Culture, and Values,"[3] he deals with the correct relation between rationality and culture. He rejects the claim that there is a unique and universal relation between culture and rationality. He believes that culture-bound rationality is a sort of relativism. He examines the three different concepts of rationality developed in the three branches of human knowledge namely, the economics, evolutionary biology and psychological behaviourism. These three concepts are known as REM (Rational Economic Man), REB (Rationality in Evolutionary Biology) and ROB (Rationality of Behaviourism) respectively. He talks about the limitation of the above concepts of Rationality, and how they fail to explain the normative aspect of economic action.

He is not concerned about the economic man, but with a rational economic man. He states that efficient management of the house requires its head not only to be rational but also moral. He is talking about the rational as well as a moral man. The rationality that is attributed to the market is due to its supposed free and competitive character. Rational man understands that mad competition is suicidal and that unbridled greed is self-defeating.[4] In a cultural life, it is the spirit of cooperation that is needed among the economic man. Love, sympathy, friendship and gratitude are also native to human nature.

Social welfare is necessary for sustaining the rationality of the market and saving it from sliding back into irrationality. DPC argues that no society can afford to allow its rich people to become increasingly rich, and its poor people to become increasingly poor. "Both pauperization and polarization beyond a point need to be arrested", says DPC [5].

Like the Rational Economic Man (REM), the Evolutionary Biologist also explains his conception of rationality (REB). The

distinction between the natural law and social law, seen in the light of evolutionary context is important. The animal behaviour is to be understood as aiming at maximizing utility and here the utility is defined in terms of reproductive fitness. The Evolutionary Biologist defends the notion of rationality by saying that the rule of the jungle and the laws of civil society do not differ in essence. DPC questions this and raises a doubt whether animals can master the best possible strategy necessary for utility maximization or, given constraints, are forced to remain content with the best strategy. Moreover, all capacities and characteristics of animals are not necessarily helpful to their being selected by nature. The existence or survival of animals do not prove their selection by nature for particular purpose say, for example, perfection or utility-maximization.

The Behaviouristic Rationality (ROB) in its psychological orientation and basic humanistic character are often regarded as good enough ground to take note of the normative claim of human activities. By implication it is said that human behaviour takes due care of the normatively of human nature and in this respect ROB is preferable than REM and REB. In REM concepts such as profit or loss, pay-off or penalty are given primary importance and in REB selection or elimination, fit or misfit are important. In ROB, concepts like reward and punishment, do's and don'ts reinforce human behaviour. By examining all the three concepts DPC comes to the conclusion that all these concepts of rationality are limited and they under estimate the diversity of human nature born out of freedom and cultural circumstances. They are outer and inner aspects of human nature. Since all the theories of rationality are derived from human experience, their validity and correctness must be tested only through human experience.

DPC's book, *Individuals and Worlds: Essays in Anthropological Rationalism* has some unique features. First of all, the book deals with the idea that whatever results from human endeavour are subject to human limitations. Secondly it talks about the idea that the products of human reason and experience are influenced by certain conditions and constraints which are essentially historical in character. Two concepts of anthropological rationalism are stressed by him. They are: (1) the fallibility of man and (2) the growing character of knowledge. The basic problem of the classical rationalism is that it did not take into account the human presupposition of reason and considered it as a supreme rational entity. Similarly, classical empiri-

cism also failed to note down the importance of the growing character of human knowledge and the result is that it had led to scepticism, presenting one-dimensional view of the individual and the world.

DPC always emphasizes that in all types of philosophies, there is anthropological presupposition. This presupposition must be studied carefully; otherwise, philosophical implication of it cannot be understood. Reason plays an important place in the life activity of man. Philosophy has suffered enough because of philosophers' refusal to learn from others' mistakes and to persue others' ways of understanding and misunderstanding and to see how much we owe to others. The fact is that we always depend on others but we fail to recognize this and others also are infused by our experience. "The individual is not a fixed and windowless social unit, an integer, or a receptacle of quantifiable needs and constraints."[6] He further says: "To act significantly and to be ethical, man must be social, i.e, one among others and not, as Kant taught us, absolutely autonomous."[7]

DPC considers that of all the social institutions which man belongs to, the most intimate one is language. Language, he says, is a set of signs related by some changing rules of connection. It is like a sea without a sea-bed. The language and its importance are shown very well by DPC. It is in language that we live and live socially. It is only by language that we philosophize. Language is a form of life. It is the essence of living and not a mere instrument of living. DPC feels that the instrumentalists wrongly believe that language is only to convey or communicate our experience. It is in language that we identify reality both generically and specifically. The identity of the world is in man, i.e., in his language. No two individuals living in language can use it identically according to DPC. It is because of the main reason that every individual is a unique actor. The form of life may be the same, but it is lived differently. In other words, we live in different worlds. Language always presupposes a society and society in turn a world. The world, which we encounter, is pre-conditioned by language and society. Of course, there is no one universal language. Like one world, one universal language is also a dream or a dogma.

What is the nature of the real world according to DPC? The real world in his view is undivine, irrational and unpredictable. The

real world is human and hence is not one and uniform. Man is not given with an *a priori* and infallible insight into the structures of all possible worlds. But the most important fact is that the real world is anthropocentric. It is by and in man that the true identity of the world is disclosed and it is in man that this identity is realized. Reality is as it is realized or lived. He is of the view that the defenders of philosophy in their eagerness to defend it against all possible criticisms convert it into a closed system. Because of this, the critical dialogue between man and man, philosopher and philosopher, breaks down.

DPC examines the notion of reason from the standpoint of Leibniz and Kant so as to show their limitations. The main problem with Leibniz's concept of reason is that it is pre-critical and Kant's concept of reason is that it is not self-critical. The concept of self-critical reason is superior to these two. First of all, the concept of reason is not free from ambiguity because it may mean several things. For example it may mean: (a) argument, (b) motive or intention (c) cause (d) premise or justification (e) an intellectual faculty and/or function of man (f) intellect or intelligence personified (God) (g) sanity and (h) sense. Of course, DPC is mainly concerned with (e) an intellectual faculty and/or function of man (f) intellect or intelligence personified (God). He is also concerned with issues like: What is the structure of reason? Is it uniform or diaform or multiform?

According to Leibniz, nothing is without sufficient reason. (SR) For contingent and necessary truths, SR is there. There exist two kinds of truth, namely, the truths of reasoning and truths of fact. The first one is based on the principles of contradiction and the second on that of sufficient reason. It is by the principle of contradiction, we judge a proposition including a contradiction as false and that which is opposed or contradictory to it as true. It is by the principle of sufficient reason we consider that no position can be true and no fact or state of affairs can be real or existing unless there is a sufficient reason. To claim like Leibniz that whatever is has sufficient reason for its being so rather than something else is not to deny that in most cases these reasons cannot be known by us, i.e. finite human beings.[8] This means that Leibniz is committed to the notions of

"unknown reason" and "unknowable reason". We, the human beings may fail to perceive the rationality of reason or sufficiently of the law of sufficient reason but that does not mean either that there is anything intrinsically irrational in the world or that the law does not apply to the contingent propositions asserting actual existence. Rationality and the ground of all contingent things lie outside them, outside the terms of the contingent series--in the necessary being, i.e., God. God is the necessary foundation and sufficient reason of all particular things and beings.

DPC argues that the Lebnizian concept of sovereign reason involves a fatal paradox. This paradox can be explained in two ways: the anthropological and epistemological. Leibniz is of the view that we simply follow many actions on memory and by acts of reflections and we do not try to apprehend their sufficient reason or necessary truths. But we have reason and we are capable of knowing necessary and eternal truths. On the one hand it is said that for man to know God completely is impossible and on the other hand, there is nothing outside God independent of Himself. These two generate a paradox, which is anthropological by nature. In the epistemological way, instead of saying that our world views are bound to disclose their anthropological root, one might say that since man is embodied, placed in the order of times and places, and subject to matter, motion and its laws, his knowledge of the world is restricted by a definite perspective and that is again due to confused perception or *materia prima.*[9]

After explaining the defects in the Leibnizian model, DPC moves forward to show how, Kant failed to develop a theory of self-critical reason which is partly due to his uncritical adherence to the Humean notion that the empirical is formless and partly because of his uncritical acceptance of the Lebnizian thesis that the empirical cannot negate the *a priori* or rational. In his effort to avoid the dogmatism of Leibniz, Kant speaks about autonomy of reason and makes it functionally dependent upon the empirical. Kant develops a theory of significance in terms of absolute whole and infinite totality. This theory of significance implies a theory of inarticulate anthropology, i.e., a theory of man, which is developed by Kant in his second critique. Reason according to Kant, is one, a unitary faculty and its functions or employments are of different types, e.g., theoretical

and practical. Therefore it would not be correct to think that freedom has nothing to do with theoretical reason. But DPC believes that reason must be primarily studied in its anthropological context. Though he does not deny the primacy of practical reason, he firmly believes that the discussion of reason, its structure and functions is very abstract and useless, unless the human relevance of reason is realized at first. Reason is "primarily an anthropological and historical concept" says DPC.[10] Reason, is neither sovereign nor autonomous. It influences and is influenced by experience.[11] The self-critical character of reason and phenomenological reflection on the structures and functions of reason show that it is fallible and human origin. Man is an agent and a critic of his own thought and of action, both theoretical and practical.

Reason according to Kant, is the whole of the supreme faculty of knowing and reason proper which confers unity upon the materials already synthesizes under the categories of understanding. DPC explains the anti-historical element in Kant as follows. Every system of thought formulated in a language uses certain principles of classification or frames some hypotheses to discover and describe the objective structure of the elements in reality. It is not possible for us to enumerate and all these principles of hypotheses. Language is an ever-changing human institution. The changing forms of human knowledge find their primary expressions in ordinary language which is being continuously produced and consumed by human being. It is not primarily *through* but *in* language that we express ourselves. The conditions of using language are among the fundamental conditions of identification of objects in the world. DPC further argues that the changing history of the human mind lies deep in language. In this context he also rejects the Strawsonian position that the conceptual infrastructure of ordinary language is unhistorical. He quotes Strawson as follows: "...certainly concepts do change... certainly... metaphysics has been largely concerned with changes... but it would be a great blunder to think of metaphysics only in this historical style. For there is a massive central core of human thinking which has no history".[12] DPC argues that Strawson's criticism of historical metaphysics is incorrect because it is possible to describe the conditions of description in highly general terms and thus keep that meta-description above the level of change and historical criticism.[13] Thinking of metaphysics,

only in the historical style is totally wrong. The anti-historical character of metaphysics is subscribed by Kant and Strawson. DPC feels that Kant's system of critical philosophy is static and nearly closed; it is open only at the transcendental end, and this has proved more harmful than beneficial for the system.

Now let us see the position of DPC with regard to reason, According to him, reason is neither sovereign as suggested by Leibniz nor autonomous as claimed by Kant. Reason is human. It is the most influential human capacity of synthesis and analysis. Synthesis always presupposes analysis and the distinction between analysis and synthesis breaks down in the ultimate analysis i.e., anthropological. The capacity of human beings, no doubt, is limited. The limit is set by the world in which we live and by the individuals which whom we move. "What sets limits to my thought and action also enables me to identify myself and to change my identity in history without destroying its recognizability or re-identifiability," remarks DPC.[14] The space and time individuates man. Among other things, individual objects of the world are independently ordered -- independently of their being perceived or thought by us. There is a limit to human freedom. The limit to human freedom may be understood by considering the fact that consciousness is object-ward, i.e., limited by its object and unable to get to its own zero-point. This means that I can neither ostensively define an object nor can I uniquely identify myself. DPC says: "My self-identification and other -identifications are relative -- relative primarily to myself and then to the rest of the world. Neither the world as *a completed totality* nor myself *as a whole* is ever given to me".[15] The unity of the world lies in the continuous process of unification of human thought and action. This process of unification is not to be dictated neither by the above nor by the below i.e. the transcendental concepts nor blind sensations.[16] Since all knowledge, including metaphysical knowledge, is an object-ward process and also all the objects are individuated, we are concerned with the empirical synthesis. DPC is of the view that the empirical synthesis is always open. It is open to the objects to be discovered and therefore criticizable. They are ciritizable at different levels. But in Kant where the transcendental synthesis is given primary importance, there is no place for any criticism. Thus the metaphysics of experience is closely related to worldly experience. DPC observes: "Reason continuously regulates

experience, but experience at times, refusing to conform to the forms of reason, influences and modifies the latter. This seems to me to be a correct description of the workings of the human mind".

The world-man relation according to DPC is a puzzling problem. Though this problem has been discussed in detail, a satisfactory solution to the problem is not yet arrived. But this does not mean that the problem is not a genuine one. But what is important is the question namely, how is man related to the world. DPC tries to give a rational explanation to this question and from it he tries to develop a concept of philosophy, known as "Anthropological Rationalism". Though normally we talk about the world-man relation, one can also think of a "manless world" in the following possible ways. For example, one can think of: (a) a world in which man has not made his appearance, (b) a world wherefrom man has disappeared, (c) a world in which man exists but his existence is ignored. In this background, DPC talks about the distinction between philosophy and science. He says that scientific concepts are less reflective than philosophical ones and more reflexive than the concepts of ordinary language used in daily life. But he also says that with regard to precision and operation, the scientific concepts are more satisfactory than that of philosophy. But with regard to the scope and depth are concerned, philosophy is more complete than science. This is the reason why the growth is not so conspicuous in philosophy as it is in science. In subtlety and suggetivity etc., of expressions ordinary language is superior to both philosophical language and scientific language. Ordinary language serves the purpose of the ultimate meta-language and this meta-linguistic role of ordinary language is due to its immense intuitive resources.

The concept of a manless world has more than one interpretation. In one sense, we can always defend the possibility of a manless world and in another sense we can also deny the very possibility of such a world. They are the scientific and philosophical conception of the world. For DPC, the philosophical conception of the world is deeper. It is the pre-naturalists view of the world, which is generally accepted by the scientists. But a close observation of this view would reveal the fact that it conceals the anti-naturalist views. Though man is *in* nature his being is never completely merged or absorbed in it. He

has the ability to go beyond it. Man is neither completely absorbed in the world nor is he completely free from it. In other words, his relation with the world is marked by an existential dialectic. In one aspect of this dialectic, man's being defines the world in nature and in another dialectic, the world defines his being.

When we say that the world *is* in so far as it is in man, it does not mean to support the notion of *esse est percipi*, which the empiricists hold. Perhaps one can call it as anthropological solipsism. This is not what DPC supports. He does not believe that man's existence however important it might be in the world, can define the structures and the processes of the world. The world we live in includes our existence as its essential and it is humanly impossible for us to think of a world, which is literally "manless." This means that man without ceasing to be what he is cannot think of a manless world.

DPC's approach to the above problem is different from that of the idealistic and realistic position. His approach otherwise known as "anthropological approach" is more descriptive and less interpretative than the other two types of traditional approaches. Now let us see how DPC examines this. The world according to him, is both within and without man. It is both dependent and independent of man. One can easily say that there is a world without man, which means the world, is independent of man. This is obvious. What is not so obvious is that the world is also within him i.e. dependent on him. The world is within and without man. Independent existence of the world without man is very well accepted and known. The manless world is an abstraction from or an extrapolation of, the man-world. This is a true description of the relation between the manless world and the man-world.

There are different levels of human activity. Sometimes, man is concerned with object-oriented consciousness and in other, he is concerned with subject-oriented consciousness. In the first one, he may be concerned with knowledge, action, imagination and appreciation etc. In the second, he may be concerned with artistic, philosophical and moral, where man is involved in his own subjectivity. In subject-oriented consciousness the objectivity pull is there, and similarly in object-oriented consciousness, the role of subjectivity is there. DPC

makes a distinction here by saying that science is of object-oriented consciousness and ethics is the subject-oriented consciousness. The pure subjectivist and the pure objectivist are engaging in a common pursuit, from two different ends. Man learns from experience but from experience-as-such, if any, he has nothing to learn. It is the experience *of* an object or the object-ward experience, which alone contributes to human knowledge. As far as man is concerned, experience-as-such is a limiting concept. Can there be an absolutely structureless experience? DPC says no. There is always an objective structure. If there is no objective structure, then experience could not have any critical say in the growth of knowledge.

DPC is of the view that some philosophers have been very much attracted by the model of physical science, because of its testability and precision criteria. Some others accept the model of analogy of God, His comprehensiveness and power. But DPC feels that in all philosophical positions, there is an inarticulate anthropological presupposition. Since philosophy is a reflective enquiry, every philosopher consciously or unconsciously touches the principle of anthropological root. "Criticised, corrected and corroborated by the objective details of experience, the philosopher broadens and deepens his theoretical visions."[17] It is because knowledge cannot grow in vacuum. Growth demands an objective correlate.

A person, according to DPC, is not pure consciousness. Person is opaque, and his opacity is due to his embodiment and worldly nature. In one sense, it means that he is in the world at the same time he is not in the world. His being is prior to being-in-the-world and does not consist in its being perceived. It is only in the world he can be conscious of this priority. His freedom no doubt is limited, and the limit which is always changing, is set by his body and his world. Man according to DPC, is born first in nature and then in society. His second birth namely, the society makes him painfully aware of his inherent paradox and also of the power to solve the paradox. Since man is not with the world given to him, he is bent upon making his own world. He has separated himself from nature, which he originally belongs to; man becomes conscious of his creative freedom. But in his bid to be fully free, he cannot and should not try to cut his original relation with nature.

According to DPC, man has two aspects of his being in him. He is both in himself and also for other selves. To be in his own self, paradoxically, he needs other selves and he cannot be in other selves without being in himself. What is interesting is that his self-identification and his other-identification are contemporaneous and conceptually inseparable. He is always partly "erased" and partly "exposed". He cannot either erase himself out of other selves or identify himself completely with the latter, or can he expose himself and other selves completely.

III

Now let us discuss some of the points raised by DPC with regard to his Anthropological Rationalism. We must congratulate him for developing this new concept which is a contribution to knowledge, but let us ask the question namely how far it is acceptable and whether it is a satisfactory theory in the present social and philosophical set up.

Man and his role in society are well depicted by DPC. He very rightly says that man is part of the history and it is man who questions the role of tradition and culture. Further he says that man can never be completely dominated by tradition and culture. It appears as though that DPC has not fully taken into account the role of tradition and culture. Gadamer in *Truth and Method* attempts to refound the notions of tradition and heritage, to discover its real nature and foundation. Tradition is the finite unfolding of an infinite content, a history of finite actualization of an essentially inexhaustible, or infinite, truth. Gadamer accepts the tradition's "inescapable facticity". He tries to understand everything by means of tradition. According to him, there is always our belongingness to tradition as our primordial ontological condition. We participate in the tradition, which carries the values. For Gadamer, our belongingness to tradition is our primordial ontological condition. He always emphasizes the revival of tradition. For him, one can understand the value and importance of tradition and heritage by living with other persons. Life develops with others in culture, time, and place. Man's life, knowledge and understanding are

connected with the tradition and heritage. Knowledge and experience of one tradition is carried over to the other by history. Tradition is the locus of understanding. It helps us to correct the mistakes of the present. We are shaped by our past in various ways and this has a tremendous influence on our understanding. The past and the present are related and become a continuous process through the tradition. For Habermas, tradition is right only if it can be judged reflectively to be right. But for Gadamer, tradition is always right, because it is traditional. DPC's position is somewhat similar to that of Habermas. Through critical reason, Habermas emphasizes the need to break from the belongingness of tradition, but whether one can detach himself from the tradition is a question, which has to be investigated.

Very neatly DPC talks about the relation between rationality and culture and rejects the view that there is a universal relation between the two. I would like to examine these two concepts further to present a philosophical theory of culture and rationality. We always find different conceptions of culture. The culture of people takes into account the language, ideas, customs, taboos and other related components. One must always consider the following aspects with regard to culture: (1) culture unifies men into one cultural group and (2) the development of many cultures is due to various external causes like, physical habitats and resources, and inner causes like range of possibilities inherent in various areas of activity. If conflict among cultures follows from the very concept of culture, then there emerges a theory where there is a relation between culture and rationality. The difference between culture and rationality is that a culture unifies all those who belong to that culture, whereas all men unite in rationality by sharing this essential feature. Rationality is the essence of man. Thus cultural unification is confined only to those who share the culture, whereas rationality is the principle of unity of all men. This difference in extension between a culture and rationality is also reflected in the intensity of the unification. Culture endows people with their identity while all men are akin in rationality; the kinship of rationality is all-inclusive. We can draw two conclusions from this. Since cultures being not merely many in number, divide men from men. Reason, or rationality, being the essence of man, is the principle of unity of all men.

One must really appreciate DPC for including morality in economics. He explains very clearly how the most of the time, the economic man is not rational. The significant aspect of the economic man is that he should take into account the "human element". In order to understand the value and importance of human element, one must look into the ethical aspect i.e., the ethical outlook which corporate companies should concentrate on. All these years we had been talking only about the end but the means, by which the end is attained, is completely neglected. Kant's categorical imperative very aptly explains this by the dictum: "Act so as to treat mankind, in your own person as well as in that of anyone else, always as an end, never merely as a means". Another aspect of DPC contribution is implied in the relation between the ethical and economic values. If we extend this argument, it may mean that ethically clean companies alone will survive in the future; they alone can fetch more revenues which will be based on moral values. This means that the economic activity of the companies must be dependent on the moral standards. Ethics and Economics must always go together to see a sustainable development in the globe. The Gandhian principle that commerce without morality will be a failure must be remembered here.

Another salient aspect of anthropological rationalism is that the role of human experience is very much stressed here. Similarly the growing character of knowledge is discussed very much to show the value of it. He rejects the classical rationalism as well as classical empiricism by saying that they did not take into account the human presupposition of reason and the growing character of human knowledge respectively. DPC is very correct here because reason must always be properly related to knowledge. In fact, there exists an inseparable relation between the two. His concept of anthropological rationalism thus transcends both rationalism and empiricism, which are classical in nature. His contribution is that he synthesizes the notion of reason with human presupposition. This presupposition takes into consideration the role of the other man, the need for interaction with others etc. Thus DPC makes his notion of rationalism more socially oriented one. The society-based rationalism is also language based. He examines the role of language to show how there cannot be a universal language, but there is always the multiplicity of language in which we participate. He criticizes those who consider language as a

mode of communication only. For him, language is a form of life. But one gets the doubt whether he is supporting the structuralists, who believe that it is not we who speaks language, but it is language who speaks man. Also there is always a transcendental aspect of language, i.e., the metaphysical dimension of language. A study language in the Indian tradition would reveal the fact that the science of semantics in India is a harmonizing force between sensuous and suprasensuous experience. The Indian conception of language has two dimensions, the phenomenal and metaphysical. Indian philosophers have carefully avoided the "two reductionistic mistakes". They neither reduce language to being a merely human convention having only scientific or factual referents nor fall into the error of metaphysical reductionism which devalues the meanings of human words that language ends up as obscure mysticism. No doubt, DPC transcends the monadic isolation of language game and brings to consciousness the inherent reflectivity of ordinary language. He discloses a new dimension of language neglected by many thinkers. But I feel that he overlooks the fact that language itself is dependent upon social processes, which are not wholly linguistic in nature. Habermas' contention that language is *also* a medium of domination and social force would go against the position of DPC.

Reason, according to DPC, has to be self-critical. Since this aspect is absent in Leibnizian and Kantian mode of thinking he rejects them, of course, on rational grounds, to develop his concept of reason. Reason according to DPC cannot be *a priori*. Reason is always man-based. This means that reason ultimately is related to human experience. Here one is tempted to see DPC's reason in the post-modern background. In the post-metaphysical thinking the role of reason is unique. Some like Rorty consider it as a social phenomenon. "We have to resist the urge to see social practices of justification as more than just such practices" but explain "rationality and epistemic authority by reference to what society lets us to say", argues Rorty. Foucault attempts to disempower the ideas of reason by totally objectivating them. "What is this reason that we use? What are its historical effects? What are its limits, and what are its dangers?", asks Foucault. Derrida attempts for a totalized critique of reason. He believes that the ideas of reason are built into thought, and give rise to illusions and therefore he wants to renounce the ideas of reason by interrogating, disrupting

and displacing them. Similarly, Habermas reconstructs the Kantian notion of reason so as to explain the importance of comprehensive reason. This comprehensive reason, otherwise known as the "communicative rationality" is one of the important contributions of Habermas. I feel that the communicative rationality of Habermas has many resemblances with that of DPC's anthropological rationalism, though one can see some differences, the main one being that in Habermas, rationality is limited to language and he wants to achieve the rationality through communication, whereas for DPC rationality is based on experience.

DPC makes a distinction between philosophy and science and argues that philosophy is more complete than science. Of course he offers his own arguments to support the above claim. Let me look at this point from two eminent thinkers, namely, Husserl and Sundara Rajan. Husserl's *The Crisis of the European Science and Transcendental Phenomenology* and Sundara Rajan's *Beyond the Crisis of European Sciences: Towards New Beginnings* deal with the above issues raised by DPC indirectly. These two thinkers explain the need to develop a conceptual framework for understanding of science and also to support the relationship between science and philosophy. For example, Sundara Rajan wanted to develop a four-fold frame work of science -- science as a possibility, science as a fact, science as a problem and science as a hope, which he thinks, can solve the crisis of the natural science. In the first context, *i.e.*, science as a possibility, philosophy is facilitative. The critical approach of philosophy is helpful to science. In the second, science as a fact, there is a radical change in the relation between philosophy and science. Philosophy has to help science by analyzing social reality. Analysis and clarificatory procedures of philosophy are immensely helpful in the understanding of the basic principles and methods of sciences. In the third context, *i.e.*, science as a problem adopts the critical function of philosophy. Here philosophy takes the possibility of a critique of sciences in terms of a normative understanding of life. The crisis of the sciences is approached by philosophy to solve it. For example, the role of science in the politics of domination and colonization has been questioned and here philosophy comes to its rescue. In the fourth and final context *i.e.*, science as hope, we allow new possibilities, taking into consideration its failures and limitations. This means that

one needs new self-understanding, which is possible only by the study of science and philosophy simultaneously. The interaction between the scientists and philosophers alone can solve many problems.

NOTES

1. D.P. Chattopadhyaya, *Societies and Cultures*, Bombay: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, 1973, p. x.
2. Ibid. p.ix.
3. D.P. Chattopadhyaya, "Rationality, Culture and Values", *JICPR*, vol. viii, pp.1-15.
4. Ibid, p. 2.
5. Ibid. p. 3.
6. D.P. Chattopadhyaya, *Individuals and Worlds*, Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1976, p. 2.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid, p. 13.
9. Ibid. pp. 14 -15.
10. Ibid, pp. 25.
11. Ibid.
12. P. F. Strawson, *Individuals*, p. 10, quoted by D.P. Chattopadhyaya, *Individuals and Worlds*, p. 34.
13. D.P. Chattopadhyaya, *Individuals and Worlds*, p. 34.
14. Ibid. p. 35.
15. Ibid. 36.
16. Ibid.
17. Ibid. p. 83.

3

PRASAṄKHYĀNA : A MEANS TO LIBERATION IN YOGA AND ADVAITA

GODABARISHA MISHRA

Introduction

The different formulations of liberation are designed to bring about an experiential realisation of one's own self by an intuition which unravels the delusive nature of the relative existence, and provides an illumination of the greatness of the native state of one's being. This realisation does away with our conditioning of limited existence and shows us the way for a wholesome existence. In Indian philosophical schools, the concept of liberation is central to all other discussions that go into making a tradition and they have a subservient role to play in the process of thinking. Since liberation is for the individual, in different schools of Indian philosophy the concept of liberation is discussed in accordance with the concept of individual self determined by that school. In Advaita, for example, liberation is being in the state of supreme self, i.e. *brahmabhāva eva mokṣaḥ*. Knowledge alone is the sole means to liberation. Such a state is the innate nature of the self and it gets manifested by the destruction of Avidyā or ignorance that conceals the pristine nature of the self in its empirical state. To have a broader scenario of the Indian conception of liberation, it would be proper to introduce the topic as enunciated in different schools of Indian philosophy before we go on to the concept of liberation in Yoga and Advaita, and the role of *prasaṅkhyāna* (meditation) to achieve such a state.

The idealistic Buddhist school like Vijñānavāda believes that vijñāna or the momentary cognition is the self. The cognition appears as the objects of the world. The momentary cognitions form a series with the beginningless latent impressions present in them and because of those impressions, the momentary cognitions appear as the world of objects. For Vijñānavādin, through the intense meditation the latent impressions will cease to exist and the series of cognition would never be presented in the form of objects. The series of cognition free from being manifested in the form of objects constitutes liberation.

The Mādhyamika school of Nāgārjuna puts forth the view that void or *śūnya* appears as the world of objects. By perfecting one's own self through meditation and through the practice of eight-fold path and the like, one can gain the understanding of the state of *śūnya*, that the self is without any essence. This will result in selflessness which is liberation.

For Jainism, the individual self is a real entity. It believes in the transmigration of the self which possesses infinite knowledge in its pure state (*ananta-darśana*), infinite knowledge of things in all its details (*ananta-jñāna*), infinite bliss (*ananta-sukha*) and infinite power (*ananta-vīrya*). These essential characteristics of the self are obscured during the state of empirical existence. The material particles which are known as karmic matters pervade the entire universe. When the self performs actions by body, mind and speech, the material particles are attracted towards the self. They enter into the self and are transformed into eight kinds of karma and form a subtle body known as *kārmaṇaśarīra*. When a particular karma has produced its effects, it is liquidated and fresh karmic matter would find its way into the self owing to its activity by body and the like. This accounts for the empirical existence for an individual self. Liberation consists in restoring the individual self to its original nature of infinite knowledge, bliss and power. The first step to liberation is to stop the influx of new karmic matter into the self. This could be possible by performing actions free from passion and accompanied by right faith, right knowledge and right conduct known as "*triratna.*" The second step to liberation is to remove the already accumulated karma. This is known as "*nirjara.*" Accumulated *karma* can be removed either by experiencing its fruits or performing

austere penance in the form of meditation, fasting and self-mortification. The self then is dissociated from its *kārmaṇaśarīra*. Then there is an upward movement on the part of the self; or it fills up its permanent abode known as *alokākāśa*. Liberation is the upward movement of reaching this *alokākāśa*.

Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas hold the view that the self is eternal and all-pervading. The self possesses knowledge, volition etc. which other entities do not have. In the state of *saṁsāra*, mind which is eternal is in operative contact with the self except in the deep-sleep. When there is contact of sense organ with its appropriate object the knowledge arises through the relation of inherence (*samavāya*) in the self. Knowledge in its turn leads to desire (*rāga*) and aversion (*dveṣa*). It is because of the delusion, the self comes into contact with the mind, mind with the sense organ and the sense organ with its objects, and hence knowledge. In order that the *mithyājñāna* may be removed, what is required is the direct knowledge of the self as distinct from all other categories. This knowledge will arise by intense meditation upon the true nature of the self. When ignorance disappears, desire and aversion get disappeared. Because of this, there would be no motivation of action and that results in non-occurrence of merits and demerits. In the state of liberation, the self gets dissociated from the body, mind and the senses. This state, which is characterised by total absence of misery, is known as liberation or *apavarga*.

According to Mīmāṁsā, the self is conditioned by the three factors of the body, senses and the world. The relation of the self to the three factors is caused by merits resulting from the performance of the actions. This connection constitutes bondage and separation from this connection constitutes liberation. Liberation results from non-performance of optional and interdicted actions and from the performance of obligatory and optional rites. For the Bhāṭṭa school, the knowledge of the self is to impel the self to perform the enjoined duties. According to Prabhākara, it is to prevent further merits and demerits. So the knowledge and action play an equal role in the attainment of liberation. That is the reason why the *jñāna-karma-samuccaya* has been accepted as the means to liberation in this school. When the self is free from the three types of karma mentioned above by the exhaustion of the fructified merits and

demerits, and when there is no accmulation of fresh merit and demerit to cause new bondage, it becomes free from the specific qualities. It is this state of the self that is known as liberation. The liberation according to Mīmāṁsā is the natural condition of the self which is characterised by the total annihilation of the empirical world.

The Sāṅkhya-Yoga like the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika admits a plurality of selves, called puruṣas. Puruṣa is the passive enjoyer and experient without being a doer or an agent; all the activity being assigned to Prakṛti. It is all-pervading and does not admit of any change of place and does not transmigrate. The subtle body known as *liṅgaśarīra,* consisting of the eleven organs of sense together with *buddhi*, *ahaṁkāra* and five *tanmātras* which undergoes transmigration. In birth and death, the gross body changes and not the subtle. In the *Sāṅkhyakārikā*, we come across the idea that no Puruṣa is bound or liberated, nor does any migrate. It is Prakṛti in its manifold form that is bound, is liberated, and migrates."[1] The state of the aloofness of the self from Prakṛti is known as *kaivalya* and that is liberation. The immediate cause of such aloofness is *viveka* or discrimination which removes the cause of bondage i.e. ignorance. The Sāṅkhya school, however, does not deal with the method of acquiring the intuitive experience that results in liberation. A very sketchy reference to the Sāṅkhya discipline is found in the *Sāṅkhyakārikā* of Īśvarakṛṣṇa which prescribes meditation upon the truth i.e. Prakṛti and Puruṣa are different[2] – as the means to the goal. The other accomplice of this school i.e. Yoga elaborately deals with the practical side of the discipline and the main path to liberation is spoken of as renunciation (*vairāgya*) and meditation (Yoga).[3] Here the meditation in the form of *dhyāna, dhāraṇā* and *samādhi* plays an important role in the whole scheme of liberation in Sāṅkhya-Yoga. Emphasising this point Hiriyanna remarks:

> The principles underlying the whole discipline is that man's faculties are by long habit adjusted to the preservation of the empirical self and they must be readjusted so as to secure the totally opposite aim of restoring the Puruṣa element in it to its true condition.[4]

In the discussion so far what I have tried to bring home is that directly or indirectly, meditation does play an important role as a means

of liberation in all the schools of Indian philosophy, orthodox or heterodox. Some schools like Yoga and Buddhism accept its direct importance whereas in Vedāntic schools its importance as an indirect means cannot be gainsaid. In this paper, an attempt is made to examine historically and conceptually the concept of *Prasaṅkhyāna* (meditation) in the schools of Yoga and Vedānta and analyse its usefulness in the attainment of final liberation.

Advaita Scheme of Liberation

Śaṅkara emphasises that knowledge is the direct means to liberation, and devotion and the like are only the indirect means since the latter help a person in purifying the mind in which the impartite knowledge dawns. Performance of the *karmas* without any attachment towards their fruits i.e. *karma-yoga* is indirectly conducive for the attainment of liberation. Among the indirect means, meditation has a pre-eminent place. In his commentary to the first aphorism of *Brahmasūtra*, Śaṅkara states that a person who has fourfold qualifications is eligible for undertaking the study of Vedānta. Those are: 1. The knowledge of the distinction between eternal and non-eternal objects, i.e. Brahman alone is real and all other things are non-real, 2. giving up the desire for the enjoyment of fruits of one's actions here and hereafter, 3. the possessions of the means such as control of mind, etc. 4. intense desire for liberation. In Advaita, we come across two types of proximate means (*antaraṅga-sādhana*). Asceticism, control of the mind and the like are taken to be the first type of proximate means for the Brahman realisation.[5] On the basis of Upaniṣadic text, *śravaṇa*, (*Vedāntic* study), *manana* (reflection) and *nididhyāsana* (meditation) are spoken of as the other group of proximate means.[6]

It may be noted here that there are two views in Advaita as far as the means of liberation are concerned. According to the Bhāmati school of Vācaspati Miśra, *śravaṇa* and the like are of the nature of knowledge, whereas according to the Vivaraṇa tradition of the Prakāśātman, these are the mental activities. Śravaṇa is a mental activity in the form of enquiry into the import of the Upaniṣadic passages which ascertains that Brahman, the non-dual entity is the primary import of the Upaniṣads. Manana is also a mental action in the form of arguing within oneself with a view to convince oneself

that the import of the Upaniṣads is not going to be contradicted by the other empirical means of knowledge and by the different theories set forth by other schools about the reality. Nididhyāsana is contemplative meditation which is a conscious mental effort in focussing one's mind on the truth which has been learnt and reflected. It maintains the stream cognition in the form of "I am Brahman." The Bhāmatī school extends the view that *śravaṇa* is mediate knowledge of Brahman which arises from the study of the Upaniṣadic texts. *Manana* also gives a type of mediate knowledge when the import of the Upaniṣads are analysed on the basis of reasoning. And in the state of *nididhyāsana* there would be the meditation consisting of a stream cognition in the form "I am Brahman." When this is maintained continuously, it leads one to attain the direct knowledge of Brahman.

Śaṅkara is clear about the fact that knowledge cannot be made or enjoined, it is *vastutantra* and not *pururṣatantra*.[7] The problem here is to explain the meaning of the suffix "*tavya*" which enjoins Brahman knowledge in the Upaniṣadic passage "*ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ*" etc.[8] There is enough explanation about the text and as to how to interpret it in the context of liberation. As is known, *vidhi* or injunction is a concept in the Pūrvamīmāṁsā where we come across three types of *vidhis*, viz. *apūrva-vidhi*, *niyama-vidhi* and *parisaṅkhyā-vidhi*. *Apūrva-vidhi* is that type of an injunction which has its result of conveying something which is not known through any other *pramāṇa*. For example, the causal relation between *Jyotiṣṭhoma* sacrifice and *svarga* (heaven) is not known through any other means of knowledge excepting this Vedic text. *Niyamavidhi* is a type of injunction which stipulates a particular means from out of several possible ones to attain an end. The example given is in the context of a sacrifice where "a person pounds the paddy grains." The expected result is that the husk of the paddy has to be removed to get rice to have certain use in the *Āgneya* sacrifice. Husk can be removed in different ways, say by pounding, by nails etc. Thus when there are alternatives, the injunction which specifies pounding and excludes other means such as nailing etc. is known as *niyama-vidhi*. The third type of injunction is *parisaṅkhyā-vidhi*, which excludes one of two simultaneous factors applicable at the same time. The example given is "five

five-nailed animals can be taken as food." In a sacrificial context when there is possibility of taking the animals which have five nails and which do not have five nails as food, the text specifies that the animals which do not have five nails should not be taken as food. This points to an exclusive injunction and here one gets the knowledge that five five-nailed animals may be taken as food only presumptively.

Śaṅkara seems to accept *parisaṅkhyā-vidhi* when he says that the statements containing the semblance of injunction are meant to turn away the spontaneous functioning of mind toward the not-self.[9] Explaining the text "*ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ*" Sureśvara is of the view that this can be either *niyama* or *parisaṅkhyā-vidhi*. As for *parisaṅkhyā-vidhi*, he feels that the purport of the injunction in the text may be of restrictive type or it may be exclusive type. We concentrate our mind on the supreme self by the non-perception of the not-self.[10] In post-Śaṅkara period, Prakāṣātman, the chief proponent of Vivaraṇa, views that *śravaṇa* is the principal factor, while *manana* and *nididhyāsana* are subservient to it. However, Vācaspatimiśra, the author of the *Bhāmatī*, states that *nididhyāsana* is the principal factor and holds the view that mind is the instrumental cause of the direct knowledge of Brahman.[11] He says that it is only a sense organ that could give rise to any knowledge and as far as direct knowledge of Brahman, the mind associated with the latent impressions originated from intense meditation on the *śruti* statements like "I am Brahman" is the cause. For Prakāśātman, the rise of the direct knowledge of an object does not depend upon the instrument of cognition but on the nature of the object. Brahman being most immediate, by *śravaṇa*, by the study of Upaniṣads, there would arise the mediate knowledge of Brahman.[12] He also testifies the *śruti* text which says Brahman cannot be manifested by the mind.[13] Hence it is accepted in the Vivaraṇa school that Upaniṣads constitute the instrumental cause of Brahman knowledge.

To summarise this part of the discussion: Vācaspati holds the view that it is mind disciplined by intense meditation becomes the instrumental cause for the direct knowledge of Brahman, which is liberation. Prakāśātman thinks that meditation starts after the direct knowledge arises out of *śravaṇa* of the Upaniṣads. Hence it is meditation which plays an important role in liberation in Advaita in general and in Vācaspati it is a direct means to attain such a state.

Yoga Scheme of Liberation

The state of liberation which is absolute independence is known as *kaivalya* in the Yoga. Through the attainment of true knowledge called *prajñā*, the ignorance (*avidyā*) with the latent impressions (*vāsanā*) gets removed and this is followed by the liberation of *Puruṣa*. When by the continual practice of *dhyāna*, *dhāraṇā* and *samādhi*, the knowledge of the distinct nature of the *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* becomes stronger, there occurs annihilation of the potency of the outgoing states of activity. In the process, the seeds of false knowledge becomes burnt up and the impurity of *rajas* gets removed and the *sattva* becomes predominant. In such a state, the stream of the notion of discrimination that is, the distinct nature of *puruṣa* and the *buddhi* is recognised. This way, when the state of *buddhi* becomes almost as pure as *puruṣa* all self-enquiry subsides and the vision of the real form of the *puruṣa* arises. This results in the cessation of all false knowledge along with all *kleśas* together with the results of action. In this state, the *citta*, instead of moving towards the objective world, moves towards the *kaivalya* of *puruṣa*.

In the beginning, in spite of the discriminative knowledge, the *prajñā* is not firmly seated. The phenomenal states of consciousness at times intervene and the mental states like "I am" "I know" etc. arise. But higher order practice destroys the potencies of the outgoing states of activity and there would be no intervention in the flow of *prajñā* by the outside forces. This state, when the mind is in its natural, passive and objectless stream, is known as *Dharmamegha-samādhi*. In that state, one does not even want to get anything from *dhyāna*, there arises the true knowledge which distinguishes *prakṛti* from *puruṣa* and one attains the state of *dharmameghasamādhi*. This state of consciousness continues until the *puruṣa* is finally liberated and is freed from the bonds of *prakṛti* and attains absolute freedom (*kaivalya*). In this state, the *citta* becomes infinite and absorbs all finitude within it. The *puruṣa*, in this state is also known as *jīvanmukta*.[14] With the rise of *dharmamegha*, *guṇas* return to the *pradhāna*, their primal cause, after completing their objectives of getting him the phenomenal experiences and obtaining salvation to *puruṣa*.[15]

In Yoga, the attainment of liberation is possible with two kinds of mind called *samprajñāta* (cognitive) and *asamprajñāta* (ultra-cognitive). The former is that in which the mind is concentrated on some object, external or internal in such a way that it does not vacillate from one object to another, but remains fixed on the object it has as its content. *Asamprajñāta* is a state in which the ordinary consciousness has been altogether surpassed and the *citta* returns to its primal cause and in that state the person reaches to the final liberation. The last state of *samprajñātasamādhi* is called *saṁskāraleṣa*, and in that actual states of consciousness become all extinct, though the residue of the potencies of subconscious thought only remain. The different limbs of Yoga are described by Patañjali for attaining this final state. Those are *yama* (restrain), *niyama* (observance), *āsana* (posture), *prāṇāyāma* (controlling the breath), *pratyāhāra* (abstraction), *dhāraṇa* (concentration), *dhyāna* (meditation), and *samādhi* (mystic trance). Vācaspati observes that the state of *samprajñātasamādhi* is attained by making Īśvara the motive of all actions. Vijñānabhikṣu says:

> It is by the meditation on Īśvara that one succeeds in bringing about *samādhi* through the performance of all the accessories of Yoga so the other accessories of Yoga cannot be regarded as unnecessary; or rather it is the other accessories which bring *dhāraṇā, dhyāna* and *samādhi* through meditation on God and thereby produce salvation since they cannot do that themselves. [16]

All the steps of focusing insights on something knowable enrich the Yogī with the knowledge of deeper layers of reality. In this process when he reaches the highest level of concentration-with-consciousness the whole universe reveals itself to the Yogi. This is the state of *prasaṁkhyāna* in which the Yogī seems to be enveloped in a cloud that rains down on him everything knowable.[17]

Now I move on to the concept of *prasaṅkhyāna* meditation as a means to liberation in the schools of Yoga and Advaita to see the conceptual interaction between two schools.

In the *Yogasūtras* (YS) of Patañjali and the commentaries thereon, the idea of *prasaṅkhyāna* meditation involving discriminative

discernment, has been dealt with as a means to liberation. In the system of Yoga it is referred to as perfect discrimination. YS. 4.29 says that when there is no interest even in the highest meditation (*prasaṅkhyāna*) because of perfect discrimination, *dharmamegha-samādhi* arises. The *sūtra* indicates that this meditation is a pre-condition for the liberation (*kaivalya*) and after attaining the *kaivalya*, this meditation automatically drops off. The moment it happens, the difference between Puruṣa and Prakṛti is perfectly understood which, in turn, leads the aspirant to the highest *prasaṅkhyāna*. In his commentary on the *Yogasūtras*, Vyāsa says that when *kleśas* are considerably weakened, like burnt up seeds through the fire of *prasaṅkhyāna*, they become disabled and hence cannot give rise to *Saṁsāra*. That represents the state of Jīvanmukti. In the case of one who has attained Jīvanmukti, *abhyāsa* and *vairāgya* co-exist harmoniously having action in inaction and inaction in action.

Prasaṅkhyāna in Advaitavedānta

In Advaitavedānta, *prasaṅkhyāna* is discussed in the *Brahmasūtra*1.1.4, of Bādarāyaṇa and its commentary by Śaṅkara. In this, a clear distinction is made between *dhyāna* and *jñāna*. For Śaṅkara, *dhyāna* is *puruṣatantra*, i.e. under the control of an agent, whereas the *jñāna* is *vastutantra* as per the ultimate object, the subjective self, viz. Brahman. Śaṅkara rejects the *prasaṅkhyāna* meditation advocated by *jñāna-karma-samuccaya-vādins*. Śaṅkara recommends a type of meditation known as *parisaṅkhyāna*. In the *Upadeśasāhasrī* (1.18), Śaṅkara, says that *prasaṅkhyāna* is not efficacious with respect to liberation. However, he acknowledges its utility in the cleansing of mind which will facilitate the rise of knowledge.[18] Following Śaṅkara, Sureśvara too takes up this issue and reiterates that *prasaṅkhyāna* cannot be the direct means to liberation. He says that it is wrong to believe that the text "thou art that" imparts the knowledge of the existent reality through meditation.[19]

The view expressed by Śaṅkara and Sureśvara, against *prasaṅkhyānavāda* in the context of *Jñānakarmasamuccaya* as a means of liberation gives an impression that meditation has no place in the Advaita scheme of liberation. We have already seen how Vācaspatimiśra gives sublime importance to *nidhyāsana* and

considers meditative mind as the instrumental cause for the liberation. Śaṅkara also is very clear in his view that meditation has to be practised till the Ātman is experienced.[20] But according to the cardinal Advaita viewpoint, liberation always exists, as it is the very nature of Ātman and does not need any action to bring it about. Śaṅkara's view of meditation has to be understood only through this explanation of the dichotomous concepts like *jñāna-karma, vidyā-avidyā*, and transcendental and empirical.

In the *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* (4.1.1-12), Śaṅkara talks of *manana* and *nididhyāsana* as direct causes of Brahman-realisation. Sureśvara allows for both *niyama* and *parisaṅkhyā* injunctions and holds that the meditation on the self is necessary concomitant with the exclusion of the not-self.[21] So he comes nearer to the fact that even though positively meditation is not the cause but through the elimination of Avidyā, it becomes the cause for liberation. So both of them argue against the possibility of an *injunction* as far as meditation is concerned, but not meditation itself. In Advaita, liberation cannot be enjoined, but it is quite possible; similarly meditation cannot be enjoined, it has an important role to play.[22]

In Advaita, the concept of *prasaṅkhyāna* is viewed as an aid to the understanding of the self. In the *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi*, Sureśvara gives the *prima facie* view that *prasaṅkhyāna* removes the suffering nature of the self by generating a knowledge which is opposed to the one revealed by perception, etc. This argument, Sureśvara says is not satisfactory because meditation which is only concentration of mind is not a *pramāṇa*, and hence cannot produce any knowledge. Even if it is accepted as a *pramāṇa* for the sake of argument, it cannot remove the suffering nature of the self since what it conveys, goes contrary to the evidence of perception and other sources of knowledge. One may argue that meditation is the repeated application of the mind to the idea which is conveyed by sentences like "thou art that" and which has been understood by the reasoning of *anvaya-vyatireka*. To explain: meditation does give rise to knowledge as it forms part of the discipline of *śravaṇa-manana-nididhyāsana*. What is known from the hearing (*śravaṇa*) of the text must be examined through the various kinds of reasoning (*manana*); and the repeated meditation *(nididhyāsana)*

on the sense of the text gives rise to the desired knowledge. The opponent argues that the *śruti* itself refers to meditation as a means to self-realisation when it says that the Self should be seen, heard of and reflected on and meditated upon.[23]

It is also said that repeated meditation leads to the attainment of Brahman. The *Chāndogya-upaniṣad* declaration, "According to his volition in this world, so does he become, on departing from here," is quoted in support.[24] Sureśvara emphatically rejects such a position saying that the advocates of such a view have mistaken the ideas behind *śravaṇa, manana* and *nididhyāsana*. In the tradition of Advaita, *śravaṇa* is meant for the removal of doubt relating o *pramāṇa, manana* is meant for removing the doubts pertaining to *prameya*. That is, one may doubt whether the Upaniṣadic text which is the source of knowledge (*pramāṇa*) purports to teach Brahman or some other entity. This doubt called *pramāṇa-asambhāvanā* is removed by the hearing of the text (*śravaṇa*). The doubt whether Brahman and the jīva are identical or not —called *prameya - asambhāvanā* — is removed by rational reflection on the content of the *śruti* text (*manana*). Meditation (*nididhyāsana*) is intended to avert the wrong notions like "The universe of multiplicity is real and the difference between Brahman and the *jīva* is real" which are opposed to the *śruti* texts. Since the discipline of *śravaṇa, manana* and *nididhyāsana*, is for the purpose of only removing the possible obstacles, they cannot produce knowledge as they are not *pramāṇas*. A *pramāṇa* does its work on its own at the first instant without involving repeated action. For example, if the necessary conditions for the rise of knowledge are present, the visual sense straightway gives us the knowledge of the colour. Thus since *prasaṅkhyāna* is a mental act, it cannot lead to the everlasting liberation, since whatever is achieved through action is perishable.[25] It may be argued that meditation produces a permanent result on the ground that the *śruti* text confirms that one who reaches Brahmaloka by practising *saguṇopāsanā* does not return here again.[26] Sureśvara rejects this view as unsatisfactory. It is well known that anything that is produced by action is perishable. This is also confirmed by the *śruti* text which says that if there is nothing in this world which is not the result of *karma* - is perishable,

then why should one resort to *karma*?[27] A *pramāṇa* can reveal an object as it is, but it cannot transform the nature of the object by conferring a new power on it. So whatever is accomplished by *prasaṅkhyāna* cannot be everlasting. Here a question may arise as to the meaning of the *śruti* text on "*anuvṛtti*" which says that one who has reached Brahmaloka does not return to the world of transmigration. What is meant by the text is that one who has reached Brahmaloka after attaining the saving knowledge, is eventually liberated and there is no question of *saṁsāra* to such a person.

Sureśvara further argues that the conduct of one who does not resort to *prasaṅkhyāna* after renouncing the scripture enjoined *nitya-naimittika-karmas* will not be different from that of the Buddhists and others who do not accept scripture. Though scripture has enjoined the performance of *nitya-naimittika karmas*, the spiritual aspirant who seeks liberation renounces these *karmas* and pursues the discipline of *śravaṇa-manana-nididhyāsana* without however accepting *prasaṅkhyāna*. A *mumukṣu* who after giving up *nitya-naimittika-karma* does not practise meditation which has been enjoined suffers spiritual lapse. If on the other hand, he accepts and practises *prasaṅkhyāna*, then his mind will be constantly absorbed in the meditative practice and hence he would not be in a position to perform *nitya-naimittika-karma*. Thus there is scope for *sarvakarma-sannyāsa* for him. Since these difficulties would arise because of the non-inclusion of *prasaṅkhyāna*, the opponents insist on the acceptance of *prasaṅkhyāna*. To this, Sureśvara replies that the Advaitin accepts the scripture-enjoined-practice of *śravaṇa-manana- nididhyāsana* for the purpose of getting the knowledge of Brahman-ātman. As a necessary preliminary to the practice of hearing, etc. renunciation of all karmas has been enjoined. The *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* points out that he who knows it as such becomes self-controlled, calm, withdrawn into himself, enduring and concentrated and sees the self in his own self: he sees everything as the Self."[28]

Sureśvara also tries to explain the contention that the text *tatttvamasi* imparts the knowledge of the Reality through meditation.[29] Since *prasaṅkhyāna* is a type of mental act, he asserts that it cannot be the direct means. The application of the six-

fold criteria beginning with *upakrama-upasaṁhāra* serves its purpose to construe the identity of Brahman-Ātman and not in action. The immutable ever-existent reality is fit only to be known and not accomplished through meditative action. Further, every object is what it is and does not admit of different predications (*vikalpa*) simultaneously or successively. The object in front cannot be a post and a man at the same time, or a post at one time and a man at an other time. In the same way, the immutable reality cannot be ever existent (*nitya-siddha*) as well as attainable through meditative action (*upāsanā-sādhya*) simultaneously or successively.[30] Hence Sureśvara concludes that the knowledge of the Self can be attained only through the *śruti* text such as "that thou art" and not through the means like *prasaṅkhyāna* etc. Just as the visual sense cannot give rise to the knowledge of taste, even so *prasaṅkhyāna* and other means cannot give rise to the knowledge of Brahman-Ātman.

In his *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi,* Sureśvara raises one more question regarding the concept of *prasaṅkhyāna* by prefacing a prima-facie view. The advocate of *prasaṅkhyāna* may say that though the *śruti* texts are authoritative, still they cannot produce direct and immediate knowledge of the Self, since a sentence secular or scriptural can convey only a relational and mediate knowledge[31] and the immediate knowledge of the Self can be attained only through *upāsanā* or *prasaṅkhyāna*, i.e. through meditation on the mediate knowledge obtained by the Upaniṣads. For this, Sureśvara says that a person can gain the mediate knowledge of the fire in a distant mountain through verbal testimony and inference. But he will not get the immediate knowledge of it even though he repeats the verbal testimony and the inference any number of times. The same reasoning holds good for the Vedānta texts. But then, the question would arise that if that indeed were the case, the *śruti* texts like *"tattvamasi"* could give us only mediate knowledge of the Self, and immediate knowledge could never be obtained by repetition (*āvṛtti*) of the Upaniṣadic texts.[32] The important question here is whether *prasaṅkhyāna* should be admitted before or after the rise of the knowledge. It is a question of placing *prasaṅkhyāna* in its right perspective than finding its usefulness. Sureśvara never denies the imortance of such an idea in the scheme of discipline leading to liberation. He further maintains that if *prasaṅkhyāna* has to be accommodated in the scheme of

liberation, then one could certainly place it in the context of *śravaṇa* and *manana* of the texts. Śaṅkara in his commentary on the *Brahmasūtras* 4.1.1-2 says that while a single hearing of the text will do in the case of those who are well advanced, repetition of the texts is necessary for others and it should be continued till there dawns the knowledge of the reality.

Such a person, according to Śaṅkara must necessarily be a *sannyāsin* whose goal is self-knowledge. Regarding combination of the practice of *sarvakarma-sannyāsa* and the discipline of *śravaṇa-manana-nididhyāsana*, he observes in his *Upadeśasahasrī* that one should know the inward self, the meaning of the word "thou" in the aggregate of the body and the organs. One then knows the pure self as all. And that is the import of the *śruti* text "that thou art".[33] So *sarvakarma-sannyāsa* is required for the practice of the discipline of *śravaṇa* etc, which has to be continued until one attains self - realisation. It means that there is no scope for the idea of *prasaṅkhyāna* as a direct means to the knowledge of Brahman-Ātman since the scripture enjoins only hearing etc. for the renunciate.

All that it means is that Śaṅkara and following him Surevara have to work with a few contraries like *jñāna-karma, ātman-anātman* etc. to work out the concept of liberation based on the idea of Nirguṇa Brahman. The same idea is evident when Śaṅkara holds that *jñāna* does not exhaust *prārabdha karma*, which continues till the fall of the body. This accounts for the continued embodiment of the *Jīvanmukta* too. This seems to be a paradox because if knowledge brings about liberation by the destruction of all the actions, then how would body, which is a product of *prārabdha-karma* continue? In *Bṛhadāraṅkayakabhāṣya* (1.4.7), and its corresponding *vārtika* it is stated that through meditation the force of *prārabdha karma* can be countered. One more example: even though Śaṅkara is very particular that it is *śruti* which has the highest authority as a *pramāṇa*, he still works on *Smṛti*, like *Bhagavadgītā* and cites their authority. Vidyasankar Sundaresan states that if self-knowledge is obtained through *śravaṇa*, in which *śruti* is to be heard, then *manana* and *nididhyāsana* are akin to *smṛti* as they constitute recollection and meditation upon what has been already heard.[34] That does not

mean that *manana* and *nididhyāsana* have no place at all in Advaitic scheme of liberation.

Prasaṅkhyāna in the Philosophy of Yoga

The textual evidence regarding the ideal of liberation is associated with many aphorisms of the *Yogasūtras*. In *Yogasūtra*, 1.2., *yoga* is defined as *cittavṛtti-nirodha*. Through the practise there occurs the loss of qualities of *tamas* and *rajas* to the state of realisation of *sattva* and *puruṣa*. This realisation is called as *paraṁ-prasaṅkhyāna* which is viewed as *vivekakhyāti* by Vyāsa, the commentator. In *Yogasūtrabhāṣya*, *prasaṅkhyāna* is taken in the sense of discriminative knowledge which leads to *vairāgya*, i.e. renunciation. For example, in the *sūtra* 1.2 it has been stated that the experience of *prasaṅkhyāna*, which is discriminative discernment of the difference between puruṣa and prakṛti leads the aspirant to *dharmamegha-samādhi* which is the highest *prasaṅkhyāna*. In his commentary on the *Yogasūtra*, 2.1., *Vyāsa* subscribes to the same idea that the *kleśas* when considerably weakened, become like burnt-up seeds through the fire of *prasaṅkhyāna* and are made unfit to give rise to *saṁsāra*. If the aspirant reaches to the stage of *prasaṅkhyāna*, or *vivekakhyāti* as described in the *Yogasūtras* 2.26, 28; 4.29 , he is called *jīvanmukta*. For such a person, afflictions do not arise again and he is liberated while being alive.[35] These indicate the last stage of *samprajñāta-samādhi*, and refer to the fact that *kaivalya* is attainable only when one casts off the body in the last stage of *asamprajñāta-samādhi*. In Yoga system, the experience of Jīvanmukta is similar to that of Īśvara excepting the fact that the former experiences suffering before liberation which Īśvara never experiences. In the *Yogasūtras*, 4.29, we find that when there is no interest in highest meditation which is called as *prasaṅkhyāna*, *dharmamegha-samādhi* develops on account of complete discrimination.[36] The *sūtra* indicates the initial urge for final liberation, *kaivalya*, which automatically drops off at the time of attaining the goal itself. When this dropping takes place, the state of *dharmamegha-samādhi* takes place in the person. It is *dharmamegha* because it rains *dharma* which totally uproots afflictions (*kleśas*) and deeds (*karmas*).[37]

The ideas of *cittavṛttinirodha* does find a prominent place even in the commentaries of Śaṅkara who seems to use yogic techniques in the discipline of Advaita. Śaṅkara gives the *prima facie* view that if self knowledge is not enjoined, then it must be *cittavṛttinirodha* that is enjoined, which has been prescribed in a different school of thought (*tantrāntara*), i.e. Yoga. For Śaṅkara, it is only the knowledge which is the means to liberation. In his commentaries he summarises his view saying that steady recollection is the only way to achieve such a *nirodha* of Yoga. Thus Śaṅkara does accept such a state in a different way even though he does not accept meditation as an injunction. With the radical methodology accepted by him, he cannot accept any view which enunciated dualism. If he were to accept such a view then he may fall to the trap of Mīmāṁsaka. In Ātma-vij*ñā*na, he accepts the role of meditation, though in a different way he denies it elsewhere. Śuresvara seems to recommend the practise of Yoga, which is to be taken up after the renunciation of all Karma.[38]

Comments and Conclusion

That *Prasaṅkhyāna* has a greater roll to play is evident in early Vedānta. It seems that Śaṅkara in his enthusiasm to work out a radical Vedānta must have refuted a prevalent Vedānta school which accepted *Prasaṅkhyāna* along with knowledge as the means of liberation. Śaṅkara and Sureśvara try to integrate Yogic meditation in their Advaitic frame work. *Oṁkāra* meditation in *Māṇḍūkyopaniṣad*, *Asparśayoga* in *Gauḍapādakārikā*, the idea of *Yogābhyāsa* of Sureśvara testify the Yogic practices in the Advaitic disciplines for the liberation. The idea of *parisaṅkhyāna* used in *Upadeśasāhasrī* is similar to *Prasaṅkhyāna* of *Yogasūtrabhāṣya*. In its essence, *prasaṅkhyāna* teaches one how to develop *ātma-anātma-viveka*. What I would like to add here is that Vācaspatimiśra by giving prominent emphasis on mind as the instrumental cause of liberation would add substantial weightage to the Yogic idea of meditation as the means to liberation. There is no doubt about the fact that the *prasaṅkhyāna* cannot be accepted as a direct means of liberation in Advaita. But one cannot do away with the role of mind, as put forward by Vācaspati, and the *nididhyāsana* as the direct means to liberation. The Vivaraṇa school refutes the contention of Vācaspati,

in putting forth its view that *śravaṇa* of śruti is the direct means. The missing link of the role of mind is again taken up by Vidyāraṇya in his *Jīvanmuktiviveka*, wherein he very clearly exposes the role of mind and the Yogic ways of discipline required for attaining to the state of manonāśa and vasanākṣaya which are necessary pre-requisites for Jīvanmukti. Thus the pre-Śaṅkara and post-Śaṅkara Advaita literature is abound with number of instances wherein Yogic practices are emphasised for attaining the state of liberation.

Here I have made an attempt to show how the two schools viz. Yoga and Advaita have dealt with the concept of *prasaṅkhyāna* meditation in their own way sharing a few similarities. In Advaita it is taken in the sense of meditation and the Advaita preceptors are uniform in their attitude to this concept as an indirect means to liberation. In Yoga too, it is taken as a means for reaching the state of liberation, which emphasises a state of inaction in action similar to the Jīvanmukti ideal of Advaita. Though *prasaṅkhyāna* is too much slanted towards Yogic liberation, one, however, can find it as useful in Advaitic scheme of liberation.

Notes and References

1. *Sāṅkhyakārikā* of īśvarakṛṣṇa, verse, 62.
2. *Ibid.*, Verse, 64.
3. *Yogasūtras* of Patañjali, 1.12-16.
4. M. Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1973, p. 296.
5. *Vidyāsaṁyogāt pratyāsannāni vidyāsādhanāni śamādini, Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*-2.4.27
6. *Bṛhadāraṅyakopaniṣad*, 2.4.6.
7. *jñānam tu pramāṇajanyam, pramāṇam tu yathābhūta-vastuviṣayam, ato jñānam kartumakartumanyathā vā kartumaśakyam, kevalaṁ vastutantrameva tat, na codanātantram, na puruṣatantram*, Śaṅkara's *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, 1.1.4.
8. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad*, 2.4.5
9. *kimarthāni tarhi ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyaḥ ityādīni vidhicchāyāni vacanāni, svābhāvikapravrtti-viṣaya-imukhikaraṇārthāni iti brūmaḥ*, Śaṅkara's commentary on *Brahmasūtra*, 1.1.4.

10. *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi* of Sureśvara, 1 - 88.

11. This view of Vācaspati is supported by the *śruti* statements like: *eso 'ṇurātmā cetasā veditavyaḥ, Muṇḍakopaniṣad,* 3.1.9, *dṛśyate tvagryayā buddhyā, Kaṭhopaniṣad,* 3.12, *manasaivānudraṣṭavyam, Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad,* 4.4.14.

12. Prakāśātman's arguments are also based on Upaniṣadic statements like: *tam tu aupaniṣadaṁ puruṣaṁ pṛcchāmi, Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad,* 3.9.26.

13. *yanmanasā na manute, Kenopaniṣad,* 1.6.

14. *tatra jīvanmuktāvasthāyāṁ sarvaiḥ kleśa-karmāvaraṇairmalairvimuktasya jñānasattvasyānantyam bhavati.* Nāgeśa, 4.31

15. The Yoga school makes a difference between *pralaya* and salvation. In *pralaya* or dissolution, the *guṇas* return to *prakṛti* and later there is the possibility of creation and subsequent relation of *prakṛti* with *puruṣa* through the *buddhi.* In liberation i.e. *kaivalya* there is no connection of any *prakṛti,* for there is perpetual separation of the prakṛti from the puruṣas which are eternal ones.

16. S.N. Dasgupta, *A Study of Patañjali,* Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi, 1989, p.127

17. *sattvapuruṣānyathākhyāti mātram cittam dharma-megha-paryantam paraṁ prasaṅkhyānam ityācakṣate dhyāninaḥ, Tattvavaiśāradi of* Vācaspati Miśra, with notes by Shri Balaramadas, Benarus, 1911, p.13.

18. Sengaku Mayeda says that the difference between *prasaṅkhyāna* and *parisaṅkhayāna* is not clear. He holds the view that Śaṅkara's rejection of *prasaṅkhayānavāda* with his treatment of action to be self contradictory. He is of the opinion that Śaṅkara sacrificed consistency because he wanted to give his disciples a great shock by the radical negation of action. See Sengaku Mayeda, *Thousand Teachings,* Tokyo University Press, 1992, p. 251-54. Also refer, K.Kunjunni Raja, "Parisaṅkhayāna and Prasaṅkhayāna in Śaṅkara's Philosophy," *Adyar Library Bulletin,* Vol. 54, 1990.

19. *prasaṁkhyānadvāreṇa vastuniṣṭatvam, Vide Naiṣkarmya-siddhi* - III.82.

20. *Prasaṅkhyānam ataḥ kāryam yāvad ātma anubhūyate. Upadeśasāhasrī,* 1.18.12.

21. *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi* of Sureśvara, 1.85-89)

22. Vidyasankar Sundaresan, *"On Prasaṅkhyāna and Parisaṅkhyāna," Brahmavidyā, Adyar Library Bulletin,* Vol.62, 1998, p. 62.

23. *Ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyo mantavyo nididhyāsitavyaḥ, Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad* 2.4.5

24. *Chāndogyopaniṣad,* 3.14.1.

25. The commentary *Kleśāpahāriṇi* says *prasaṅkhyāna* is a result of the human effort not concerning the nature of the object. *yasmāt puruṣa-āyāsamātrajanitaḥ saḥ na tu vastutantraḥ. Naiṣkarmyasiddhi* Comm. of the verse 90 & 91

26. *na sa punarāvartate. Chāndogyopaniṣad,* 8.15.1

27. *nāsti akṛtaḥ kṛtena, Muṇḍakopaniṣad,* 1.2.12

28. *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣad,* 4.4.23.

29. *prasaṅkhyānadvāreṇa vastuniṣṭhatvam, Naiṣkarmyasiddhi, verse* .83

30. *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi,* verse - 82

31. *saṁsṛṣṭa-parokṣa-jñāna* .

32. *Naiṣkarmyasiddhi,* 3.124

33. *Upadeśasāhasrī,* 18-222-223

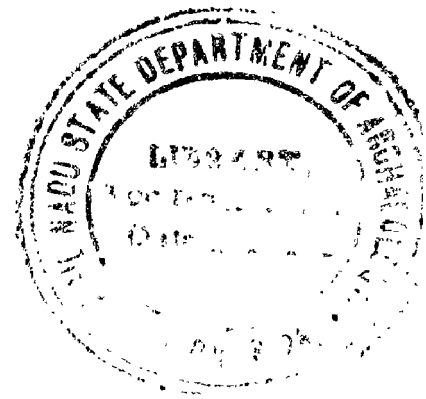
34. *Ibid.,* p.65.

35. The concept of Jīvanmukti is advocated both in Sāṅkhya and Vedānta. The *Sāṅkhya - sūtra* 3.82 states "The sage still lives because of his karmic residue remains to be consumed just as potter's wheel continues to turn from the velocity it has acquired, even though the pot is finished.." Though the Yogasūtras do not explicitly mention the word Jīvanmukta, Vijñānabhikṣu interprets the state of liberated person in commenting the sutras 4.31-33 where he says that there is a possibility of Jīvanmukti as in the state due to the removal of afflictions and karmic residues, and because of presence of sāttvia state of his being, there remains little to be known to him.

36. *prasaṅkhyāne'pyakusidasya sarvathā vivekakhyāter dharmameghaḥ samādhiḥ.*

37. *Yogavārttika of* Vijñānabhikṣu, 4.29

38. *Naiṣkarmya-siddhi,* 1.52.



4

THE RADICAL TRINITY: RAIMON PANIKKAR'S RE-VISION OF ADVAITA AND THE TRINITY

L. ANTHONY SAVARI RAJ

Introduction

Born of a Hindu father and a Spanish Catholic mother, thus pluralistic in his very blood, Raimon Panikkar has been striving all through his life towards the harmony of a pluralistic world. Aptly styled, 'the child of diverse cultures and the academic product of several disciplines,' 'the finest fruit of the East-West fecundation process,' Panikkar, 'one of the leading religious thinkers of our times,' and 'a man whose life and work virtually embodies the cross-cultural and inter-religious dialogue of our day,' has one overriding concern: cross-cultural communication. He himself states: "I am attempting to speak a language that will make sense for the follower of more than one particular tradition -- a risky task perhaps, but necessary if one is to do justice to a cross-cultural investigation."[1]

Detectable beneath all of Panikkar's work is a single but deep insight which he calls the "Radical Trinity" -- a theme which our essay would like to further explore. The Radical Trinity represents, in short, Panikkar's efforts to apply the Christian trinitarian understanding of God to the trinitarian structure of the entire reality. Besides being the culmination of his thought, this insight is also a splendid and concrete example of Panikkar's cross-cultural enterprise. It symbolizes his attempt to enlarge and deepen the Christian mystery of

the trinity through the Buddhist and Hindu modes of silence and non-differentiation, effecting thus, a re-vision in the usual and prevalent understanding of advaita and the trinity, and further enabling these insights to open themselves up to a cross-fertilization.

Moreover, the Radical Trinity is a fitting example of Panikkar's cross-cultural enterprise to articulate the experience of truth in such a manner that it becomes meaningful in the different contexts of diverse cultures. To understand Panikkar's Radical Trinity, it is important, first of all, to take a brief note of the context in which it is discerned and proposed.

I

The Context of Panikkar's Cross-Cultural Contribution

Although our epoch seems to be the beginning of a second Axial Age, a 'mutational' age when the maturing fruits of the various religious traditions are on the verge of beginning to dialogue, to really speak with each other, to share and hopefully to 'cross-fertilize' and enrich one another, yet we are also equally and even painfully aware of an experience which is not all that positive and encouraging. We have been experiencing the near monopoly and dominion of certain world-views and their values, particularly the Western-Christian-Scientific-Technological one. Its main thrust seems to be a narrow anthropocentric perspective which considers human being -- to be precise, a certain type of human being -- as the centre of reality and sees the *logos* (more in the sense of *ratio*) as the centre of human life. This perspective seems to accord an exaggerated importance to the *logos* and seeks to reduce human awareness to the *logos* mode of awareness.

True, there is much to be said for this perspective. Yet it looks as though we need to pay a very heavy price for it. The fragmentation that has come about in our knowing and being, especially due to our dichotomized understanding of the Divine, the Human and the Cosmic is just one example of such heavy price.

Hence, we stand in need of a holistic vision of reality which will help overcome this fragmentation and also integrate the

anthropocentric, the theocentric and the cosmocentric perspectives of different world-religious-traditions in such a manner that their complementary interaction will eliminate possible blind spots in each other's vision.

Consequently, holistic vision would also attempt to overcome -- not deny--the strictures of every kind of dichotomy that plagues our present epoch: the body-soul split, the sacred-secular dichotomy, the God-World-Man separation, the past-present-future compartmentalization -- in short, any *part*-ial or fragmented vision of reality which is indeed at the root of many of our contemporary crises.

It is here, in the context of our search for a new, integrated and integrating experience of reality, that Panikkar's contribution becomes crucial and relevant. Frank Podgorski discerns Panikkar's contribution aptly as follows: "Drawing on mysticism as well as science, myth as well as logic, *intellectus* as well as *ratio,* heart as well as mind, he both calls for and contributes to this bold, new spiritual search, a quest mature enough to be nourished and enriched by the heritage of the entire human community."[2] We only add that the "Radical Trinity" is a simple example and expression of Panikkar's holistic search and a symbol that represents the fundamental trinitarian character of reality.

II

Panikkar's Approach: The Diatopical Hermeneutics and The Dialogical Dialogue

As we have just indicated, the context of our times demands that we gather together the insights of various religious traditions of the world, so that these insights assist and complement one another in our task of overcoming the fragmentation in our knowing and being. And Panikkar's holistic vision of reality indeed provides space where the different world-views can harmoniously meet without losing out their respective insights. In this sense, Panikkar's vision is not only an integrated one, but integrating, too. It is here we like to situate and briefly present Panikkar's diatopical hermeneutics and dialogical dialogue.

Panikkar calls his hermeneutics "diatopical" as it attempts to study and integrate the insights and wisdom of various cultures and traditions which are "spatially" (*topoi*) far apart and hence have no common cultural source. He observes: "Diatopical hermeneutics stands for the ultimate consideration of understanding the other without assuming that the other has the same basic self-understanding and understanding as I have. The ultimate human horizon and not only differing contexts, is at stake here. The method in this third[3] moment is a peculiar *dialogical dialogue*, the *dia-logos* piercing the *logos* in order to reach that dialogical, translogical realm of the heart (according to most traditions), allowing for the emergence of a myth in which we may commune, and which will ultimately allow understanding (standing under) the same horizon of intelligibility."[4]

Without elaborating much, let us only recall here two basic assumptions of Panikkar's diatopical hermeneutics: one, truth can never be totally identified with its formulation; two, it is possible to interpret a truth cross-culturally.[5] This implies that the diatopical hermeneutics has to reconcile between the universalization aspect of truth (i.e. the claim of truth) and the regionalization aspect of truth (i.e. the expression of truth). In other words, truth as such cannot have borders. If it is true, then it must be true for everybody. But truth's expression cannot have such a claim because our grasp of truth is limited, episodic, and particular due to our finitude.[6] "The original moment (and place) of discovery, however privileged it may be sociologically, is hermeneutically speaking just *a* formulation of that truth; it can never claim to be *the* formulation of the truth, much less the truth itself."[7]

This further means that no one can claim to have formulated truth exhaustively and totally. Since truth is identical with reality, the *logos* (expression) can never exhaust or be identified with it (the experience of reality or truth). In other words, reality or truth cannot be totally reduced to or grasped by the *logos* dimension, although it is an essential and constitutive dimension of reality and truth. There is also a mythical dimension which is equally an authentic mode of human awareness which in fact acts as a foundation, but recedes always to a deeper level as a depth-dimension of reality. Panikkar calls this as *Mythos* dimension. It is this dimension which serves as the basis

and horizon of our understanding of reality. It is again this dimension which supports and sustains our being-in-the-world and that through which we know.[8] However, it is important to realize that both the *Logos* and the *Mythos* dimensions of reality can be distinguished, but cannot be radically separated. Panikkar states: "Myth and Logos go together, but their link is not dialectical, nor is it mythical: rather it is the link which constitutes both of them... In other words, there is no *logos* without *mythos* -- of which the *logos* is the language -- and there is no *mythos* without the *logos* -- of which the *mythos* is the ground."[9]

This is only an indication of the fact that every culture has its own experience and expression of the truth of reality. "But still the exigency of the unity of reality -- which is manifested in the urgent need to communicate cross-culturally -- urges us to make the effort to articulate the experience of truth in such a manner that it becomes meaningful in the different contexts of diverse cultures. It is here that diatopical hermeneutics becomes topical."[10]

Panikkar, of course, has provided us with a number of concrete diatopical hermeneutic interpretations. To mention a few: The Myth of Prajāpati[11], Vedic Sacrifice,[12] The Myth of Śunaḥśepa,[13] Karma,[14] Advaita and Bhakti,[15] The Trinity,[16] etc. These cross-cultural interpretations of Panikkar indeed illustrate how "diatopical hermeneutics tries to bring together radically different human horizon."[17]

Let us now consider for our study Panikkar's cross-cultural interpretation of the trinity of the Christian tradition in relation to the advaitic insight of the Hindu tradition. The trinity, Panikkar submits, is an integral part of the religious experience of all traditions. His cross-cultural interpretation, therefore, is only "so to enlarge and deepen the mystery of the Trinity that it may embrace this same mystery existent in other religious traditions but differently expressed."[18]

III

Panikkar's Re-Vision of Advaita and the Trinity
Advaitic Trinitarianism

1. A Re-Vision of Advaita

In trying to understand the nature of reality, Advaita Vedānta claims that reality is ultimately advaita, that is, "not two." That is,

Brahman and the world are not two. To be sure, the indic mind has introduced advaita to stress the negation of duality. Yet, Panikkar reminds us, and rightly so, of its temptation and tendency towards *ekatva* (i.e. monism).

The advaitic attitude is that though it does not deny the reality of the world, yet it considers the world as illusory in relation to the overwhelming reality of Brahman. Moreover, in the context of the multiplicity of the phenomenal world, the advaitic intuition indeed helps to grasp Brahman as the substratum of the phenomenal world and as the undifferentiated ground of all multiplicity and differentiation. In any case, monism or monistic oneness is what seems to be characterizing, in the main, the above advaitic spirit.

We submit that Panikkar does not share this vision of advaita. He makes an attempt to overcome the monistic temptation of advaita, by getting into its very etymology, and thus makes a re-vision in the advaitic notion. The "not two" of a-dvaita inspires Panikkar to affirm that the subject and the object are not two, without being one. "Reality is neither one nor two. It is not one, for we cannot deny evidence: we experience multiplicity. It is not two, for we cannot deny that any duality, epistemologically, logically and metaphysically presupposes an underlying unity which allows that it be doubted, as it were."[19] It is here, we like to situate Panikkar's "Triadic Oneness." More about this later.

We further submit that this re-vision of advaita by Panikkar only seems to be in tune with the understanding of the advaitic insight in an original way. The Puruṣasūkta hymn of the Ṛg Veda (10. 90), for example, expresses the same intuition when revealing to us the character of creation sacrifice; its all-embracing function in which the entire universe is involved. It is neither a merely divine affair, nor a purely human endeavour, nor a blind cosmic process; it is human, divine and cosmic all in one. It is cosmotheandric: God, Man and the Universe are correlates.[20]

Or again, we see this insight coming alive in the classic "*ekam eva advitīyam*" (one only without a second) of *Chāndogya* Upanisad when it expresses that the unity of reality is not a monistic oneness but advaitic which is neither one nor two. In this context, Panikkar observes: "This

one, this *ekam*, is qualified in a special way. It is, in fact, the qualifying word, *advitiya* (non-twoness), which renders the affirmation of oneness fruitful."[21]

Hence, advaita is not monism. But "it is only in denying the apparent duality of reality, without falling into the temptation of putting everything into one bag, that we may approach the advaitic intuition in an intelligible way."[22] We may say even describe this as the dynamism of the two toward the one, without ceasing to be different.

Furthermore, for Panikkar, advaita represents the overcoming of rationalism without abandoning the intellect. The advaitic intuition is not the denial of reason but the transcending of it. He advances his nuanced argument as follows:

> *Advaita* does not say that Being *is* non-dual. If Being were non-dual (and not-plural), we think logically it would have to be one. This is monism. *Advaita* says that Being *is-not* dual, that duality *is-not* the case. And it adds further that Being *is-not* one. *Advaita* does not make an objective statement about reality: "Being is not-two." If not-two includes also not-three, etc., the rational deduction would be that "Being is one." To deny it would amount to plain contradiction. *Advaita* refuses the *is* (one or two) and says instead Being is-not -- one or two. Being has no predicate. The *is* of our rational thinking does not need to be identical with the Being of our awareness. It challenges, precisely, objectivity on the ultimate level, because it discovers that our own thinking is equally non-dual; it cannot be reduced to an absolute unity; it is constitutively polar. It challenges subjectivity equally, precisely because it refuses to postulate the necessary transparency of reality to our thinking, to any thinking. Thinking and Being are two irreducible "dimensions" of reality, dimensions which are neither identical (monism) nor different (dualism).[23]

In short, for Panikkar, "the negation of both a dualistic and a monistic structure of reality, because of the fact that we cannot bring reality into an intelligible oneness is the very core of *advaita*."[24]

2. The Trinity in the Light of Advaita

Panikkar perceives the Christian doctrine of the trinity in the light of the above revised understanding of advaita. He applies the advaitic (non-dualistic) relation to the mutual relationship of the persons in the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Ewert H. Cousins characterizes this application most fittingly as "Advaitic Trinitarianism."[25] In this advaitic trinitarianism, as we shall soon elucidate, Panikkar is guided by two assumptions: one, the trinity is an integral part of the religious experience of all traditions. Hence the trinitarian under-standing cannot be the monopoly of Christianity. This means that aspects of the mystery of the trinity can be discerned in different cultural/religious traditions, which may even further enhance the submerged Christian understanding; second, these religions and cultures with their characteristic other modes of perception may also help to overcome the *logos*-centered/God-centered Christian understanding of the trinity. It is here we like to situate Panikkar's enterprise of bringing to light the role of the indic advaitic insight.

Without spelling out much the elaborate and nuanced treatment of Panikkar's trinity[26] we only like to recall it here through the summary statement of Panikkar himself: "It is the trinitarian dance by which the Father empties himself from all that "he" is, and so does the Son, and so does the Spirit, in order that life goes on giving and receiving. In other words, each "person" is fully in the other one; they are circumincessional as it were."[27] Perhaps Cousins' insightful recapitulation of Panikkar's reflections on the Trinity is still more helpful:

> In his discussion of the Trinity, Panikkar describes three aspects of the divinity and three corresponding forms of spirituality: 1) the silent, apophatic dimension, which he relates to the Father, since the Father expresses himself only through the Son and of himself has no word or expression; 2) the personalistic dimension, which Panikkar relates to the Son, since the Son is the personal mediator between God and man, through whom creation, redemption, and glorification flow; and 3) the immanent dimension, which Panikkar relates to the Spirit, since the Spirit is the union of the Father and the Son. According to Panikkar the apophatic spirituality of the Father is similar to the buddhist experience of nirvana.

> The personalist spirituality of the Son has its roots in Yahweh's revelation to the Jews; from the Christian perspective, its completion is the person of Christ. The immanent spirituality of the Spirit has its resonance in the advaitan Hindu doctrine of the non-duality of the self and the Absolute.[28]

For our purpose we like only to highlight here Panikkar's discernment of the correlation of the immanent spirituality of the Spirit with advaita. He believes that the advaitic relation between God and the world can throw some light on the intra-trinitarian problem in Christianity. "If the Father and the Son are not *two,* they are not one either: the Spirit both unites and distinguishes them. He is the bond of unity: the *we* in between, or rather within."[29]

Hence Panikkar discovers the Spirit as basically the spirit of communion and the unity between *I* and *Thou* resulting in *we*. "The Spirit 'in himself' is a contradiction. There is only the Spirit of God, of the Father and Son. He is the One sent. He is neither an I who speaks to another, nor a Thou to whom someone else speaks, but rather the *we* between the Father and the Son -- that *we* which encompasses also the whole universe in a peculiar way."[30]

It is here we like to highlight Panikkar's discernment of the contribution of the Hindu tradition towards understanding the mystery of the Spirit. "It is to this Spirit that most of the upanisadic assertions about the Absolute point, when seen in their deepest light. One could cite almost every page of the Upanisads for examples. Indeed what is the Spirit but the *atman* of the Upanisads, which is said to be identical with *brahman,* although this identity can only be existentially recognized and affirmed once 'realization' has been attained?"[31]

Just as an aspect of the trinity, namely the unity of the Spirit, is highlighted by the advaitic insight of the Hindu tradition, so too, Panikkar believes, the advaitic intuition brings in some modes of discerning the trinity other than the *logos*. He is convinced that the recognition of these modes present in other cultures of the world, would certainly assist in liberating the *logos*-centered trinitarian understanding of Christianity. Cousins' remarks are once again pertinent here: "While not rejecting the Logos-centered Trinitarianism, Panikkar also perceives the Trinity from outside the Logos/logos

historical-cultural context of the west: from the silence of Buddhism and the unity of Hinduism. When one plunges into the mystery of this silence and this unity, the differentiation constituted by the Logos do not appear. Yet they are not absorbed into an all-encompassing monistic One; they remain in the advaitic sense described above: as not-two."[32]

In other words, the advaitic intuition reveals the non-*logos* structure of the trinity. The *logos* dimension in it is not all that there is, neither can it enable us to grasp fully the mystery of the trinity. There are other ways and modes of perception, namely, silence and the sense of immersion in unity, which assist us better in penetrating deeper into this mystery. It is in this spirit we may also better understand the "indescribable" and "inexhaustible" nature of reality, and the upanisadic "*neti neti*" (not this, not that) approach.

Trinitarian Advaitism

1. A Re-Vision of the Trinity

Panikkar's re-vision of the trinity consists in his attempt to enlarge the Christian trinitarian understanding of God to the trinitarian structure of the entire reality. This, in short, is Panikkar's "Radical Trinity." "The Trinitarian intuition is neither an exclusive Christian doctrine, nor a monopoly of 'God.' It reveals the most fundamental character of Reality. Being is trinitarian."[33]

Moreover, for Panikkar, reflection on the Trinity is not merely a speculation about the life of God, but it is also to do with the height and depth of man and the world. Hence it is a revelation not only of God, but it is equally of the human and the universe. He notes: "A divine Trinity severed from human history and the cosmos would remain a museum piece in a theological cabinet."[34]

Hence the ultimate revelation of the trinity, for Panikkar, is the trinitarian structure of reality, of the triadic oneness existing in all levels of consciousness and reality. This oneness, as we shall try to explicate more in the next section, is not a monistic oneness but a triadic oneness which is neither one nor many. It is here we like to situate and briefly elucidate Panikkar's Cosmotheandric Vision of

Reality[35] which he believes to be an emerging religious consciousness of our times and which is only an another name for the Radical Trinity.

Coining the word "cosmotheandric" Panikkar reflects on the three irreducible dimensions of reality: *Cosmos, Theos*, and *Anthropos* (*bhautika-daivika-ātmika*: Earthly, Divine and Human). He maintains that these are the three constitutive dimensions of anything that "is" which can be distinguished for heuristic purposes, but not severed or separated from one another. That is, all reality or whatever "is" is relational. This intuition, then, seeks to recover the foundational, trinitarian structure underlying every reality.

Panikkar has different formulations for cosmotheandrism. We just quote a few of them. "There is a kind of *perichoresis,* 'dwelling within one another' of these three dimensions of reality, -- the Divine, the Human and the Cosmic -- the *I*, the *you* and the *it*."[36] Or again, "The cosmotheandric principle could be stated by saying that the divine, the human and the earthly -- however we may prefer to call them -- are the three irreducible dimensions which constitute the real, i.e. any reality inasmuch as it is real."[37] And finally, "The times begin to be ripe now to gather again the broken pieces of these partial insights into a new wholistic vision: there is no matter without spirit and no spirit without matter, no World without Man, no God without the Universe, etc. God, Man and World are three artificially substantivized forms of the three primordial adjectives which describe Reality."[38]

The last formulation, more than others, clearly indicates that we have one non-dual (advaitic) reality, which is trinitarian. There is no separate thing or being as God, or world, or human being. We always have a reality which is cosmic, divine and human -- all at once. Hence Panikkar's re-vision of the trinity implies that the trinity is not the monopoly of God, much less of the God of Christianity. Every reality is trinitarian.

2. Advaita in the Light of the Trinity

In the light of the above trinitarian vision of reality, Panikkar discerns the oneness not as a monistic oneness, but a triadic oneness which is neither one, nor two. We would like to characterize this

discernment of Panikkar as "Trinitarian Advaitism." The essence of this trinitarian advaitism is that the Divine and the Cosmic and/or the Human are not two, without being one. In other words, it is the dynamism of the many toward the one without, however, ceasing to be different, and without reaching a higher synthesis. Reality is three-dimensional: cosmic-divine-human. These three dimensions of reality can be distinguished, but cannot be separated.

The trinitarian advaitism further reminds us that reality cannot be reduced to any one of its constitutive dimensions. Panikkar's intuition of the trinity contests the ultimate belief of every idealistic monism that there is a Being or Reality that encompasses all that there is and that Reality is Pure Consciousness (*jñāna -svarūpa)*. It is this belief which also conceives being to be self-intelligible in the sense that it is totally transparent to the light of the intellect and is absolutely pervaded by *cit, nous,* or mind, whatever.[39]

We should, however, clarify that Panikkar's trinitarian advaitism does not deny that *logos, nous, cit* or by whatever name we may call this dimension as an essential dimension of reality. It only contests that reality is totally reducible to it. That is, consciousness is not the only dimension of reality -- reality has other dimensions, too. Panikkar's vision points to the Matter, for instance, or the Spirit which cannot be totally reduced to the *logos.* Each reality presents a mysterious aspect that defies a total transparency and total explanation. For Panikkar, this is precisely the *locus* of freedom. As he puts it, there "is" also *sat* (being) and *ānanda* (joy), besides *cit* (consciousness) to being or reality.[40] Reality is, therefore, *satcitānanda,* cosmotheandric (cosmic-divine-human); it is always a relationship between these three dimensions. In a word, for Panikkar, consciousness is real, but the real is not only consciousness.

This leads us to reflect upon another important dimension of Panikkar's trinitarian advaitism: the symbolic awareness of reality. If reality is basically a symbol, then it cannot be fully grasped or exhausted by the *logos* dimension or objectification of reason. Though reality is constituted by the *logos* (the objectifying or human) dimension, yet it is equally governed by the Matter (the objectifiable) and the Divine (non-objectifiable) dimensions which escape any

total objectification. Furthermore, in the cosmotheandric and symbolic experience of reality, the symbolizer (the Human) is invited, or even expected, to recognize the symbolized (the Divine) in and through the symbol (the Cosmic). Cosmos, then, is a very symbol of the Divine. In the same measure, temporality is a symbol of eternity; matter, of spirit; secular, of sacred; outer, of inner; material, of spiritual, and so on. Thus, trinitarian advaitism indeed proposes to assist us, in the undamental task of overcoming the dichotomized ways of our thinking and being.

IV

The Radical Trinity: Advaitic Trinitarianism and Trinitarian Advaitism

We now recall the cross-fertilization and mutual fecundation that we alluded to in the beginning of this essay. Panikkar's Advaitic Trinitarianism (a re-vision of the trinity in the light of advaita) throws light on the advaitic (non-dualistic) nature of the Persons of the trinity, nay, the entire reality, besides bringing to the forefront other modes of perceiving or experiencing the trinity. Trinitarian Advaitism (a re-vision of advaita in the light of the trinity), on the other hand, tries to overcome the advaitic tendency towards monistic oneness (*ekatva*) by discovering the foundational, trinitarian structure underlying every reality. Reality being trinitarian, it can never be totally reduced to or exhausted by any one of its dimensions, even if it is the dimension of "Pure Consciousness," *Cit, Nous, Logos,* or Mind. All the three dimensions of reality (the cosmic, the divine, and the human) belong together, one is not without the other.

To be sure, both "Advaitic Trinitarianism" and "Trinitarian Advaitism" are only pointers to, or to be viewed in the backdrop of, the "Radical Trinity" -- the universal trinitarian structure of reality, which, Panikkar believes, to be an emerging religious consciousness of our times. But this radical trinity perhaps demands from all of us a radical response -- a response to be responsible enough to contribute, and also get corrected in, our "long held" and "most cherished" insights of our respective religious traditions.

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2 Frank Podgorski, "The Cosmotheandric Intuition: The Contemplative Catalyst of Raimon Panikkar," in *The Intercultural Challenge of Raimon Panikkar*, ed. Joseph Prabhu (New York: Orbis Books, 1996), p. 110. Henceforth as *ICRP*.

3 Here we like to insert a note on the other two moments as pointed out by Panikkar. Panikkar refers to the morphological and diachronical hermeneutics as the first and second moments. The former attempts at bridging a factual gap, the latter is the effort at closing a temporal gap. Cf. Panikkar, "Cross-Cultural Studies. The Need for a New Science of Interpretation," *Monchanin* 50 (June-December, 1975), p. 14.

4 Panikkar, *MFH*, p. 9.

5 For an insightful elucidation of these two assumptions, cf. Francis X. D'Sa, "The Notion of God," *ICRP*, p. 28.

6 Cf. *Ibid.*

7 *Ibid.*

8 For a clear and elaborate treatment of these two dimensions of reality, cf. D'Sa, "The Interreligious Dialogue of the Future," *Vidyajyothi*, Vol. 61, No. 10 (October 1997), pp. 698-700.

9 Panikkar, "Philosophy as Life-Style," *Philosophers on their Own Work*, eds. A. Mercier, M. Svilar, Vol. 4 (Bern, Frankfurt am Main, Las Vegas, 1978), p. 202.

10 D'Sa, "The Notion of God," *ICRP*, p. 29.

11 Cf. Panikkar, *MFH*, pp. 66-95.

12 Cf. Panikkar, *The Vedic Experience. Mantramañjarī. An Anthology of the Vedas for Modern Man and Contemporary Celebration*. Indian Edition. (Pondicherry: All India Books, 1989), pp. 346-432. Henceforth as *VE*.

13 Cf. Panikkar, *MFH*, pp. 98-184.

14 Cf. Panikkar, *MFH*, p. 238.

15 Cf. Panikkar, *MFH*, pp. 278-9.

16 Cf. Panikkar, *The Trinity and the Religious Experience of Man. Icon-Person-Mystery* (London: Orbis Books, 1973). Henceforth as *TREM*.

17 Panikkar, "Philosophy as Life-Style," *op.cit.*, p. 205.

18 Panikkar, *TREM*, p. 42.

19 Panikkar, "A Self-Critical Dialogue," *ICRP*, p. 275.

20 Cf. Panikkar, *VE*, p. 73.

21 *Ibid.*, p. 656.

22 Panikkar, "A Self-Critical Dialogue," *ICRP*, p. 275.

23 *Ibid.*

24 *Ibid.*

25 Cf. Ewert H. Cousins, "Panikkar's Advaitic Trinitarianism," *ICRP*, pp. 119-30.

26 The following two books may be mentioned as Panikkar's major writings on the Trinity.

1. *The Unknown Christ of Hinduism.* Indian Edition. (Bangalore: Asian Trading Corporation, 1982). In this work, Panikkar focuses on the *Logos* (i.e. the Son) dimension of the Trinity).
2. *The Trinity and the Religious Experience of Man, op. cit.* Here, Panikkar deals with the entire Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit and he also explores the mystery of the Trinity from the standpoint of spirituality.

27 Panikkar, "A Self-Critical Dialogue," *ICRP*, p. 276.

28 Ewert H. Cousins, "Raimundo Panikkar and the Christian Systematic Theology of the Future," *Cross Currents* 29 (Summer 1979), p. 147.

29 Panikkar, *TREM*, p. 62.

30 *Ibid.*

31 *Ibid*, pp. 63-4.

32 Cousins, "Panikkar's Advaitic Trinitarianism," *ICRP*, p. 129.

33 Panikkar, *Programme for the Gifford Lectures*, University of Edinburgh, 1988/89, p. 1.

34 Panikkar, "A Self-Critical Dialogue," *ICRP*, p. 272.

35 For an elaborate treatment of this vision, cf. Panikkar, *The Cosmotheandric Experience. Emerging Religious Consciousness* (New York: Orbis Books, 1993).

For a detailed study of this vision and its implications, particularly from an Indian perspective and experience, cf. Anthony Savari Raj, *A New Hermeneutic of Reality. Raimon Panikkar's Cosmotheandric Vision* (Peter Lang AG: Bern, Berlin, Frankfurt/M., New York, Paris, Wien, 1998).

36 Panikkar, "The Myth of Pluralism: The Tower of Babel--A Meditation on Non-Violence," *Cross Currents 29* (Summer 1979), p. 217.

37 Panikkar, *The Cosmotheandric Experience, op. cit.*, p. 60.

38 Panikkar, "Philosophy as Life-Syle," *op. cit.*, p. 206.

39 Cf. Panikkar, "The Invisible Harmony: A Universal Theory of Religion or a Cosmic Confidence in Reality?" *Toward a Universal Theology of Religion*, ed. Leonard Swidler (New York: Orbis Books, 1987), p. 129.

40 Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 130.

BOOK REVIEWS

REV. A.S. GADEN: *The Philosophy of the Upanishads,* (Reprint of T.T. Clark Edition of 1919) Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1999, Pages xiv + 429, Price Rs. 225/-

Rev. A.S. Gaden's English translation of the text of *The Philosophy of Upanishads* by Paul Deussen written originally in German is one more welcome publication of the famous Indological publisher Motilal Banarsidass. This translation was first published in 1919 in T.T. Clark and the present book is its first Indian paperback reproduction. With the visible diminishing interest in Indology and Indian tradition, this book would probably supply some impetus to its readers about the great philosophical heritage India has been having. Introducing the book to its readers, Paul Deussen writes:

> In this shape the idea of accommodation becomes a key which is fitted to unlock the secrets not only of the doctrinal developments of the Upanishads, but of many analogous phenomena in Western Philosophy. For the practice of clothing metaphysical intuitions in the forms of empirical knowledge is met with not only in India, but also in Europe from the earliest times. And for that reason no account would have been taken of it had not Kant demonstrated the incorrectness of the whole procedure (p. ix)

By looking at such books, one cannot simply gainsay the interest European scholars have taken in the study of Indology and Ancient Indian Literature. The way the Sanskrit studies have been patronised and promoted, the translations of many classics are taken up in many countries in Europe, especially in Germany is simply great. The text under publication is one such scholarly attempt in that direction which brings about the quintessence of Upanishads in a scholarly way.

Besides Introduction, the book is divided into four parts. In addition to the discussion on the place of Upanishads in the literature

of the Veda, the Introduction contains a Brief summary of the History of the Upanishads. The Fundamental conception of the Upanishads and their significance. The first part entitled "Theology, or the Doctrine of Brahman" contains five divisions: I. On the possibility of Knowing Brahman, II. The search for Brahman, III. Symbolical Representation of Brahman, IV. The Essential Brahman, V. Brahman and the Universe. The second part again consists of five divisions such as VI. Brahman as the Creator of the Universe, IX. The Unreality of the Universe, X . The Origin of the Sāṁkhya System. In continuation to the topics of the Second part, the third part: Psychology, or the Dotctine of the Soul deals with XI. The Supreme and the Individual Souls, XII. The Organs of the Soul, XIII. The States of the Soul. The fourth Part deals with Eschatology and Practical Philosophy and the topics are: XIV. Transmigration of the soul. XV. Emancipation, XVI. Practical Philosophy and XVII. Retrospect of the Upanishads and their Teachings. The Appendix contains and Index of subjects and one on Upanishadic references.

In the Indian tradition, Upanishads are taken to be very sacred literature dealing with secret doctrines (guhya-vidyā) and self-knowledge (ātma-vidyā). Needless to say that this is an earliest expository attempt to unravel the mystery and profundity of Upanishadic knowledge tothe English knowing readrs. The author has brought out the significance of knowledge as against action (karma) propounded by Mīmāṁsakas. The discussion on the origin and growth of realistic Sāṅkhya school again in the background of Mīmāṁsā shows the penetrative insights of the author into the subtle nuances of history of Upanishadic thought.

The book, as it did earlier, would create a great interest in the study and research in Indology. Since it is a reproduction of an earlier published book, there are hardly any mistakes herein. The editing and getup are as it used to be in those days. The book is priced moderately for wide circulation and the people interested in Upanishadic studies should read this book for gettinig better insights to the philosophy and philosophical history of Upanishads.

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KARL H. POTTER : *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies*, Volume VIII Buddhist Philosophy from 100 to 350 A.D., Motilal Banarsidass, New Delhi, 1999, Pages xvi + 827, Price Rs. 1200/-

Edited by KARL H. POTTER

In the series of *Encyclopedia of Indian Philosophies*, the present volume concentrates to highlight Buddhist Philosophy from 100 to 350 A.D. The chronological presentation of historical development of Buddhism is the main objective of this volume. It commences with the study of the famous four noble truths, the logical analysis of the above by Nāgārjuna and Āryadeva and the classification of Buddhist scholar and sects. The major philosophical schools and their philosophies are stated in a nutshell. The theory of karma is explained from Buddhist perspective followed by the paths to liberation as enunciated by Vasubandhu. His categorisation of seventy five factors into five major categories is interesting. 1. physical factors, 2. mental factors, 3. factors related to mind, 4. factors separate from both matter and mind, and 5. unconditioned factors.

The second part of this volume is devoted to the summaries of Buddhist works which are chronologically arranged. On the whole 207 texts have been well annotated by scholars from both East and West. This volume will be a boon to the readers and researchers on Buddhism especially those who are really interested in the study of Buddhist philosophical history.

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SUTAPAS BHATTACHARYA : *The Oneness / Otherness* Mistery, Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 1999, Pages xx + 677, Price Rs. 659/-

The very title itself is fascinating since it uncovers the mysterious relationship between the individual consciousness and the cosmos. An attempt has been made in this work to effectively present the synthesis between science and mysticism. The human personality has to live and make its being in the cosmic reality and as a miscrocosm the human personality has to move in the macrocosm. Both the West and the East in their philosophical discussions have endeavoured to elucidate the meaning of the mystical union between mind and matter. The contents of the book have been spread to the lyricism of a philosopher ranging to the social utility of the philosophers, the reassertion of the Indian, a few sutras and their commentaries, in this age of falling curtains, (dealing with the historical message of the work), the oneness / otherness mystery, Western misconceptions of Indian metaphysics, mind, consciousness, cosmos. Time and Space, Universal consciousness, Mind-Body interactions, Karma, and Eternal Truth.

With a view to elaborating these ideas, the author has takenup several related issues pertaining to Indian and Western mela - physics, epistemology ethics, logic culture, religion etc. The author tries to resolve several puzzles, confronting issues and complications pertaining to mankind. Ultimately the author resolves that only the healthy combination of science and mysticism can resolve the problems emerging with reference to the transcendental and mundane, the individual and the Absolute. A careful and thorough study of mystic experiences of all mystics from all over the world in all ages based on authentic scientific knowledge and yogic traditions will pave the way for perfect existence. The study of philosophy must be directed in this dimention only. The Indian mystico-philosophical traditions and the intellectual and analytic approach of the West are well integrated to adhere to the above objective. The author deserves much appreciation for elaborately elucidating high ideals in simple and lucid language. It is a book of worth reading and reflected upon.

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LATE THAKUR D SHARMA : *The Science and Logic of the Absolutely Pure*, G.I., Corporation, New York 1999, Pages xxvi + 357, Price US $ 50/-

This book is a wonderful exercise of giving due respect to the past of one's tradition, and at the same time, of overcoming any contempt for the alien. What is more interesting and significant about the book is that it views the past with the eye of the present, and holds the alien closer to the heart. In other words, the book makes a significant attempt to present the diverse stands that comprise the rich and variegated fabric of Indian Philosophy in the idioms of modern science, thereby signaling efforts of reconciliation between Philosophy, Religion and Science — an important task indeed for our times. It signals moreover the new and emerging trends to cross barriers and boundaries in the discovery of the nature of the Ultimate Reality.

The book comprises of two parts. Part I is the main text of late Professor Thakur Dass Sharma's original manuscript. Part II has two appendices (prepared by Rishi S. Raj and Vishwa S. Raj) which serve as an important addition to the main text.

Part I explores the nature of the Ultimate Reality in the perspectives of the six systems of Indian Philosophy. In brief, what the author argues is that though all these systems have a realist or idealist orientation, and view reality as substance or non-substance, yet they are all definitions of the one and only Supreme Divine.

Part II of the book which consists of two appendices does something more. In these appendices, mathematical relations are developed to synthesize the universe as an indivisible whole. These mathematical forms, as the authors describe, lead "to a new definition of the absolute scale of intelligence, the speed of mind, the cyclic nature of birth and death of universe, life and death, the inner and outer worlds, and the projection of future species. In arriving at the numbers presented, data from cosmology and evolution has been used. New relations between mass, energy, space, animate and inanimate objects are developed." (p. ii).

A book of this kind remains welcome, especially in our times of interdisciplinary enterprise and cross-cultural communication. One essential dimension of this interculturality is the effort towards the universalizing of one's insights — that is, the attempt to make one's discipline, and also the insights of one's tradition, intelligible and meaningful for people of all climes and times. Especially today when we experience a new dawn on a global horizon to re-interpret the truth of our respective religious or cultural traditions in the light of, and even with the assistance of, traditions other than our own, this work is not without its importance.

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HERMAN PHILIPSE : *Heidegger's Philosophy of Being,* Motilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited., Delhi, First Indian Edition, 1999, Pages xviii + 555, Price Rs. 395/-

In the history of Western Philosophy, the name of Heidegger will be remembered forever for the main reason that he gave a new direction to philosophy. In the west there are two important thinkers whose roles cannot be neglected in the twentieth century. They are Heidegger and Wittgenstein. Interestingly both of them owe a lot to their philosophical masters, namely, Husserl and Russell but at the same time differing from their teachers in their own way. Also in both these philosophers we see the "earlier" and the "later" philosophy and the unity between them. In both, language played a significant role. If one is responsible for the linguistic turn, the other is responsible for the hermeneutic turn. Both of them were interested in rejuvenating philosophy.

The book under review is the critical interpretation of the Heidegger's study of Being. It is a detailed study of Heidegger, which deals with the basic concepts of Heidegger. The book contains four important chapters and a conclusion. The uniqueness of this book is that it presents a detailed evaluation of Heidegger's approach to the study of Being. In *Sein und Zeit* (1927) the celebrated question of Being is undertaken. According to the author, the central thesis of *Sein und Zeit* is that time is the horizon of each and every "understanding of

being," seemed a natural one; if human existence is essentially finite, we have to find its meaning within the horizon of the limited time of our life, and not in an imaginary eternal realm (p.xii). But the author believes that Heidegger's later writings refuted the above atheism and existentialist interpretation of the question of Being.

The life history of Heidegger shows that he had to undergo many problems and to face many criticisms for the main reason that he was a supporter of Nazism. He was the first child of poor Catholic parents. He studied nearly eight years in a Seminary school and later studied in Freiburg University. He worked for his doctorate on Philosophy on the title, "The Doctrine of Judgment in Psychologism". Husserl's *Logical Investigations* influenced him a lot and themes like, the ontological meaning of the concept of time, space and beings occupied him throughout his life. The basic point of his thought lies in the question of fundamental ontology and the need for it. The fundamental ontology according to him is phenomenological. "Only as phenomenology is ontology possible", says Heidegger. The distinction between human beings and other beings is that the human being sees him as faced with the choice to be or not to be. It is possible for man to see himself as faced with this choice and to think. He uses the word "I dwell" to mention this aspect of human being. The word "Dasein" is used by him to mean a being, a man and sometimes as a substitute for man.

Language is the house of being, according to Heidegger. This made some to argue that for him, language and being are one. It is said that being *is* the house and hence being is language. This is also reflected in his "Letter on Humanism" where he says: "Thought gathers language in simple demonstrative saying. Language is thus the language of being, as the clouds are the clouds of the sky". "Language is at once the house of being and the dwelling of mankind". This is familiar from the interpretation of being in terms of dwelling proposed by him in the *Being and Time* and developed in *An Introduction to Metaphysics*. Here one can see the shift in his thought from Dasein to language.

Ever since the book, *Being and Time* was first published in Germany, it has become the most celebrated philosophical work in Germany. It is a difficult book for the German reader himself and the

English translation is very difficult because of the main reason that many terms used by Heidegger do not get equivalent English words. Whether the English translation goes along with the original German work is also a question. It is for the main reason that Heidegger sometimes uses two different German terms to refer to the same term, which we do not get in translation. He uses words, which are by no means ordinary, and there is freshness in his writings. He had to discard the traditional philosophical terminology and substituted it with his own vocabulary. This means one can always find new expressions in his writings, which makes the translator's job very difficult. The author, Herman Philipse has made a sincere attempt to present Heidegger's notion of Being with an evaluation for which he needs our appreciation.

What do we mean by the word Being? Can we answer this question? This is how Heidegger starts his discussion on Being. He says that the above question cannot be answered. Hence first of all, we must reawaken an understanding for the meaning of this question. Because our aim here is to understand the question of meaning of Being. Heidegger believes that the Question of Being must be restated first. In order to understand the meaning of the word, he goes to the ancient Greeks who first talked bout the interpretation of Being. It is said that Being is the most universal and emptiest of concepts. The author examines in his introductory first chapter the question why an interpretation of Heidegger's question of being is difficult. The reason for this is due to the fact that the question of being appears to be hidden or concealed or somehow inaccessible. The other reason emerges from Heidegger's view on logic found in *Was ist Metaphysik?* The author aims at an objective historical interpretation and concludes following Heidegger that we cannot provide an answer to the question of being at all, but at the same time, the question of being is the basic question in philosophy. The author presents different problems involved in interpretation and explains the need to use our interpretation as a basis for critically evaluating Heidegger's philosophy.

The second chapter deals with five aspects or strands with regard to the question of being where each determine a different meaning of

the question of Being. The author discusses the five fundamental structures or leitmotifs of Heidegger's philosophy, which are interconnected. He develops the interpretative method here and examines the role of such interpretative hypothesis. The meta-Aristotelian theme, for example, provides Heidegger the bipolar scheme. The pole of differentiation and unity of Aristotelian method can be seen in Heidegger's earlier and later writings. This is depicted well by the author. In the third chapter he deals with the problem of unity in Heidegger's thought and the difficulty in translating Heidegger's thoughts. This chapter elucidates the syntactical elements of the question of being and the semantic transformations and the motivational links in Heidegger's thoughts. Chapter four is the central examination of Heidegger's thought. Heidegger himself says that to ask the question about Being is nothing but asking "the unique question whether God is fleeing from us or not". In his critique, the author rejects the two fundamental themes in Heidegger's later works, i.e., the Neo-Hegelian and the postmonotheist leitmotifs. He rejects the Heideggerean postmontheist doctrine of Being by saying that if it transcends reason, it will be meaningless. If it does not transcend reason, it is shipwrecked by the dilemma of the plurality of religions." (p.301). Meaninglessness and incoherence, according to the author infect Heidegger's Neo-Hegelian theme. Also he offers some epistemological and moral objections which makes Heidegger's Neo-Hegelian theme untenable.

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OBITUARY

Professor R. Sundara Rajan
(1935 -1997)

Professor R. Sundara Rajan was born on 2 November 1935 in Chennai where he had his school and higher education. He did B.Sc. Physics and later M.A. Economics in RKM Vivekananda College, Chennai. He got appointment as Inspector in the Income-Tax Department and served there for some years. His maternal uncle Mahāmahopādhyāya Sri Narasimhachari, a renowned scholar of Sanskrit, inculcated interest in Philosophy in him and this made him to do his M.A. in philosophy as a private candidate. His main interest was on Western philosophy. He did his M.Litt. in the University of Madras in 1961 on "Studies in Modern Empiricism: An Essay in Structural Analysis" and took up teaching assignment in Assam. After serving as lecturer for one and half years there, he went to Tirupathi and served in the S.V. University for two years. He was awarded Ph.D. degree in philosophy in 1967 for thesis, "Studies in the Later Philosophy of Wittgenstein" by the University of Madras where he was appointed as lecturer in the department of philosophy, in the same year. He joined the University of Poona as Reader in 1974 and became Professor in 1977. He served there as the Professor and Head for many years and retired from service on 30 November 1994. After his retirement also he was actively involved in research work. He was a senior fellow in the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla (1994-96) and later in the Indian Council of Philosophical Research, New Delhi before untimely death snatched him away from us on 24 June 1997 at a time when he was trying to give a final shape to his philosophical thought, which he had been developing for the last twenty five years.

Professor Sundara Rajan is a serious teacher and always engaged himself in teaching and research. He taught subjects like Philosophy of Natural Science, Philosophy of Social Sciences, Philosophy of Mind, Philosophical Logic, Analytical Philosophy, and Critical theory etc., for post-graduate students for nearly 35 years and guided 30 Ph.D. and 15 M.Litt scholars. He has a love for Phenomenology and Analytical Philosophy. He was also interested in interdisciplinary studies and delivered lectures in the departments of Anthropology, Sociology and

Environment. He was a visiting professor for number of Universities both in India and outside. Travelled widely for academic assignments he had published nearly 100 research papers and 12 books. His last book, *Beyond the Crisis of European Sciences* (vol. I) was published posthumously by the IIAS, Shimla Institute, and the vol. II is yet to be published. Some of his major articles are: 'The Essential Contestablility of the Human Sciences" *(JICPR)*, "Towards a Theory of *Pursarthas" (JICPR)*, "Symbols of Transcendence" *(JICPR)*, "The Primacy of the Political" *(JICPR)*, "The Concept of Critique" *(IPQ)*, "Critique and Imagination" *(IPQ)* "Aspects of the Problem of Reference" *(IPQ)*,"Phenomenology and Psychoanalysis" (Journal of British Phenomenology, UK). His major books include: *Structure and Change in Philosophy,* (1974), the trilogy, *Innovative Competence and Social Change, (1986), Towards a Critique of Cultural Reason (1987),* and *The Primacy of the Political (1991), Studies in Phenomenology, Hermeneutics and Deconstruction (1991), Transformations of Transcendental Philosophy (1994), Humanization of Transcendental Philosophy (1997), and Beyond the Crisis of European Sciences (vol. I) (1998).*

Professor Sundara Rajan was very much respected in academic circles for his extra-ordinary brilliance. He always encouraged students in philosophical discussions. A close examination of his philosophy would show three strands in him: the phenomenological, the linguistic and the ecological. It is important to note that all these three are interconnected in almost all his writings. His posthumous publication, *Beyond the Crisis of European Sciences: Towards New Beginnings* criticizes the Eurocentric bias and explores the possibility for a new path. It tries to identify the "European themata" i.e., the general features of style and motivation, which seem to characterize the modern sciences, and to explain the need to develop a conceptual framework for understanding of science and also to support the relationship between science and philosophy. He wants to develop a four-fold framework of science — science as a possibility, science as a fact, science as a problem and science as a hope, which he thinks, can solve the crisis of the natural science.

Professor Sundara Rajan is interested in developing what is known as "participatory humanism". Man alone possesses the capacity to understand the good of other species. This shift from autocentric nature of man to the allocentric is possible only if there is a transformation in man or if there is a shift to new mode of thinking which is possible through the interaction of the ecological and the political frames of understanding. He believed that there is a hope and promise of new life beyond the present crisis of the European Sciences. The way out is to follow a new mode of thinking which is possible by the proper understanding of the life-world and science. His contribution to philosophy is something, which cannot be ignored by the scholars, and the issues that are discussed by him are not only new and novel but also something, which one must give a serious thought for a better understanding.

S. Panneerselvam

Professor P.K. Sundaram
(1926-1999)

Professor P.K. Sundaram, known lovingly as PKS, was born on 13.9.1926 to Thiru Krishnaswami and Thirumathi Mangalambal at Pachampettai of Tiruchirappalli District in Tamil Nadu. He obtained his M.A. degree in Philosophy at Madras University with distinction in 1950 and Ph.D. in 1960 under the supervision of Professor TMP Mahadevan. The subject of his thesis was *"Advaita Epistemology as Expounded in the Iṣṭasiddhi of Vimuktātman."*

He started his academic career as a lecturer at R.D.M. College, Sivaganga, in 1947, and served as a lecturer at V.O.C. College, Tuticorin, during 1951-54. He joined as a research fellow in the department of Philosophy, University of Madras, in 1954 and became a senior lecturer in the same department in 1956. He was elevated to the position of Reader in the C.A.S. in Philosophy, University of Madras, in 1964 and became a Professor of Philosophy in the RIAS in Philosophy, University of Madras, from 1978 till his retirement on 30.9.1986.

Much adored and respected for his brilliance and clarity in teaching, Professor Sundaram was also very prolific in his writings. The following are his major publications:

1. *Vedāntasara of Sadānanda, 1964*
2. *Advaita Epistemology, 1968*
3. *Ātmabodha, 1977*
4. *Some Philosophical Concepts in Purāṇānuru, 1979*
5. *Advaita and other Systems, 1981*
6. *Ishtasiddhi of Vimuktatman, 1980*

Besides these important and well-appreciated books, particularly his magnum opus Advaita Epistemology, he also has to his credit more than fifty articles in National and International Journals on various themes in Philosophy.

After retiring from service at the department of Philosophy, University of Madras, where he had a brilliant career of teaching and research, he went to serve as the Director, School of Philosophy, Tamil University, Thanjavur, for six years, and since then he engaged himself in delivering public lectures, particularly in Advaita Vedanta which were well appreciated by the interested public and scholars alike. Among the many distinctions and laurels he enjoyed, he had the distinction of being the Honorary Director of C.P. Ramaswamy Iyer Foundation, Chennai for many years and also served as one of the Regional Editors of the prestigious *Encyclopedia of Hinduism* published by McMillan Company.

His mortal life came to an end on July 15, 1999 and he has become immortal, particularly in the minds and hearts of people who have known and loved him.

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Indian Philosophical Annual covers the proceedings of the All-India seminars held at the Institute and special articles of advanced research. Twenty Two volumes have so far been published. Volume Six contains part of the proceedings of the International Seminar on World Philosophy. The main proceedings having been published as a separate volume entitled *Philosophy: Theory and Practice*. Other volumes contain the proceedings of the All-India seminars held each year. The themes covered by the volumes are mentioned below.

Volume One (1965)	:	Karma and Rebirth
Volume Two (1966)	:	Indian Philosophy and Social Concern & The Concept of Maya
Volume Three (1967)	:	The Concept of Progress & The Meaning of Metaphysics
Volume Four (1968)	:	Determinism and Moral Freedom & The Problem of Method in Philosophy
Volume Five (1969)	:	The Concept of Liberation and Its Relevance to Philosophy & Gandhian Weltanschauung
Volume Six (1970)	:	Freedom (Panel Discussion) & Indian Philosophical Perspective (Symposium)
Volume Seven (1971)	:	Advaita Vedanta and Western Thought & The Concept of God
Volume Eight (1972)	:	Sir Aurobindo and the Concept of Evolution & The Concept of Person
Volume Nine (1973-74)	:	The Concept of Being & Philosophy and Social Conflict
Volume Ten (1974-75)	:	Reality and the Categories of Thought & South Indian Mysticism
Volume Eleven (1976)	:	The Concept of Consciousness
Volume Twelve (1977-78)	:	The Philosophy of Radhakrishnan
Volume Thirteen (1978-79)	:	The Problem of Alienation
Volume Fourteen (1980-81)	:	Saiva Siddhanta
Volume Fifteen (1982-83)	:	The Concept of Man
Volume Sixteen (1983-84)	:	Philosophy of History: Indian Perspectives
Volume Seventeen (1984-85)	:	Mystics and Society
Volume Eighteen (1985-86)	:	Spiritual Values and Social Life in Indian Tradition & Tradition and Modernity in Indian Philosophy.
Volume Nineteen (1986-87)	:	Sivajnanamunivar
Volume Twenty (1987-88)	:	Self-knowledge and Self-identity
Volume Twenty-one (1989-90)	:	Special Number on Sri Sankara
Volume Twenty-two (1999-2000)	:	Post Modernism and Critical Theory