

In a basic sense I certainly regard tradition and modernity as typical contrasts, so does traditional thought. In all traditional thought polarity is the very foundation of manifestation in the cosmos—no polarity, no manifestation. So the contrast and conflict cannot be a historical emergency at a given time—it has always to be there. Although its forms are changing, the relationship between tradition and modernity in traditional thought is fixed.

There was a point about man's conquest of nature, and I think we have to be very careful while ascribing these ideas to traditional thought. In fact, these ideas have already been ascribed to traditional thought both at the level of theory and at the level of practice. There was a famous article by Edgerton long ago which said that power in the worldly sense was the ultimate aim of all Vedic yagnas. So this is not a new charge, and Potter has written a whole book about it. But I think this is an untenable position, despite distinguished support, and the reason is that the texts quoted are viewed only partially, to the exclusion of the other portions in the same text which counter the argument. To treat certain portions as basic and the others as frills would be a prejudice.

There are other proofs against it. Yoga describes all kinds of powers and siddhis which are just like the siddhis a modern scientist might gain and has gained. But there is a clear injunction that they come as by-products in the process of self-transformation, and that it is always possible to be arrested in further progress by them. This constitutes the internal, structural temptation of the path, and it has to be transcended, showing very clearly that their attainment is not the aim. And those historical or mythical figures who are said to have gained these powers through other means have been recognised, in terms of that theory, as arrested at that level.

Take for example the modern idea of an ideal language, which can be seen as the urge within language for self-conquest. This is not a modern notion in the sense that we find in many traditions the urge for universal language or grammar. But the distinction is that, firstly, this urge is characterised in tradition as perverse, and in some traditions God even punishes man for it; secondly, in modern thought it is treated as an empirically realisable goal, but not in traditional thinking, witness the empirical unrealisability of the *parā* or even *pasyanti* levels of language.

The idea of man as master of his own destiny occurs in Hindu texts also, but in an entirely different sense. Man's life there is considered as a series of created causes and consequences. But if you analyse the meaning of this, it is that he is the creature of destiny, and can become a creator only when he recognises the creatureliness of his life and transcends it. The meaning is completely different in modern thought where man's creatureliness is denied.

Why do we not ask "Who are we?" and not just "Who am I?" I think it is for modern man only that this form of questioning is possible. The traditional idea is that man's knowledge must never exceed his being. He should not know anything the responsibilities of which he cannot cope with. To ask the question ("Who are we?") implies a kind of universal imagination which I don't suppose ordinary man possesses at all. That would mean an identification with alter-egos, which is not ordinarily possible. This question cannot, therefore, be a fundamental human question although it can be a yogic one. It can be a question for adepts but not for ordinary humans. Modern man thinks of it because he believes in knowledge for the sake of knowledge, where responsibilities are not created internally but have to be taken. So "Who are we?" is a superhuman question, not a human one.<sup>7</sup>

The institution of slavery lies at a different level. There are many traditional theories that regard slaves as not fully human, e. g. the Hindu theory, and perhaps the Greek too. However, this does not, as far as I can see, invalidate or vitiate any theoretical point I made, and if it does, I would like it pinpointed. But may we be reminded that slavery as an institution is found right down to our own days but now without even the excuse of supporting consistent theory. Modern civilisation is founded on the idea that all men are in some basic, important sense, equal, and yet suffers and fosters slavery, whereas in traditional civilisations, although there is slavery, there is consistent attempted theoretical support for it, however, unjustified.

7. Can there not be autological inquiry in the collective mode? Can we not in addition to or along with seeking the Self of each, seek also the Father of all?—Ed.

RAMCHANDRA GANDHI :

It is not at all clear to me that the traditional view of man was the view of all men in the past, or that a sufficiently large number of men had become one with it. I don't think there is any evidence for it, I don't think there is any theoretical need for this postulation either. If we accept something like the traditional vision of man—which is not the same as the view of traditional man—then there would be complex connections with the past, which if chalked out, could handle the difficulties Professor Daya Krishna has mentioned without upsetting either your general theory or the view that at its centre perhaps, traditional society had this vision of man. So I am suggesting two things : a clear repudiation of the phrase 'traditional man' by you and also further clarification of what is meant by the traditional vision of man. It was probably a view that was accepted and historically put forward by some people but I feel that to say that would be unsatisfactory from the general point of view you have been putting forward. The suggestion that in some large scale way this was there in the world or, can be so, is not at all convincing to me. It may become the central view of a group and, if we take it as such, the kinds of controversy Professor Daya Krishna raised might be settled.

K. J. SHAH :

It is very necessary for us to see that Professor Saran has at least succeeded in putting before us two views of man and society and also two views of their inter-relationship. Unless we do so, we will blur a very significant point being made. But what is the distinction between these views and their inter-relationship? In one view I think one would begin, as it were, with an understanding of man and then try to relate it to the way man shapes himself. Alternatively, one would try to understand the nature of man in terms of what he does.

Professor Gandhi suggested that whatever this view of man, it was held only by a few people and not a large number. I don't think this is any problem at all, because at any time the articulators of understanding are few, and those who can understand the articulation are also few. The question is whether, in a right or wrong way, this kind of understanding provided the basis for living. Even

if that understanding was misused, in so far as it was used effectively by some, I suggest that it would constitute the understanding of man and society for that particular community. Modern understanding itself is not so universal there are very few who could articulate it and see what its presuppositions and consequences are. Again, between that society and ours so many basic human functions will be in common, and the question will then be whether these different elements have the same significance in the life of the individual and the community, given these two ways of understanding. I suggest it would not be so. Today slavery may be the worst condition for a human being to be in, but it is also possible to suggest that the worst condition for a human being or a society is one which suffers from a lack of self-respect and dignity. I don't think poverty is the most important factor which takes away the dignity of man. I am not saying that it is not a factor, only that need not be the most important. I don't know whether the absence of a feeling of dignity, a feeling of helplessness is as common in the non-modern understanding as the kind of helplessness we feel, in modern society today, with its modern presuppositions. I am not sure of it at all, and I think it is enormously important that we give this more attention, because I feel the most important thing for man is to be free, as far as possible, from the feeling of helplessness either in relation to others or in relation to himself or to both.

NIRMAL VERMA :

I am completely in agreement with what Professor Shah has said. One of the reasons for the helplessness he alluded to may also relate to the suppression of the traditional in man. When we speak of the traditional and modern view of man, we almost think of a temporal rupture, as it were, between what is past and what is living. And this is a fallacy, for if modernity has done any violence to man, it is in trying to suppress feelings, impulses, insights, visions, which once spontaneously, innately belonged to man. This has yielded a very distorted, a very crooked, concept of man himself. I would like to link this point to the anguish of the modern artist—and I use the word 'modern' in the exact western sense. Take the example of Proust : by any criterion he is the most modern of the modern novelists. And yet he found that the sense of time which Victorian rationalist novelists had

embraced under the influence of the modern ambition of conquering nature and controlling time led him nowhere except to the futility of fleeting, internally unrelated moments. I am trying to draw your attention to a most interesting thing : that by rejecting the modern notion of time, Proust created the most modern of novels, despite the seeming paradox. And I think this can be applied to some of the most insightful of the modern artists. They are modern not because they conform to the superstitions of modernity but because they have the courage to go back to those aspects of man which the modern age has suppressed.

So it is not a question of going back to tradition. We must address ourselves to the most crucial problem of recovering once again that which has slipped into the shadows of dormancy and abeyance it is the power of such recovery which is at the back of the best insight of the movement of art and literature in our times.

ASHOK KELKAR :

Referring to the feeling of helplessness that Professor Shah mentioned, I would like to point out that whenever there is a transition from one type of society to another, there is this feeling of helplessness. It is not a function of what is being transitioned from or what is being transitioned to, but only of the fact that there is a transition, whether from a tribal to a traditional vision or from a traditional to a modern one.

RAMAKRISHNA :

My main problem concerns the use of the word "traditional". I think the kind of metaphysical types you are trying to construct—tradition and modernity—cannot exist, because they are not perfect poles. Modernity presupposes and is dependent upon tradition, and vice versa. Tradition implies continuity, and continuity includes the point from which it is continuous as also the point to which it is continuous. So one cannot talk of tradition or modernity without the other.

MOHINI MULLICK :

I hate to change the scale of discussion, but it seems to me that we have not really examined the content of Professor Saran's critique of the modern vision of man.

My response has to do with the categories of residues, particularly that of rationality. Your argument that the acceptance of irrational phenomena — you have characterised three — as having an autonomous existence, coupled with the idea that reason is a basic and adequate tool of understanding, necessarily creates a residue, is not very clear to me. I don't think it necessarily follows, unless you suppose that the irrational is also the intelligible *per se*, which of course modern science would not accept.

A. K. SARAN :

Let me begin with the last speaker.

Her contention is that the irrational and the unconscious may be autonomous but need not necessarily be rationally unintelligible and that I appear to have failed to take this into account in my discussion of residues and their autonomy in modern thought.

Let us, for the sake of argument, put aside the question of autonomy, and let us see if irrationality and the unconscious as posited by modern thought itself could be understood in terms of reason. I submit that there are two ways in which reason can understand them : one, by showing that the irrational and unconscious are either some kind of transformation of the rational, or that both rationality and irrationality are diverse transformations of something else; two, by treating the conscious as some form of reduction of the unconscious, and rationality as a reduction of irrationality. My argument assumes that these are the only ways, and I suggest that no other has been or can be shown without going radically beyond this framework of transformation.

As regards unintelligibility, it is certainly true that the unconscious and the irrational intrinsically contain elements of the unintelligible. In terms of the total cognitive or epistemic constitution of man, the unconscious *per se* retains an element of unintelligibility because a special symbolic has to be created for it. And unless that symbolic is grounded in rationality, it is the symbolic of the unintelligible, not the intelligible. Of course, I have then to show that the possible symbolics within this framework also are not well-grounded, but I lack the necessary knowledge to embark on that.

Briefly to respond to one of Mr. Verma's point. My view is not that complete rupture marks the movement from tradition to

modernity, although I do think a kind of rupture has taken place here which, from the ordinary, evolutionary point of view, is unique. There is a Sanskrit verse which says that our heritage was left to us without a testimony. Rupture and discontinuity and anguish have to do with our failure to possess our heritage.

To Mr. Ramakrishna I would say that although tradition does mean continuity, it is when this continuity is broken that the question of modernity or anti-tradition arises. In fact antitradition is more a kind of simultaneous spatial concept while rupture or discontinuity is a temporal concept. And modern thinking itself posits this discontinuity, in the evolutionary view too, where man's various devices fail to cover it up.<sup>8</sup>

Professor Kelkar raised a question about transition and continuity, and I feel the concept of transition is not an answer to the problem of continuity but simply a way of by passing it. Transition assumes continuity. Again, there must be limits to transition. We might, from the historical point of view, think of a period of transition lasting thousands of years. But if this is so, it should be made very clear. I am not saying there is something intrinsically odd about a transition taking a whole millenium, only that it should be made clear. I would say, though, that unless we think of tradition in millennial terms, the idea of transition does not clarify the succession of tradition by modernity. When it was suggested that transition itself may be regarded as the basic, central value of modernity, I do not know whether it was meant ironically or not, but I think some such thing is involved in Professor Kelkar's point.

8. Is there in traditional thought, in some centrally situated way, global historical consciousness capable of dealing in strictly traditional terms with the threat of collapse which the earth face today? If not, then some saving newness of conception and execution must come not from tradition but from its object—God—and the uprooted but contrite human soul may be specially receptive to such Grace—Ed.

## PROVOCATIONS

□ I was not a radical in my youth because I did not want to be a reactionary in my old age.

— ANONYMOUS OLD MAN

□ An educational method which is not inspired by the conception of a certain form of human perfection is not worth very much. When it is a matter of educating a whole people, this conception should be that of a civilisation. It must not be sought in the past, which only contains imperfect models; far less still in our dreams of the future, which are necessarily as mediocre as we ourselves are, and consequently vastly inferior to the past. The inspiration for such an education must be sought, like the method itself, among the truths eternally inscribed in the nature of things.

— From 'ILLUMINATIONS', A. K. Saran

□ "Who are you?" the lady in black asked Cardinal Salviati.

The Cardinal looked up, met the gaze of her wide-open eyes and smiled very gently.

"Who am I?" he repeated. "Verily, madame, you are the first of my penitents who has ever asked me that question—the first, indeed, who has ever seemed to presume that I might have an identity of my own to confess to. I was not prepared for your question."

The lady remained standing up straight before him; without taking her eyes off his face, she mechanically pulled on her long gloves.

"Men and women," the Cardinal went on, "in the course of time have come to me and have asked my advice. Many of them have come in deep distress..."

"As I myself?" she exclaimed.

"In deep distress and anguish," he continued, "which, however, have never been deeper than my compassion with each of them—and have put their problems before me in all kinds of terms. Madame, the multitude of statements and arguments have been but so many variations of one single cry of the heart, of one single question :

‘Who am I?’ If I could but answer that question, if I could but solve that riddle for them, my consultants would be saved.”

“As I myself?” she cried for the third time. “When I first told you of the horrible conflict, of the cruel dilemma which was rending my heart, I put before you, I know, a number of details, in themselves unconnected and contradictory, and so jarring that I had to stop the ears of my mind to them. In the course of our talks together all these fragments have been united into a whole. Oh, not into an idyll—I am well aware that I am in for a *furioso*—but into a harmony without a discordant note to it. You have shown me myself! I might tell you that you had created me, and that I had come to life under your hands, and surely it would have been both happiness and pain to have been thus created. But it is not so; my happiness and my pain are greater still, for you have made me see that I was already created—aye, created by the Lord God Himself and issued from His hands. From this hour, what on earth or in heaven can harm me? To the eyes of the world, it is true, I am standing at the edge of an abyss, or walking in a blizzard in wild mountains, but the abyss and the blizzard are the work of God and are infinitely and magnificently beautiful!”

She closed her eyes, then after a second looked up again.

“Yet,” she said, her voice soft, like the voice of a violin, “I shall be asking one more favour from you. I beg you to answer my question. Who are you?”

“Madame,” said the Cardinal after a long pause, “I am not in the habit of talking about myself, and your demand makes me feel a little shy. But I do not want to see you go away—and may be we two shall never meet again—without having granted you your last request. “And indeed,” he added, “I am beginning to take an interest in your question. Allow me, then, in order to save my modesty, to answer you in the classic manner, and to tell you a story.”

“I have seen your mother,” said the lady in the armchair. “She was a friend of Mama’s and, when I was a very little girl, from time to time came to the house—in the most lovely frocks and bonnets. I adored her because she could smile and weep at the same time. She made me a present of a bowl of goldfish.”

“A week ago,” said the Cardinal, “in going through the drawers of an old cabinet, I came upon a small flask of the perfume which she had made for her in Bologna—the recipe will have been lost by now. The flask was empty, but still gave out a faint fragrance. A multitude of things were in it, all in one. Smiles, as you say, and tears, dauntlessness and fear, unconquerable hope and the certainty of failure—in short: What will, I suppose, be found in that belongings of most deceased ladies.”

“And so her son,” said the lady after a pause, “early trained in the art of *equipoise*, was left to promenade in the high places of this world, in one single magnificently harmonious form, two incompatible personalities.”

“Oh, no, Madame,” said the Cardinal, “use not that word. Speak not of incompatibility. Verily, I tell you: you may meet one of the two, speak to him and listen to him, confide in him and be comforted by him, and at the hour of parting be unable to decide with which of them you have spent the day”.

“For who,” he continued very slowly, “who, Madame, is the man who is placed, in his life on earth, with his back to God and his face to man, because he is God’s mouthpiece, and through him the voice of God is given forth? Who is the man who has no existence of his own—because the existence of each human being is his—and who has neither home nor friends nor wife—because his hearth is the hearth of and he himself is the friend and lover of all human beings?”

“Alas” whispered the lady.

“Pity him not, this man,” said the Cardinal. “Doomed he will be, it is true, and forever lonely, and wherever he goes his commission will be that of breaking hearts, because the sacrifice of God is a broken and contrite heart. Yet the Lord indemnifies his mouthpiece. If he is without potency he has been given a small bit of omnipotence. Calmly, like a child in his father’s house binding and loosening his favorite dogs, he will bind the influence of Pleiades and loose the bands of Orion. Like a child in his father’s house ordering about his servants, he will send lightnings, that they may go and say to him: ‘Here we are.’ Just as the gate of the citadel is opened to the vice-

regent, the gates of death have been opened to him. And as the heir apparent will have been entrusted with the regalia of the King, he knows where light dwells, and as to darkness, where is the place thereof."

"Alas!" the lady again whispered.

The Cardinal smiled a little.

"Oh, do not sigh, dear and kind lady," he said. "The servant was neither forced nor lured into service. Before taking him on, his Master spoke straightly and fairly to him. 'You are aware,' he said, 'that I am almighty. And you have before you the world which I have created. Now give me your opinion on it. Do you take it that I have meant to create a peaceful world?' 'No, my Lord,' the candidate replied. 'Or that I have,' the Lord asked, 'meant to create a pretty and neat world?'" "No, indeed," answered the youth. "Or a world easy to live in" asked the Lord. "O good Lord, no!" said the candidate. "Or do you," the Lord asked for the last time, "hold and believe that I have solved to create a sublime world, with all things necessary to the purpose in it, and none left out?" "I do," said the young man. "Then," said the Master, "then, my servant and mouthpiece, take the oath!"

"But if indeed," the Cardinal went on after a moment, "your kind heart yearns to melt in compassion, I may tell you at the same time, that to this chosen office – holder of the Lord – so highly favored in many things – certain spiritual benefits, granted to other human beings, are indeed withheld."

"Of what benefits are you speaking?" she asked in a low voice.

"I am speaking," he answered, "of the benefit of remorse. To the man of whom we speak it is forbidden. The tears of repentance, in which the soul of nations are blissfully cleansed, are not for him. Quod fecit, fecit!"

He was silent for a second, then added thoughtfully: "In this way, because of his steadfast renunciation of repentance, and even though he be rejected as a judge and as a human being, Pontius Pilate took immortal rank amongst these elect at the moment when he proclaimed: 'Quod scripsi, scripsi.'"

"For the man of whom I speak," he once more added, after a longer pause, "within the play and strife of this world is the bow of the Lord."

"... the arrow of which," the lady exclaimed, "each time strikes the heart?"

"An ingenious *jeu-de-mots*, Madame" said he and laughed, "but I myself used the word in a different sense and had in mind that frail implement, mute in itself, which in the hand of the master will bring out all music that stringed instruments contain, and be at the same time medium and creator."

"Then answer me now, Madame," he concluded, "who is this man?"

"It is the artist," she answered slowly.

"You are right," he said. "It is the artist. And who more?"

"The priest," said the lady.

"Yes," said the Cardinal.

She rose from her chair, dropping her lace mantilla over the back and arms of it, walked up to the window and looked out first down into the street, then up into sky. She came back, but remained standing, as in the beginning of the conversation.

"Your Eminence," she said, "in answer to a question, has been telling me a story, in which my friend and teacher is the hero. I see the hero of the story very clearly, as if luminous even, and on a higher plane. But my teacher and adviser – and my friend – is farther away than before. He no more looks to me quite human, and alas, I am not sure that I am not afraid of him."

The Cardinal lifted an ivory paper-knife from the table, turned it between his fingers and put it down.

"Madame," he said, "I have been telling you a story. Stories have been told as long as speech has existed, and *sans* stories the human race would have perished, as it would have perished *sans* water. You will see the characters of the true story clearly, as if luminous and on a higher plane, and at the same time they may look not quite human, and you may well be a little afraid of them. That is all in the order of things.

But I see, Madame," he went on, "I see, today, a new art of narration, a novel literature and category of belles-lettres, dawning upon the world. It is, indeed, already with us, and it has gained great favour amongst the readers of our time. And this new art and literature—for the sake of the individual characters in the story, and in order to keep close to them and not be afraid—will be ready to sacrifice the story itself.

"The individuals of the new books and novels—one by one are so close to the reader that he will feel a bodily warmth flowing from them, and that he will take them to his bosom and make them, in all situations of his life, his companions, friends and advisers. And while this interchange of sympathy goes on, the story itself loses ground and weight and in the end evaporates, like the bouquet of a noble wine, the bottle of which has been left uncorked."

"Oh, Your Eminence," said the lady, "do not speak ill of the new fascinating art of narration, to which I am myself a devotee. Those live and sympathetic persons of the modern novels at times have meant more to me than my acquaintances of flesh and blood. They have indeed seemed to embrace me, and when, reading by candlelight, I have wetted my pillow with the tears of Ellenore, this sister of mine—frail and faultful as myself—seems to have been shedding my own."

"Mistake me not," said the Cardinal. "The literature of which we are speaking—the literature of individuals, if we may call it so—is a noble art, a great, earnest and ambitious human product. But it is a human product. The divine art is the story. In the beginning was the story. At the end we shall be privileged to view, and review, it—and that is what is named the day of judgement."

"But you will remember," he remarked, as in a parenthesis and with a smile, "that the human characters in the book do come forth on the sixth day only—by that time they were bound to come, for where the story is, the characters will gather!

"A story," he went on as before, "has a hero to it, and you will see him clearly, luminous, and as upon a higher plane. Whatever he is in himself, the immortal story immortalises its hero. Ali Baba, who in himself is nothing more than an honest woodcutter, is the adequate hero of a very great story. But by

the time when the new literature shall reign supreme and you will have no more stories, you will have no more heroes. The world will have to do without them, sadly, until the hour when divine powers shall see fit, once more, to make a story for a hero to appear in."

"A story, Madame, has a heroine—a young woman who by the sole virtue of being so becomes the prize of the hero, and the reward for his every exploit and every vicissitude. But by the time when you have no more stories, your young women will be the prize and reward of nobody and nothing. Indeed I doubt whether by then you will have any young women at all. For you will not, then, see the wood for trees. "Or", he added, "as if in his own thoughts," it will be, at the best, a poor time, a sad time, for a proud maiden, who will have no one to hold the stirrup to her, but will have to come down from her milk—white steed to trudge on a dusty road. And alas!—a poor and sad lover of hers who will stand by to see his lady disrobed of her story and, all naked turned into an individual."

"The story," he took up the thread, "according to its essence and plan, moves and places these two young people, hero and heroine—together with their confidants and competitors, friends, foes and fools—and goes on. They need not distress themselves about material for the burnt offering, for the story will provide. It will separate the two, in life by the currents of the Hellespont and unite them, in death, in a Veronese tomb. It provides for the hero, and his young bride will exchange an old cooper lamp for a new one, and the Chaldeans shall make out three bands and fall upon his camels and carry them away, and he himself with his own hand shall cook, for an evening meal with his mistress, the falcon which was to have saved the life of her small dying son. The story will provide for the heroine, and, at the moment when she lifts up her lamp to behold the beauty of her sleeping lover it makes her spill one drop of burning oil on his shoulder. The story does not slacken its speed to occupy itself with the mien or bearing of its characters, but goes on. It makes the one faithful partisan of its old mad hero cry out in awe: 'Is this the promised end?'—goes on and in a while calmly tells us: "This is the promised end."

'O God,' said the lady. "What you call the divine game seems a hard and cruel game, which maltreats and ruins human beings."

'Hard and cruel it may seem,' said the Cardinal, "but we who hold our high office as keepers and watchmen to the story, may tell you, verily, that to its human characters there is salvation in nothing else in the universe. If you tell them that they may bring their distress and anguish before another authority, you will be cruelly deceiving and mocking them. For within our whole universe the story only has authority to answer that cry of heart of its characters, that one cry of heart of each of them: 'Who am I?'"

There was a long silence.

The lady in black stood still, sunk in thought, at last, absent-mindedly, she lifted her mantilla from the chair and draped it round her shoulders and torso in a most fashionable style. She took a step toward the man, and stopped. At this moment of parting she was pale.

"My friend," she said, "dear teacher, adviser and consoler, I see and understand, by now, that you serve, that you are a loyal and incorruptible servant. I feel the Master whom you serve is very great."

She closed her eyes, then after a second looked up again.

"Yet," she said, "before I go away—and perhaps we shall never meet again—I beg you to answer one more question of mine. Will you grant me this last favour?"

"Yes," said he.

"Are you sure," she asked, "that it is God whom you serve?"

The Cardinal looked up, met her eyes and smiled very gently.

"That," he said, "that, Madame, is a risk which the artists and the priests of the world have to run."

— ISAK DINESEN,  
Last Tales

□ The history of western philosophy is a series of footnotes to Plato.

— WHITEHEAD

□ Philosophy never reverts to its old position after the shock of a great philosopher.

— WHITEHEAD

□ As adults we have forgotten most of our childhood, not only its contents but its flavour; as men of the world we hardly know of the existence of the inner world; we barely remember our dreams, and make little sense of them when we do; as for our bodies, we retain just sufficient proprioceptive sensations to coordinate our movements and to ensure the minimal requirements for biosocial survival—to register fatigue, signals for food, sex, defecation, sleep; beyond that little or nothing. Our capacity to think, except in the service of what we are dangerously deluded in supposing is our self-interest, and in conformity with common sense, is pitifully limited: our capacity even to see, hear, touch, taste and smell is so shrouded in veils of mystification that an intensive discipline of unlearning is necessary for *anyone* before one can begin to experience the world afresh, with innocence, truth and love.

— From 'ILLUMINATIONS'  
A. K. Saran

□ The condition of alienation, of being asleep, of being unconscious, of being out of one's mind, is the condition of the normal man.

Society highly values its normal man. It educates children to lose themselves and to become absurd, and thus to be normal.

Normal men have killed perhaps 1,00,000,000 of their fellow normal men in the last fifty years.

—From 'ILLUMINATIONS'  
A. K. Saran

□ It is unbelievable but true that our entire academic and educational establishment—schools, colleges, universities, institutes of advanced learning, research centres, research projects, seminars, conferences—is working incessantly, formally and informally, to keep us etherised upon the table.

— From 'ILLUMINATIONS'  
A. K. Saran



□ A crucial first step towards intellectual and political freedom is to realise that freedom of thought is defined by love of truth, not by ideological philandering, by mastery of passions, not by passionate opinions, by the ability to think originally and upstream, not by a sort of monomaniacal search for and pursuit of the novel and the exotic. Intellectual and political freedom is constituted by the opportunity to pursue the *summum bonum*, not by the liberty to 'think' what one likes and do what one wants.

— From 'ILLUMINATIONS'  
A. K. Saran

□ Betrayal is the worst form of a human relationship : it is inauthenticity *par excellence*. The *sine qua non* for an authentic relation between the elite and the people is that there be a group of intellectuals who own their past and repent; who constantly endeavour to rise above their class-interest and aspire to attain to the consciousness of the whole, and above all, who would not betray their calling, no matter what the cost, how insufferable the misery.

— From 'ILLUMINATIONS'  
A. K. Saran

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### Section III

## FREEDOM AND NECESSITY

Lecture By : P. F. STRAWSON

Chairman : K. J. SHAH

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RAMCHANDRA GANDHI :

It is a matter of great honour that Professor Strawson is here and that Professor K. J. Shah, who has been a pupil of Wittgenstein, will be chairing. I request Professor Shah to take over.

K. J. SHAH :

I seem to have become a professional Chairman, and I would like to remind Professor Gandhi that the distinction that might apply to the teacher might not apply to the pupil at all. I request Professor Strawson to give his talk.

P. F. STRAWSON :

In this paper I shall discuss the views of Spinoza on Liberty and Necessity, otherwise Free will and Determinism as those views are set out in his great work 'The Ethics'. What I offer, in fact, is a critique, a rejection of those views.

First, I would like to make a few general remarks about the book as a whole. The first reading of 'The Ethics' may leave the reader with a sense of strain or paradox, even of contradiction. This is not because Spinoza, as he does, denies both on the one hand freedom of action or decision, and on the other hand exalts or celebrates what he calls freedom of mind. No contradiction there, because even if all things follow with absolute necessity, as he says they do, from the nature of God, yet there is nothing paradoxical or contradictory in distinguishing some of the conditions

which may follow with the honorific name of freedom. What does create a first sense of strain is the fact that Spinoza recommends, urges on us the following of what he describes as the difficult path to the achievement of this condition of freedom, while at the same time assuring us that we have no choice at all in the matter, only the illusion of a choice. One might wonder what the point is of making this recommendation and adding that we have no choice in the matter. However, this strain can be accommodated. Spinoza thinks the illusion of choice to be inescapable, and thinking this, being subject to the illusion himself, we may think of him as caused to set out what can only from his point of view be seen rationally as a description of the condition desired in a form of recommendation which will cause an attempt to promote in his fellow men or some of them a state of affairs to which he attaches a great value and desires to see more generally realised. At this point comes a further strain and a need for a further effort of accommodation. Though Spinoza evaluates human conditions and human propensities with some confidence, yet he also maintains that to a mind wholly free, i. e. to a mind that fully comprehended the nature of things, to such a mind, all distinctions of value would lack application—they would not even be intelligible. So, it seems, according to him, we are to believe that nothing is truly good or truly evil, and also that the Supreme Good is to approximate as nearly as possible to that condition in which it could be understood that this is so, that no thing is truly good or truly evil. That does seem rather a strain, but again we can take the strain and make the accommodation. We can reconstrue, we can reinterpret the evaluations he offers as descriptions of the causes and effects of certain human dispositions. We can note also the naturalness of the requirement of an evaluative terminology which by hypothesis reflects the limitations of our own understanding and of his, and we can then feel the effect ourselves. So the total exercise is, in its way, superbly managed. The combination of total naturalism with this unique elevation of tone which we find in 'The Ethics' is, rather against the probabilities, splendidly brought off.

Yet, serious questions remain, questions about the freedom which is declared to be illusion and about the freedom which is equated with blessedness, and is said to increase proportionately with increase of understanding. Spinoza attributes the illusion

of freedom of action to our consciousness of our actions, decisions, and desires on the one hand, together with our ignorance, of their causes, on the other. So he has, on this matter, two theses: first that the sense of freedom is illusory because it entails a belief in our freedom which is incompatible with the universal reign of natural causality which he holds to be a fact. The second thesis, is that this sense of freedom, this illusion of freedom, caused in a certain way. Both these are questionable, and I shall reject both.

It could be maintained that free actions are free not from all causality, but that they are free from certain kinds of causality, the causality, let us say, of constraint. And those who maintain this will be ready enough to illustrate what they mean by this with examples of physical force, obviously, or intrusive psychological compulsion. If on this ground one questions the first thesis that the sense of freedom is illusion because it is incompatible with determinism, one is under some obligation of consistency to question also the second thesis of the causal origin or source of the sense of freedom. One can scarcely allow that knowledge of causes would make those causes constraining, which were not so before, also that such knowledge of causes would cause an authentic sense of freedom to be displaced by an illusion of constraint, so it seems one must deny that the sense of freedom is caused by ignorance of causes. Intellectual decency would oblige one to give another account of the source of the sense of freedom.

Men are not generally ignorant of the immediate cause of their actions, i. e., they know often enough what combinations of desire, preference, belief and perception prompt them or cause them to act as they do. Not all the reasons they give are rationalisations, and given their reasons, they may often produce the true causes of their actions. As for the remoter causes of their actions, i. e., causes of their own desires, dispositions and preferences, they will often enough have a reasonably accurate notion of the source of these as well, acknowledging both the general determining power of education, training, environment and heredity and the specific influence of this or that element of these determining forces. So blank ignorance of causes does not exist, so the sense of freedom cannot be attributed to it.

Whence, then, does this sense arise, or better perhaps, what does it consist in? One can only sketch an answer. First, we

should consider that our desires and preferences are not, in general, some things we just note in ourselves as alien presences. To a large extent they are ourselves. And the point gains force from the very fact of exceptions to it, i. e., from the presence in some people, sometimes, of dispositions and desires which they do experience as intrusive compulsions. And in respect of these desires, preferences, experienced as intrusive compulsions, there is precisely no sense of freedom. This absence is not attributable to knowledge of their causes; on the contrary, sufferers from such compulsions may suffer also from just such ignorance of their causes as Spinoza would declare to be the source of the sense of freedom.

This is one point. We should consider the experience of deliberation of—thinking out our courses of action and making up our minds. We should consider this experience of deliberation and relate this experience to the point just made, that our desires and preferences, are not in general something we just note in ourselves as alien presences in us. The corollary of this point is that in the experience of deliberation we are not mere spectators in a sense in which, as it were, contending desires struggle for mastery with ourselves as prize. This image of contending desires may sometimes be appropriate, but not for the standard experience of deliberation. That experience, rather, heightens our sense of freedom, by heightening our sense of soul (self). In the higher order desires, as we might call them, which determine what we call our choice, we identify ourselves the more completely, and this is why we call it our choice. This is another point in the phenomenology of the sense of freedom.

And finally we should consider what I shall call the experience of agency. When a basic action of ours issues by a normal causal route from a specific intention which itself arises from a combination of relevant beliefs and desires, then we have immediate knowledge not only that our action has been such as we intended to perform, but also that it has been performed intentionally. This immediate knowledge of the intentional character of our actions I call the experience of agency. So here then is a part, at least, of the phenomenology of the sense of freedom.

Suppose it is acknowledged that the sense of freedom experienced in ourselves and attributed to others is a natural fact, one of the facts of nature, not, in general, causally threatened by knowledge of particular causes, nor logically threatened by a general belief in the reign of universal causality. Yet it must be admitted that the sense of freedom, this natural fact, is closely linked with other attitudes both towards ourselves and others, with our feelings towards ourselves and others, and with other concepts which we apply to ourselves and others. And it is often argued that the justification of some of these attitudes and feelings, and the application of some of these concepts, requires and is seen by us to require, the truths of beliefs which are incompatible with the general belief in the universal reign of natural causality.

Spinoza speaks, in this connection, of sin and merit, praise and blame, and allied notions, in general, we may say, of notions, attitudes and feelings associated with moral judgement. It certainly is generally held, and I call it the thesis of the common moral consciousness, that the appropriateness of these attitudes and feelings, the applicability of these notions of praise, blame, etc., does require that the agent on relevant occasions could have acted otherwise than he did on those occasions. Thus according to this argument, if the thesis of determinism is true, then it is not true on any occasion that our agent could have acted otherwise than he did, which implies that the attitudes and notions in question are never appropriate. So we must ask whether the thesis of the common moral consciousness is really correctly interpreted in that line of reasoning. We may ask also whether it is in any case a line of reasoning which Spinoza accepts or could consistently accept as it stands. The reasoning, in that line of argument, depends heavily on the notions of appropriateness and justification of attitudes, and these notions, being alien to Spinoza's profoundly naturalistic and descriptive style of thought, must at least be reinterpreted in terms of cause and effect. To put it crudely, the thesis that a certain attitude is justified only if a certain belief is true amounts in its Spinozistic reconstrual to the thesis that a certain attitude is causally dependent on a certain belief. Reinterpreting the reasoning in these terms, we must ask whether our proneness to the attitudes and feelings and to the application of the concepts associated with moral judgement is in fact dependent on beliefs

incompatible with the truth of determinism.

The question returns with a difference to the common moral consciousness. When, in a context of moral appraisal, the common moral consciousness delivers the judgement 'He could have acted otherwise, therefore he is to be praised/blamed', we must ask whether this judgement really amounts to the following: that there was no sufficient natural impediment of any kind whatsoever, however complex, to his acting otherwise.

I find it difficult, as others have found it difficult, to accept that equivalence. It seems to me that a common judgement of this form 'He could have acted otherwise' amounts to a denial of a sufficient natural impediment of a specific kind. For example, one might say 'He could have easily helped, instead of withholding help.' This would amount simply to the denial of any lack of adequate muscular power on his part, or the denial of any lack of adequate financial means on his part. Will the response 'No he couldn't—it simply wasn't in his nature to do so' lead to the withdrawal of moral judgement in such a case? I hardly think it would—rather, to its reinforcement.

There is another reason, equally familiar, for questioning the proposed equivalents on which the line of reasoning I set out depends. Acceptance of the equivalence commits one to the view that the practice of moral judgement or appraisal is either rationally grounded on or causally dependent on a conscious or tacit rejection of the thesis of determinism. When those who accept the equivalence are invited to enlarge on the question 'How does your belief in the absence of determining causes explain or justify the attitudes or practices in question?' their answers are always singularly insufficient. It is hard to see how belief in randomness of action or decision could explain or justify any such thing as moral judgement. And attempts to formulate an appropriate belief, an alternative to determinism in other terms, have never really resulted in anything but high-flown nonsense or psychological descriptions which are in no way inconsistent with the thesis of determinism. That is, no one has been able to state intelligibly what that condition of freedom, which has been supposed necessary to ground our moral attitudes and judgements, must actually consist in. The question 'If we believe in such a condition, what exactly are we believing?' remains unanswered, and I think unanswerable.

Some who have faced this fact but have also felt an irreconcilable tension between the reign of causality and the holding of moral attitudes, have concluded that there is something inherently confused about moral attitudes. And that is a conclusion which echoes Spinoza. Nevertheless, brought in this way, and for this reason, it is the wrong conclusion to draw, for our proneness to moral attitudes and feelings is another natural fact just as the sense of freedom is. I have remarked that they are linked, and it is time to say more about the link.

In speaking of the sense of freedom, I connected it closely with the sense of self. Our desires, decisions, actions, I said, are not in general alien to us, but are we, and our awareness of them is awareness of ourselves. I remarked that we attribute to others the same sense of freedom and the same sense of self. We see others as other selves. This is not a conclusion drawn by analogical reasoning. In a variety of ways inextricably bound up with the facts of mutual human involvement and interaction, in a variety of ways we feel towards each other as to otherselves, and this variety of ways is just the variety of moral and personal reactive attitudes and emotions which we experience towards others, and which have their correlates in attitudes and emotions directed towards ourselves.

All or most of these attitudes and emotions, whether self-directed or other-directed, Spinoza treats in 'The Ethics'. He treats of them as natural facts, bringing unparalleled psychological insight to bear on the detailed analysis of their causes and effects. For that analysis of his one can have nothing but admiration. What I dispute is the thesis that these emotions and attitudes, together with the associated sense of freedom of one-self and otherselves, rest upon a belief incompatible with the doctrine of the universal reign of natural causality.

But we must once more distinguish between the thesis that these emotions and attitudes together with the sense of freedom rest upon a false belief of determinism and the thesis that this cluster of associated feelings rests upon ignorance of the actual causes of desires, dispositions and actions, and would be dispelled by knowledge of them. These two theses are logically independent of each other. The second could be true even if the first, which I rejected, was false. Earlier on I rather summarily rejected the second thesis as well, at least as far as the sense of freedom

was concerned. That is, I rejected it in its full generality, arguing that we could have a reasonably accurate notion of the causal sources of our desires, dispositions and actions, and those of others, without being in the least disposed, as a result of this knowledge, to lose our sense of these desires, dispositions and actions as truly ours or theirs, to lose our sense of ourselves and our freedom in respect of them. On the other hand we could sometimes experience as alien compulsions in respect of which we had no sense of freedom, certain desires and dispositions, of the causes of which, we were truly ignorant, which we were quite at a loss to account for.

Despite a summary rejection of the second thesis, a more detailed consideration of it is called for. I have been speaking of a kind of non-specialist knowledge that we have of the casual sources of human desires, dispositions and actions. We explain ourselves and others to ourselves and others in terms which we might call human and social terms. We refer to the inherited characteristics, social influences, the effect of education, training and experience, to the particular circumstances people find themselves in. We speak of character and personality and the influence which form and modify them, and we can develop considerable subtlety and expertise in this kind of knowledge. It must be admitted that it remains a relatively vague and inexact kind of knowledge, and there must be few who suppose that it will ever be anything else. But we are also increasingly able to view ourselves in a quite different kind of light—the light of the physical and biological sciences—as genetically programmed mechanisms of immense complexity that are constantly modified by their own history, and which respond in constantly modified ways to sensory inputs with behavioural outputs. And the scope of development of these sciences is no less immense than the complexity of the mechanisms we must take ourselves to be. And we are only at the threshold of this development. At the same time, the knowledge that these sciences deliver and promise differs fundamentally from the knowledge of causation of human behaviour which I just spoke of, for the latter is, as far as it goes, inexact knowledge.

Suppose for a moment that we were able to give complete causal explanations of human behaviour, including our own, in terms belonging to the exact sciences. Suppose, Spinozistically,

we were able to identify every thought, feeling and original impulse to action as the mental aspects of some complex physical state, and that we could in turn determine the sufficient physical causes of the latter, tracing them as far back as we wished to. Might we not then be said to have replaced our present, inexact, inadequate knowledge and understanding of the causes of our desires, dispositions and actions with adequate knowledge? Might not such adequate knowledge remove the basis of the sense of freedom and the sense of self, and hence the basis of all associated moral and personal attitudes and emotions, thus vindicating the thesis that all these did indeed rest, if not on absolute ignorance, then at least on inadequate knowledge of causes?

That suggestion—a defence of Spinoza's second thesis, as it were involves obvious minor complications. In as much as such mental items as the sense of agency, say, or the sense of guilt must themselves be supposed to have physical correlates and causes, it would at least be necessary to suppose substantial modifications in the mechanism itself to result from knowledge of its workings.

But it is pointless to dwell on these complications, because the question that contains the suggestion is unanswerable, because the supposition that gives rise to it cannot conceivably be fulfilled: i.e., the supposition that we were able to give complete causal explanations of human behaviour in terms belonging not to our ordinary, common vocabulary but, to the exact sciences.

Let us take an example. A person, X, say, notices that Y's, last remark has caused embarrassment to Z, and, wishing to spare Z's feelings, himself makes a remark intended to change the direction of the conversation. Can we seriously contemplate the possibility of being able to give, in terms belonging exclusively to the exact physical sciences, a complete causal account of the origin of precisely this complex of thought, feeling and action on X's part and not only of this, but every other piece of human behaviour?

The idea is absurd, not because there wouldn't be time enough to work the solution for such a problem as, there wouldn't be time to work out the causal conditions of every movement of a leaf on a stream, but for the more fundamental reason that there is no practical possibility of establishing the general principles on which such a calculation could be based.

I don't mean that he must absolutely deny the existence of underlying psycho-physical correlations, or as some would say, identities, even in such cases as these, but I do mean that the idea of such correlation in these cases must remain merely an idea, something without effect, quite empty from a practical point of view.

There is, of course, more to be said about the physical explanation of human behaviour. In particular two points can be made. First, if we find connections between the language of the exact sciences on the one hand and the language of mind and behaviour on the other which, I maintain, is unattainable yet, grosser connections are attainable. Many general kinds of dependence of the mental and behavioural on the physical are really well known. We can modify perception, stimulate memory, reduce or enhance aggression, depression or sexual drive by chemical and electrical means, and a great extension of this kind of knowledge is to be foreseen. And knowledge of such dependencies and the availability of techniques may surely, in certain cases, contribute to inhibit those personal and moral attitudes and reactions whose basis is at issue. It may be asked why this inhibiting effect should not be generalised. If all general traits that manifest themselves in particular episodes of human behaviour must be supposed to have a physical base, then why should the effect be confined to particular cases? The answer, or the beginnings of the answer, is to be found, I think, in first noting the fact that these are also the cases which we were disposed to regard as cases for treatment. They are the cases in which the traits in questions are displayed in a form which by itself tends to inhibit ordinary interpersonal and moral attitudes in favour of objective ones. That is why I said such general knowledge of causes only contributes, in some cases, in inhibiting personal and moral attitudes and reactions.

The second point to be made is this: I gave just now a particular example of human behaviour, described it in ordinary, human terms and rejected the idea of being able, even in principle, to give adequate causal explanations of such episodes in terms of the exact sciences. But suppose we were content to abandon the practice of describing behaviour in terms of intention or action altogether, in favour of describing it solely in terms of bodily movements. Then the general principles of exact and adequate causal explanation of behaviour so understood would no longer seem beyond our

grasp. For mechanisms of bodily movement show no discontinuity with the finer, electrochemical mechanisms of the human brain. The difficulties of explanation in particular cases would no longer be different in kind, although they would, no doubt, be in degree, from the difficulties of explaining the movements of a leaf on a stream.

I make that point only for the sake of completeness. What I was concerned to contest was the thesis that knowledge of causes of behaviour would undermine a certain range of attitudes and feelings. Such general knowledge of causes as we actually possess has not, in fact, produced this effect. To the hypothetical question whether exact or adequate knowledge couldn't produce it, I respond with a distinction. So long as what we understand by human behaviour is intention or action, such knowledge is unattainable. The idea of necessary correlation is empty. If we were to exclude from a description of human behaviour all references to belief, desire and intention, and see it as consisting simply in bodily movement, then such knowledge might indeed be in principle attainable. But this is simply irrelevant to the issue before us. To see human behaviour as consisting simply of physical movement would, by itself, exclude the attitudes and feelings in question.

So I conclude that if we cannot positively reject Spinoza's second thesis about the dependence of the sense of freedom and moral attitudes on ignorance of causes, if the thesis cannot be put to test, we can have no reason to accept it.

I have talked entirely about Spinoza's doctrine regarding the freedom of action and decision, and left myself no space to discuss his positive conception of the freedom of mind, when he describes in such an elevated way. The picture Spinoza draws of the free and rational man, of his detachment, magnanimity, moderation, is, by and large, a coherent, impressive and recognisable picture. But there is one central thesis which leaves an insistent doubt; Spinoza equates increase of freedom with increase of understanding, and by 'understanding' he means understanding of the nature of God, i. e., the working of nature, since Spinoza identifies the two.

The advances that have been made in the last 300 years in this kind of understanding are spectacular, but it can hardly be contended that they have been matched by comparable advances towards

deliverance from the bondage of human passions, towards freedom of mind in Spinoza's sense. It is true the free and rational man, as so impressively and coherently pictured in 'The Ethics', must have a certain largeness of vision of the world, and a certain broad and sympathetic understanding of human nature, must in fact by no means be a fool; but it is not at all clear that he has to be a natural scientist.<sup>1</sup>

### DISCUSSION

DAYA KRISHNA :

I have a few points to make regarding Professor Strawson's presentation. First, cannot freedom be something about which illusion is not possible? There are types of phenomena where consciousness of the phenomenon itself is certification of its existence. Suppose, for example, you have pain. There can be no illusions about it. You may have illusions as to its location or about many other things with respect to it, but not that you are in pain. Similarly, could not freedom be of the same variety? Cannot it be that the feeling of freedom means there is freedom?

Secondly, Professor Strawson tried to suggest that the feeling or even the reality of freedom was not incompatible with the reign of universal causality. I do not know what exactly he meant by the reign of universal causality. The concept of causality is not so clear as seems to have been assumed in both classical and current discussion. It is fairly well-known that the nature of causality itself has undergone radical transformations, at least in the current context of the sciences. I was surprised by the fact that Professor Strawson referred to the Life Sciences as the exact sciences. Normally the term exact sciences denotes only the physical sciences, and even there, the exactitude is, so to say, decreasing tremendously.

A more important point concerns the usage of the term 'natural'. Professor Strawson continuously referred to various types

1. The sense of a free-floating will which is widely declared to be a central feature of a certain sort of modern consciousness is surely a false sense of freedom, illusion and not reality, and capable of withering away in the light of causal knowledge. A sense of freedom is neither more nor less significant than a sense of constraint. Is a non-impressionistic understanding of either Freedom or Necessity possible without a metaphysical grasp of the contrast between Man and Nature.—Ed.

of facts as natural facts, be it the phenomena of agency or the effects of desires, attitudes or personality. I wonder if this is an extension of the word 'natural', for it may not be acceptable to those who use it in a narrow, restricted sense. If there is a narrow, restricted meaning, it is evident from Professor Strawson's argument. He suggested that it was impossible in principle to translate statements which contain psychological terms on the one hand and moral terms on the other, without a residue, into a language of the exact sciences. I would agree with this view, but the point I am trying to raise is that if these are also natural facts because one encounters them, then, since one encounters everything, all that is, is natural. One encounters for example religious phenomena, mystical phenomena and experiences and so on: if all these are natural, then why translate at all? If the sense of freedom is as natural as perception of movement, then what is the problem? The whole issue of translation rests upon a restriction of the word 'natural'. In fact Professor Strawson himself suggested that if these phenomena were treated as movements, they presumably, in principle at least, could be described in terms of the exact sciences. Of course, he countered by saying that the moment you describe them in terms of motions or movements, the phenomena will remain no more. This is a very interesting point: that the description of a phenomenon itself defines it, that the same thing described in other terms will lose its essence.

When we say that norms or presuppositions of intelligibility force us to use a category of causality to understand phenomena, it is not exactly correct. There are phenomena where the condition of intelligibility is not dependent on the use of a category of causality, which in fact is a sign of non-understanding of the phenomena. I am not saying that the question 'What caused this?' cannot be asked, but only that intelligibility is not always in causal terms. It is fairly well known that there is intelligibility in terms of reasons besides intelligibility in terms of causes. Thus Professor Strawson's assumption that there is a problem regarding all natural phenomena that cannot be understood in causal terms, needs to be questioned.

The final point deals with an interesting problem that arises out of the talk: Why do certain types of causal knowledge seem to impinge far more intimately upon the issue of moral responsibility while others do not? I would say here that advances in causal

knowledge do not close the issue of freedom. In fact they raise the problem anew, of what should be done with that causal knowledge. The issue is not merely whether somebody could have acted otherwise—that is an issue of moral responsibility—but the assumption is always that one could have acted otherwise.

P. F. STRAWSON :

The first point suggested was that consciousness of freedom meant it could not be illusory, and if somebody felt free it must be that he is free, just like if somebody felt he was in pain, then he must be in pain. But I would say that consciousness of freedom is not just a sensation, and after all, people do have illusory feelings. Someone might have the feeling that he is acting out of compassion, while actually he is acting out of self-interest, or that he loves someone when he actually dislikes him. So the feeling of X doesn't guarantee the reality of X, unless you restrict it to the special case of sensations.

The second point was about what I meant by universal causality. I suppose a caused event is contrasted with one that occurs randomly, by sheer chance, for which there are no causal antecedents. The thesis of determinism or Spinoza's universal causality would be that there are no events which do not have adequate causal antecedents. As I have argued, the thesis is not incompatible with the notion of freedom of action.

The third point dealt with natural facts and the too-wide usage of the term 'natural', which left nothing to contrast it with. But there are contrasts like 2 plus 2 equals 4, or the statement 'Everything scarlet is red', which is not, I think, a fact of nature. In general, necessary or semantic or logically guaranteed truths would not be expressive of natural facts.

The next point, if I understood rightly, was that understanding is not always a matter of explaining in causal terms. I would be inclined to agree with this, since a master of mathematics may have an understanding of his subject without having much to do with causality. Similarly, self-knowledge, or the understanding of other people is not, in general, a matter of investigating causes, but more of what could be called empathy.

There was another point regarding the phrase 'he could have acted otherwise.' If I have grasped you correctly, I fully agree

that this phrase relates to responsibility, and is not simply a blanket phrase meaning that there was nothing whatever causally operative which would make him act otherwise.

RAMCHANDRA GANDHI :

The possibility of being mistaken about one's belief in one's freedom has to be understood in a context. For instance, there is a general charge one can imagine levelled against all manner of freedom-claims: 'You think you are free, but you are not really free — you only think you are'. If you tie this charge to real contexts, it is intelligible only if the general possibility of being free in the kind of way you are denied being free, is allowed. A psychoanalyst might say to his patient 'You think you are free, but actually your family has a decisive hold over you, so you are not.' But here the possibility of being free from family pressures has to be allowed. What I am trying to say is that the language of the charge cannot be universalised. I think it is absolutely clear that, far from undermining the general possibility of freedom, this sort of non-universalized charge clearly presupposes not only the possibility of freedom but also its general illustration. I offer this as an argument to undermine the charge.

DHARMENDRA KUMAR :

I have a few questions that relate to the meaning of the expression 'sense of freedom.' Professor Daya Krishna said that it was somewhat like sensation, but Professor Strawson rightly remarked that the two were not on a par. But I think there is considerable similarity between the two, and we shall have to see how far our disagreement with Spinoza is verbal and how far substantial. The phrase 'sense of freedom' can have meaning only if the word 'freedom' has meaning, and we must first consider the meaning we assign to 'freedom'. If we go into it, we see that literally it is used to distinguish between the kind of consciousness we are familiar with in the human context from other behaviour found in the lower animal world. So considered, I think we are bound to connect the concept of freedom with the concept of understanding. I would think the expression 'sense of freedom' is different from sensation words like 'pain', and yet not totally different, so that while it is all right for someone like Freud to show that we do not

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have as much freedom as we think, it would be completely wrong to say that we do not have any freedom at all. Professor Strawson gave the example of the sense of acting out of compassion when actually the motive was different. But at least on certain occasions it must be possible for us to know our desires, and Professor Strawson admitted this fact. Our desires are part of ourselves, and there is such a thing as self-knowledge. Given that, our disagreement with Spinoza is seen to be far less than what it is made out to be.

RAMCHANDRA GANDHI :

I would like to add a footnote. Many of those who have spoken of the sense of freedom seem to have been slightly disparaging about it, whereas they could have given it more careful attention. For example, the sense of the numinous, or the sense of God, are, I think, very important for us to consider in a certain area of language. It could be that a sense of freedom is, therefore, a bit like a sensation — it is not necessary that a lot of people have it, but those who do, may be, can never be wrong. So I offer the suggestions that far from being used in a derogatory sense, the expression 'sense of freedom' may lead us into very relevant areas, but for that I think we shall have to look much more sympathetically at things like a sense of God, a sense of transcendence, a sense of the other world.

R. R. VERMA :

I have a comment on what Mr. Dharmendra Kumar said about the sense of freedom and the feeling of pain. There may be some similarity between the two, but I think an important point is direct awareness, and that may have something to do with what Professor Strawson calls the consciousness of agency, which implies awareness of intentional act. So will you please, Professor Strawson, explain what this direct awareness of intentional act means?

DHARMENDRA GOEL :

Professor Strawson gave an example towards the second half of his lecture in which he pointed out that it was not right for a natural causalist to suggest that the behaviour of X in trying to

divert the conversation could be reduced to some sort of neuro-chemistry of structures. In a way it epitomises his main thrust against the argument that since there is a natural causal order, there is only an illusion of freedom, and Spinoza's second thesis is, in a way, justified by what we know today about intentions, dispositions, behaviour and related psychological concepts.

I would like to bring to notice, in this context, a point by Wittgenstein in the Blue and Brown Books regarding a thought experiment which is visualised and projected back by some mechanism on a screen. He draws the distinction that when the image is being reconstructed all over again, the first experience of the particular act or desire or belief cannot be equal to the second perception of the same mechanism as displayed on the screen. This might suggest a point regarding body language, and, say, the language of intimacy of one's self-awareness. Self-awareness has a certain language of privacy—the way in which an agent is aware of himself as an agent—and this language or private illusion is not likely to be dissolved by any mechanism whatsoever. And this is where my point relates to what Professor Daya Krishna said about pain. There are some people who can feel pain in their body when it can be diagnostically proved that there is no erratic behaviour of any tissue. Nevertheless, can one deny this pain? The point was made that one could imagine an illusory self-awareness. But can there not be some kind of status given to such a hallucinatory condition? We have heard that even illusions have some pseudo-objectivity, and in the same sense, in the natural order, the psycho-physical correlates of belief or opinions or dispositions are exhaustive. In a certain sense, it is a concept of absolute which Professor Kothari referred to. Yet cannot we say that in an alternative world the language of privacy also has its own claims which are equally acceptable? In the Indian tradition there is the *kartā*, the *bhoktā* and the *drshtā*, and we might have orientations which are that of the agent, the *kartā*, or that of the sufferer. We have only talked of the agent, but there is also the patient suffering the consciousness of the agent, which is equally important for our understanding.

P. F. STRAWSON :

I would say I agree with most of the substantial points made by the last four speakers. I have one or two reservations. Profes-

sor Gandhi said that it would make no sense to say 'You are not actually free but only imagine yourself to be so' unless there was a positive conception of what a free action would be. Spinoza's doctrine, of course, was that causality is destructive of freedom, but since randomness doesn't seem to be in his vision the basis for the notion of freedom, it is not clear that those who hold the thesis of determinism being destructive of freedom have a well-defined conception of freedom at all. This can be linked with the fact that there is a positive conception of freedom—not from all causality but from certain kinds of causality such as what I call the causality of constraint, which could include psychological constraint, as was mentioned by Professor Gandhi in his example.

The next point made by Mr. Dharmendra Kumar was that there is something self-authenticating about the sense of freedom, insofar as we construe it in terms of knowledge of our own desires and the awareness of the intentional character of our acts. I accept this. What I wanted to deny was not that there was something self-authenticating but that it was absolutely self-authenticating, because there could be cases where they could be properly questioned.

The only point on which there was some shadow of disagreement was Mr. Dharmendra Kumar's remark that our disagreement with Spinoza was not as great as it seemed. But after all Spinoza did say that the sense of freedom was potentially illusory on the grounds of universal causality. So I think the disagreement remains quite fundamental.

Professor Gandhi also mentioned the sense of the numinous. I don't think I have any opinion about that perhaps I am not sufficiently a subject of it.

The last speaker made a number of points, one of which was perhaps essentially wrong when he pointed out the dependency of the language of neurophysiology and the language in which we ordinarily speak of intentional action. He further claimed an autonomy of different levels of conceptualisation, and with that I thoroughly agree.

MOHINI MULLICK :

It seems to me that one cannot really tackle Spinoza's thesis regarding ignorance of causes as creating an illusion of freedom

by arguing phenomenologically and saying 'I am aware of it'. I think the phenomenological point of view begs the whole question. In fact it could be part of the illusion Spinoza was referring to.

I agree with you when you say that Spinoza's thesis regarding ignorance of causes cannot be tested. But I think this is true only generally speaking, and the argument cannot be negated by the same token. We have already had examples, some of them in your paper, of knowledge—or rather, awareness—of specific causes, and also of wrong awareness of causes. However, if you see this as the major argument against the thesis, I would submit that there are many philosophical theses which cannot be tested but which do provide a conceptual framework. I say this because there are important theories—I was about to allude to the Marxian notion of false consciousness—and if we change the level of the entire discussion and try and look more sympathetically into the thesis of ignorance of causes, we might be tempted to go into the sociological factors involved.

SUDHIR KAKAR :

The mention of psychoanalysis has encouraged me to contribute a few points as to how a psychoanalyst sees freedom, because that is what I am also supposed to be engaged in: increasing the patient's freedom.

I would say there are three parts to freedom: first, the awareness of constraints; second, discrimination between constraints, some being illusory relics of the past and not real constraints; and lastly, choice, or the choosing of what one must or should do. This is how a psychoanalyst would look at freedom.

RAMCHANDRA GANDHI :

I think a very important point has come up—that just as there is an illusory feeling of freedom, there is also an illusory sense of constraint. It seems to me that these two points neutralise each other philosophically.

P. F. STRAWSON :

To Mrs. Mullick's remark about Spinoza's thesis of ignorance of causes, I would say that I tackled the thesis at two levels. First

at the commonplace or non-technical level, we do in fact have a fair knowledge of what desire—belief complexes are responsible for the desire—belief system, without any threat to our sense of freedom at all. So at one level at any rate the thesis is not just untestable but manifestly false. Second, at a more profound level, where causes are not dealt with in an ordinary manner but through the exact sciences, I did indeed argue that the thesis was untestable because we couldn't even in principle, establish the necessary correlation. Does that mean it might still be true? Mrs. Mullick said we were dealing with a philosophical thesis, and in a broad sense we are, but nevertheless, there is an empirical side to it too, and in empirical theory it is generally regarded that what is not subject to test is false a view which I share.

As for the Marxist case, I wouldn't know whether there was something in it. But I didn't maintain, of course, that ignorance of causes could never be responsible for some types of illusion — it could well be, for example, in economics.

#### RAMAKRISHNA :

I have two points to make—one as a student of science, and the other as a student of existentialism.

As a student of science I support Spinoza. I consider that the two major objections—one taken out of a physical situation, say the randomness of dice, and the other taken out of the human situation, say the unpredictability of the human brain—can be resolved. These two things can be predicted if one has the necessary variables, and I think the variables will soon be evolved. It is not as difficult or impossible as it looks today. Every action can be put into a set of equations, and it would be easy to counter the first objection. To the second I would say that neurochemistry is not given its due at all, and I think it can solve the problem of why I do a particular act and not another.

As a student of existentialism my reaction to Spinoza's thesis would be just that it doesn't give me a purpose.

#### R. R. VERMA :

My comments concern Mr. Ramakrishna's remarks. I think the combination of Spinoza and existentialism is a very queer one,

although Mr. Ramakrishna has somehow managed it. I think it was very clear from Professor Strawson's paper that detailed knowledge of causes, if the intentionality of the act is retained, will not affect either our sense of freedom nor our freedom as such.

#### P. F. STRAWSON :

Mr. Ramakrishna was quite right in saying that neurochemistry does not receive the attention it deserves, and that bodily movements or the fall of dice could, in principle at least, be worked out with sufficient variables, even though there was a problem in practice. I think Professor Verma met the point when she referred to the fact that what we were concerned with in the moral sphere and in the sphere of human understanding in general, was not just bodily movement that was continuous with neuro-chemical causes but with intentional action. And my thesis, which I don't think Mr. Ramakrishna did challenge, was that it would be absurd to accept a translation of intentional action back to the language of bodily action. The autonomy of these languages, as another speaker pointed out, wasn't threatened.

#### R. K. GUPTA :

It seems to me from the discussion that there is an assumption of an antithesis between freedom and causation. Although in one sense there is such an antithesis, if we take freedom to be the absence of causation, there is another sense in which these two are not opposites. To focus on this sense, I can do no better than go back to Kant, where the antithesis is between different forms of causation : using the old-fashioned terms, between internal and external causation.

There is a problem here which Kant discusses at length, and that is whether we can give some kind of empirical evidence for internal causation or determination, and I think he provides a more-or-less conclusive argument against such a proof being given. It has already come up in the previous discussion when the example was given of a person who feels that an action is determined by him, but which in actuality is not, and also in the talk of freedom being illusory. There is one particular place where Kant discusses the possibility of building up ethics on the basis of particular expe-

riences, and he says something of utmost importance, that one simple reason why we cannot build up ethics on the basis of particular experiences is because there may not be any such example in the moral context at all. We may believe that it is a moral example, that the action has proceeded from a rational, internal condition, but it may be the real self hidden behind somewhere at the back of it all. So we can never be sure whether our example is a valid one or not.

If one is right in seeing the problem of freedom in terms of internal determinism, and if one is also right in saying that one cannot, on the basis of particular experiences, be sure of our action being a free action in the sense of being internally caused, then what are the other possibilities? I think Kant gives us further food for thought in suggesting that one might tackle the problem via non-empiricism. I do not wish to go into how he tries to make the concept of freedom plausible in the realm of theoretical knowledge and reasoning, for I am primarily concerned with freedom from the moral point of view. In the context of ethics, then, Kant's non-empirical answer lies in the question he asks as to what would happen to our moral lives if we were not able to talk of freedom in some sense. Though this does not give us a proof of freedom, it does enlarge the possibility of talking about it in moral terms.

D. S. KOTHARI :

The problem of determinism and free-will is well-known, specially in physics. In quantum mechanics, unlike Newtonian physics, the issue of choice in relation to making a measurement is central, and thus the concept of freedom is very important there. The view generally taken by physicists in connection with natural causality—as distinct from the metaphysical causality—would be that freedom and determinism are complementary rather than contradictory. If we limit ourselves to Newtonian science, then these appear to be antithetical, but if we lift ourselves slightly higher to modern physics, we find a complementarity.

There are two points about causality that I would like to make. One is that if we continue with a causal chain, it must end at non-causality, i.e., something different from causality. Alternatively, the chain should continue to infinity. But the moment we think of an infinite chain, we are involved in contradictions of infinity

analysed by Gödel. The second is that causality makes sense only if each individual thinks himself more or less free from the influence of others—in other words, if there is a weakly interacting system. But if we think of a model involving strong interactions, then freedom is in relation to the whole assembly and not the individual. The individual will feel only partly free, and this would lead us to the question of the one and the many—the one totality and the many components. The discussion would relate to the central issue in Vedanta: the issue of freedom and determinism. Schrodinger, in his classic work 'What is Life?' has added an epilogue which is noteworthy. He says there are two incontrovertible experiences in man: one, the sense of freedom, which can not be denied, and the other, that the body acts according to the laws of physics like a machine. How does one reconcile these two? The only answer, argues Schrodinger lies in the 'I' being the totality which determines the laws of nature, which leads to the equation of Atman with Brahman. The point I am making is that a discussion of freedom and determinism must involve concepts like those in the Vedanta. We have to lift the discussion from the classical level of Newton to the new dimension of modern physics and the relevant concept of the one and the many.

DHARMENDRA GOEL :

I would like to submit to Dr. Kothari that the kind of awareness I am speaking about when I am thinking of my agency is also as important historically as the totality of the system. Mr. Ramakrishna made a point about existentialism being compatible with physics, and I would also say that an individual can be directly aware in the way Schrodinger was, that he is free, and at the same time recognise the totality of the system. It is not necessary to go to Vedanta in order to explain one's private, historic, subjective independence here and now.

R. K. GUPTA :

I think I mentioned the sense in which I talked of freedom—in terms of internal causation and determinism. I quite agree that internal and external causation could be complementary and not antithetical if we define our terms so.

Professor Kothari mentioned two possibilities in the context of a causal series, one that ended non-causally and the other that continued *ad infinitum*. I would like to mention a third: When we ask 'What is the cause of this?' It would mean the same as 'Does the cause lie outside or is it in itself—is the cause internal or external?' And I think there could be a causal series, or many causal series such that the starting point does not lie outside but inside, in the person itself.<sup>2</sup>

P. F. STRAWSON :

The last three speakers shared a fair measure of agreement with each other, and I am happy to say, with me Dr. Gupta rejects the opposition between freedom and causation, and differentiates rather between forms of causation which he gives the names internal and external.

The thing I felt less happy about was his reference to Kant, whose picture of freedom related not to empirical selves—human beings in space and time—but to some mysterious entity, namely the noumenal self, outside space and time. He couldn't prove that we could have noumenal freedom, because, of course, it was part of his thesis that we could have no knowledge of things as they are in themselves at all. He argued, it is true, from the common moral consciousness to a certain plausibility in the notion of freedom, and I would accept that, holding, as I have held, that all these phenomena—the common moral consciousness and its reactions, the sense of self, the sense of freedom—form a web of attitudes, feelings and concepts to which we are inescapably committed. I have given my reasons why I am not quite happy with all that has been said in Kant's defence, who once said that if we couldn't comprehend freedom, at least we would comprehend its incomprehensibility. But I don't think it is quite as difficult as that.

Professor Kothari spoke of the complementarity of freedom and necessity, a thesis which all the last speakers and I myself

2. Can the notion of self-determination be grasped without grasping the notion of the self? Or the notion of other-determination without grasping the notion of the not-self? Discrimination between the self and the not-self, fundamental spiritual exercise of Advaita, is thus indispensable for understanding Freedom—Ed.

share. I do not know much of modern physics, but I am glad to hear that it supports the notion of complementarity of freedom and necessity, although I am not convinced of its essentiality here, I agree with the last speaker on this point.

K. J. SHAH :

I have been worried about Spinoza, and not merely for the sake of Spinoza, because in the discussions it seems to me, Spinoza has been lost sight of. I wonder what he would say if he were here.

Spinoza said that increase of freedom went with increase of understanding. Professor Strawson then said that the increase was in the understanding of God and the laws of nature. It is this—the relationship between the understanding of God and the understanding of nature—which has been worrying me. It seems to me we have been presuming all the time that it is through our understanding of nature that we understand God. But I am not at all sure that this is the only way of interpreting the relationship. There is a way, perhaps, of understanding nature through an understanding of God. In spite of the fact that psychoanalysis points to us the constraints that are not really there, and thus increases our freedom, it appears to me that the understanding of nature in the way we are going about does not increase our freedom. Spinoza is fairly emphatic, fairly certain, that increase in understanding implies increase in freedom, and if we are to take him seriously on this point, I suggest we must think of understanding nature in terms of understanding God. And as far as I can think, this seems to me at least as plausible an understanding as the other.

But what would that understanding of God be that would increase our freedom? I do not remember very well, but I think Spinoza has given a magnificent account of what it could be, and I suggest that it would be through the concept of totality that Professor Kothari mentioned. If there is to be any sense in this at all, it will be really the freedom of man as a whole. And this would bring us to the point Dr. Gandhi made about the sense of freedom not restricted to a particular act. I would say that the sense of freedom restricted to a particular act would have meaning only in the context of man as a whole.

P. F. STRAWSON :

Spinoza, of course, distinguished between the freedom he declared to be illusory and the freedom of mind, which he thought highly desirable, equating it with blessedness, and Professor Shah's remarks were directed at this latter freedom about which I said little.

For Spinoza, God and nature are synonymous expressions. Professor Shah said that freedom of mind is perhaps not best achieved through an understanding of nature, in the sense of the natural sciences, but in terms of God. My doubt lies in the usage of the terms 'God' and 'Nature', since Spinoza does not differentiate between them.

However, I have one concession to make, because in addition to the intellectual understanding of nature, Spinoza did sometimes speak of a kind of intuitive insight into totality, and perhaps this is what Professor Shah also had in mind. So the completely free man would not only understand how things work, but would also be possessed of this intuitive insight, the awareness of totality. Perhaps this can be connected, as Professor Shah did, to Professor Gandhi's notion of the sense of the numinous.

A. K. SARAN :

I am not very sure whether I can intervene at all, because I am not sure whether I have understood Professor Strawson correctly. He has very prominently referred to the freedom of mind or blessedness, which Spinoza says is real freedom, and the other kind which is illusory. It seemed to me that Professor Strawson's critique was directed towards the latter, leaving the freedom of mind, which more or less synonymous with God, unaffected.

In a certain sense, the equation of God and Nature in Spinoza is a strange one, as many commentators have remarked. If I may say so, this is a kind of asymmetrical equation, although this is a contradiction in terms since all equations are symmetrical. The point I would like to make is that without placing in a central position in any critique the knowledge of God, how can we consider his theory of dual freedoms? I think Spinoza's concept of knowledge of God has not been given the focus it deserves. The theory of morality, separated from this context, could give a picture very different from the spirit of Spinoza's philosophy.

MOHINI MULLICK :

Professor Strawson has taken some pains to show the compatibility between the realm of natural causation and freedom, but when he was pressed by Dr. Daya Krishna to elucidate his notion of causality, he did contrast it with the random. If that is the basic contrast, then his task is simplified, because surely, freedom is even less compatible with randomness than it is with causality. I think the trouble of going through various arguments would be spared, and it could be shown that a random world would be less free than a causal one.

A. K. SARAN :

There are two different natures that could be meant in any discussion of Spinoza. It seemed to me Professor Strawson was speaking of *Natura Naturata*, but would it be the same for Spinoza? May be in one context he means *Natura Naturans* and in another, *Natura Naturata*. This is one more point I would like a clarification on.

P. C. JOSHI :

I come from a background of economics, and some of Marxism. I cannot react to Spinoza, but was told that one of the foundations of the Marxian system was provided by an observation traced to Spinoza, that freedom is the recognition of necessity. We have been taught in the Marxian text-books that the basis of freedom is provided by man's understanding of nature. There is a relation between man and nature, and between man and man, and an appreciation of the laws or regularities underlying nature gives man a certain control over his objective, external environment. To this extent, he extends his freedom. There is nothing like a movement from unfreedom to freedom, but a kind of extending of freedom. The point arises that the relation of man with man is seen on the basis of more freedom or extension to the extent that there is greater control of man over nature. One could bring in here the subjective and the objective : through the increasing control over nature, there is, from the objective point of view, the emergence of more freedom, yet subjectively is there a sense of freedom? There is, for example, the emergence of the machine, and with it, a whole class of people as machine-breakers also emerge, because they

think the machine is associated with the loss of their freedom. Therefore there is a conflict between freedom as perceived by those who are guided from a sense of totality and as perceived by groups as they think it seems to affect them.

The other thing is that, to the extent man understands the laws of necessity, to that extent his freedom increases, and the capacity to assume responsibility for his own fate also increases. But we must bear in mind that responsibility is easy to accept when the consequences of actions are in conformity with intentions. When certain unintended consequences flow from actions, the question arises of the kind of consequences that might have emerged had the action been different. The choice of various institutional arrangements is another interesting feature of this problem of freedom, necessity and responsibility.

S. N. MAHAJAN :

In the context of the attempts to make freedom and the universal reign of causality compatible by making a distinction between external and internal causes, I have an unworked-out suggestion. Suppose, by understanding and knowledge we mean having a close look at the phenomenon rather than theorizing about it, and by this close look suppose I discover that what I normally describe as internal causes are actually as alien to me as other external things, then there would be no internal cause at all. That is, if the motivations, dispositions and desires are also seen as alien, then all causal determinism would be non-freedom or an illusion of freedom. But in this act itself there seems to be a certain transcendence, and perhaps in that sense it is what Spinoza was saying about increase of knowledge leading to freedom.

DAYA KRISHNA :

One of the problems which has hardly been touched here except marginally is the problem created for freedom by what may be called a plurality of freedoms. I think the assumption under which the whole discussion is being carried out from the beginning is that there is only one centre of freedom. One of the most fundamental problems, at least at the human level, is that created by the plurality of finite centres of freedom—that freedoms themselves can

become problems or constraints or determinants for each other. Freedom, obviously, is not an infinite freedom—either freedom from or freedom to. If we are functioning within an empirical framework of experience, then the situation is complicated not by the limitations of causal knowledge with respect to nature, or even with respect to other human beings, but basically by the fact that other human beings are also centres of freedom, and are free to act in this way or any other. I suggest this dimension of the problem be tackled at some point.

P. F. STRAWSON :

As Professor Saran said, I was mostly concerned with disputing the argument that freedom of action was an illusion because of the reign of causality, and had relatively little to say about the freedom which Spinoza equated with blessedness. Prof. Saran, if I understood him, suggested that the whole discussion would be better understood if it was set more clearly in the context of a discussion of this kind of freedom. That is a point I cannot dispute, for I am not sure whether it is so or not. He also asked for a clarification of the relation of Spinoza's conception of God and Nature, and Spinoza's distinction between *Natura Naturans* and *Natura Naturata*, which I take to be the two aspects of the same totality he equates with God. But perhaps there is some emphasis on *Natura Naturans*, because God is declared to be the only substance, and substance is defined as that which acts.

But the main point was, I think, that the discussion would perhaps have taken a different turn if more attention had been given to freedom as blessedness, as understanding and insight. It may be so—I am afraid I have no fixed opinion on that.

Mrs. Mullick suggested that I could have made things a great deal easier for myself since I contrasted causal determination with randomness, and she rightly remarked that randomness or chance action would quite clearly be incompatible with freedom in the sense in which it is associated with responsibility and the whole range of moral attitudes. I think that is true. I don't think, however, that the discussion is made superfluous because after all, there is quite a long tradition of philosophical thought committed to the belief that causal determinism is also completely incompatible with

freedom of action in the sense we are all interested in. This is not a stupid mistake, but one that some people quite naturally make, so I thought it worth taking a certain amount of trouble to combat it.

Professor Joshi seemed to be introducing a yet another, wider conception of freedom which is not identical with the sense that goes with the appropriateness of moral attitudes, nor identical with Spinoza's sense of freedom of mind. His notion of freedom corresponded more, I think, to the notion of power, or control, as he put it, over the environment and over one's possibilities. In this other sense I would agree that the informed man, who has knowledge of necessity, has greater freedom because he has greater power than the uninformed man, just as, in this sense, the rich man is freer than the poor man, and the strong man than the weak man. They all have greater power, and although this does seem to me a perfectly valid conception of freedom, it is not the one I was mainly concerned with.

Professor Mahajan suggested that direct understanding was taking a close look at the phenomenon of desire, say, or preference or belief, and he considered the hypothetical case of somebody who finds them as alien : as external pressures of a physical kind or inner compulsions of a neurotic kind. He said that if this were the case, could it not also be the case that loss of the sense of freedom would ensue, or indeed, ought to ensue. I think that is quite possible. I can only venture the suggestion that the hypothesis is extremely unlikely to be realised, but there is no reason to think that if we do have a thorough knowledge of our internal motivation we shall always find it alien. In fact, one might even ask alien to what—because it has to be alien to something. So I didn't feel particularly disturbed by that possibly self-contradictory hypothesis.

Finally, Professor Daya Krishna spoke of a plurality of centres of freedom. He said that limitations of freedom may be recognised as derived from the fact that others too are free agents. That is obviously right, but I think it is a complex point. It relates partly to the conception of freedom that Professor Joshi put forward and partly to the restrictions we feel are imposed upon us not only by lack of power, knowledge or riches but also by moral restraints.

### PROVOCATIONS

□ Those who are lacking in goodwill or who remain adolescent are never free under any form of society.

— SIMONE WEIL

□ United with his fellow-men by the strongest of all ties, the tie of a common doom, the free man finds that a new vision is with him always, shedding over every daily task the light of love. The life of Man is a long march through the night, surrounded by invisible foes, tortured by weariness and pain, towards a goal that few can hope to reach, and where none may tarry long. One by one, as they march, our comrades vanish from our sight, seized by the silent orders of omnipotent Death. Very brief is the time in which we can help them, in which their happiness or misery is decided. Be it ours to shed sunshine on their path, to lighten their sorrows by the balm of sympathy, to give them the pure joy of a never tiring affection, to strengthen failing courage, to instil faith in hours of despair. Let us not weigh in grudging scales their merits and demerits, but let us think only of their need, of the sorrows, the difficulties, perhaps the blindnesses, that make the misery of their lives; let us remember that they are fellow — sufferers in the same darkness, actors in the same tragedy with ourselves. And so, when their day is over, when their good and their evil have become eternal by the immortality of the past, be it ours to feel that, where they suffered, where they failed, no deed of ours was the cause; but wherever a spark of the divine fire kindled in their hearts, we were ready with encouragement, with sympathy, with brave words in which high courage glowed.

—BERTRAND RUSSELL

□ That Man is the product of causes which had no prevision of the end they were achieving, that his origin, his growth, his hopes and fears, his loves and his beliefs, are but the outcome of accidental collocations of atoms; that no fire, no heroism, no intensity of thought and feeling, can preserve an individual life beyond the grave; that all the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of Man's achievement must inevitably be



buried beneath the debris of a universe in ruins—all these things if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand. Only within the scaffolding of these truths, only on the firm foundation of unyielding despair, can the soul's habitation henceforth be safely built.

— BERTRAND RUSSELL

□ When one studies the materialist theories of the original goodness of man, the equality of intellectual endowment among men, the omnipotence of education, experience, and habit, the influence of external circumstances upon man, the great importance of industry, the value of pleasure, etc., there is no need for extraordinary penetration to discover what necessarily connects them with communism and socialism. If man derives all his knowledge from the sensible world and from his experience of the sensible world, then this is to say that the empirical world should be arranged in such a way that man experiences and assimilates there what is really human, that he experiences himself as man. If enlightened self-interest is the principle of all morality it is necessary for the private interest of each man to coincide with the general interest of humanity. If man is not free, in the materialist's sense, that is, if he is not negatively free to avoid this or that event, but is positively free to express his true individuality, then rather than punishing individuals for their crimes we should destroy the social conditions which engender crime, and give to each individual the scope which he needs in society in order to develop his life. If man is formed by circumstances, these circumstances must be humanly formed. If man is, by nature, a social being, he only develops his real nature in society, and the power of his nature should be measured not by the power of private individuals but by the power of society.

— KARL MARX

□ Thus the passion of man is the reverse of that of Christ, for man loses himself as man in order that God may be born. But the idea of God is contradictory and we lose ourselves in vain. Man is a useless passion.

— JEAN PAUL SARTRE

□ Have you not heard of that madman who lit a lantern in the bright morning hours, ran to the market-place, and cried incessantly; 'I am looking for God! I am looking for God!' As many of those who did not believe in God were standing together there, he excited considerable laughter. Have you lost him then? said one. Did he lose his way like a child? said another. Or is he hiding? Is he afraid of us? Has he gone on a voyage? or emigrated? Thus they shouted and laughed. The madman sprang into their midst and pierced them with glances.

'Where has God gone?' he cried. 'I shall tell you. We have killed him—you and I. We are his murderers. But how have we done this? How were we able to drink up the sea? Who gave us the sponge to wipe away the entire horizon? What did we do when we unchained this earth from its sun? Whither is it moving now? Whither are we moving now? Away from all suns? Are we not perpetually falling? Backward, sideward, forward, in all directions? Is there any up or down left? Are we not staying as through an infinite nothing? Do we not feel the breath of empty space? Has it not become colder? Is not more and more night coming on all the time? Must not lanterns be lit in the morning? Do we not hear anything yet of the noise of the gravediggers who are burying God? Gods too decompose. God remains dead. And we have killed him. How shall we, the murderers of all murderers, console ourselves? That which was holiest and mightiest of all the world has yet possessed has bled to death under our knives. Who will wipe this blood of us? With what water could we purify ourselves? What festivals of atonement, what sacred games shall we need to invent? Is not the greatness of this deed too great for us? Must not we ourselves become gods simply to seem worthy of it? There has never been a greater deed, and whoever shall be born after us—for the sake of this deed shall be part of a higher history.....'

— NIETZSCHE

□ "To think for oneself" is always to think of oneself; what is called "free thought" is therefore the natural expression of a humanistic philosophy. We are at the mercy of our thoughts and corresponding desires. Free thought is a passion; it is much rather

the thoughts than ourselves that are free. We cannot too much emphasise that contemplation is not a passion but an act ; and that where modern psychology sees in " inspiration " the uprush of an instinctive and *subconscious* will, the orthodox philosophy sees an elevation of the artist's being to *superconscious* and *supraindividual* levels. Where the psychologist invokes a demon, the metaphysician invokes a daemon; what is for the one the " libido " is for the other " the divine Eros. "

— A. K. COOMARASWAMY

□ To have lost the art of thinking in images is precisely to have lost the proper linguistic of metaphysics and to have descended to the verbal logic of " philosophy. "

— A. K. COOMARASWAMY

□

#### Section IV

### SOME ASPECTS OF THE INDIAN INNER WORLD

Lecture by : SUDHIR KAKAR

Chairman : ASIS NANDY

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#### RAMCHANDRA GANDHI :

Dr. Kakar will talk on the theme 'Some Aspects of the Indian Inner World.' The theme is a partial echo of the title of his book 'The Inner World' which no doubt many of you have read, and I am greatly looking forward to a venturesome, risk-taking and yet disciplined discussion. We have as Chairman for this session a distinguished psychologist, Dr. Asis Nandy. Dr. Kakar is a practising psychoanalyst and also a writer-thinker, and together they make a happy combination of Chairman and Speaker.

#### SUDHIR KAKAR :

The title of my talk today is somewhat ambiguous, to say the least. On one side there are my fellow psychoanalysts who determinedly and perhaps deterministically maintain that the core of man's inner world, his fundamental psychic constellation is universal, with nothing Indian, Chinese, or German about it. On the other side are anthropologist friends and sociologist friends who would doubt if there is such a thing as an Indian inner world, given the nature of our complex and heterogenous society with its distinct religious, linguistic, caste, class and regional identities. Here I do not intend to discuss the evidence, nor restate arguments in support of my position that in the development of personal identity in India, with its admittedly group, universal and individual

aspects, there is also an element derived from the dominant world view of Indian, or should I say Hindu culture, which forms an essential part of a person's inner world of experience. This cultural core of the ego is not a system of abstractions to be more or less easily comprehended during the adult years, nor is it a set of conscious beliefs and attitudes. It is a deeper part of the psyche that is formed during the child's earliest years in his experiences with his adult caretakers, as the underlying truth of the world in which he will spend his life, and the way in which he will experience and approach this world.

Let us take the example of the child's earliest experiences with the mother. These experiences depend not only on the mother's conscious or unconscious stance towards motherhood, which is itself deeply rooted in her life history, or upon the inborn constitution of the child, but also on the cultural image of motherhood and an ideology of childhood which cuts across most caste, class and regional boundaries.

Let me elaborate on this. We can safely assume that at the beginning of life, for the continuity of its being, an infant requires a perfect or near-perfect environment that actively adapts to its needs. Normally there is a universal attitude on the part of the mother to provide such a sheltering womb-like environment for her baby. However, the need for a good environment, which is absolutely necessary at first, rapidly becomes relative: a need which can be satisfied by the ordinary, or let us say, good-enough, mother. For, if the mother is good-enough, the infant becomes able to allow for her deficiencies by his own mental activities, and it is then the mental activity of the infant which turns a good-enough environment into a near-perfect one. Thus, where the creation of the perfect environment at the beginning of life was the exclusive responsibility of the mother, gradually its maintenance comes to depend on the joint efforts of the mother and infant. The mother tries not to introduce complications beyond those which the infant can understand and allow for, while the infant develops his mental activity, understanding and capacity to create symbolic structures so as to maintain the feeling of continuity, and increase his tolerance in respect of instinctual tensions. A normal good-enough mother who starts by providing a perfect or near-perfect environment that actively adapts to the infant's needs, also has the function of pro-

viding for a graduated failure of this environment according to the growing abilities of the individual infant. Mothering, thus, also includes failure of mothering.

On the continuum of motherhood, the centre of which is the normal mother or the satisfying, good-enough mother, there can be the unsatisfying mother at one pole, who, by her failure to provide the protective environment, overloads the baby's capacity to understand. At the other pole, however, is what I call the addictive mother who continues to be the perfect mother of the first days of infancy, herself handling situations which the infant should and could by self-regulating psychological means. For instance, we observe in babies who have these addictive mothers that instead of the development of the primitive form of psychic activity akin to dreaming which permits most babies to sleep peacefully after feeding, these babies require the mother herself to be the guardian of sleep. They do not get a chance to develop this kind of activity. We would say that they do not have satisfying but rather tranquillising mothers to whom one can get addicted. Obviously, where an individual mother stands on this continuum from unsatisfying mother to the satisfying, good-enough mother to the addictive, too-good mother, is related to her unconscious fears and desires. But besides this individual aspect, and here is where we came in at the beginning of the talk, there is also a cultural concept of the nature of a child and motherhood, which seems to push many women belonging to a particular culture towards one or the other end of the motherhood continuum.

The cultural image of the child and mother found in traditional medicine, law, literature, rituals, folk tales and mythology which I have tried to describe in other writings, pushes the mother towards the too-satisfying pole. Relatively speaking, then, Indian mothers seek to emphasise the good, perfect mother in their behaviour. Children often do not have the graduated, step-by-step experience of the many small frustrations and disappointments which will allow them to recognise a mother's limitations and deficiencies harmlessly over some time. Rather, her original perfection remains untarnished by reality, a part of the iconography of the Indian Inner world. The detachment from the mother by degrees that is considered essential in psychoanalysis to the development of a

strong, independent ego, since it allows the child almost imperceptibly to take over his mother's functions in relation to himself, is not a predominant feature of early childhood in India. The outcome is that the child's differentiation of himself from the mother is structurally weaker and comes chronologically later than in the West. Mental processes characteristic of the symbiosis of infancy play a relatively greater role in the Indian inner world. In these, the so-called primary mental processes, thinking is representational and relies on visual and sensual images rather than the abstract and conceptual secondary thinking processes that we express in the language of words. Primary process perception takes place through sensory means : posture, vibration, rhythm, tempo, resonance and other non-verbal expressions, and not through semantic signals that underlie secondary process thought and communication. Although every individual's thinking and perception are governed by an idiosyncratic mixture of his primary and secondary processes, generally speaking I would suggest, on the basis of clinical experience and research study, that primary process organization looms larger in the inner world. The relative absence of social pressure on the Indian child to give up non-logical modes of thinking and communication, and the lack of interest or effort on the part of the mother, and family to make the child understand that objects and events have their own meanings and consequences, independent of his wishes and feelings, contribute to the protracted survival of primary process modes well into the childhood years. The projection of one's own emotion on to others, the tendency to see natural and human objects predominantly as extensions of oneself, magical and animistic thinking and the shuttling back and forth between secondary and primary process modes are common features of daily intercourse. Clinically, the persistence of primary process modes in an individual's thinking and perception has been associated with psychopathology in the sense that it suggests the persistence in adult life of an infantile mode of behaviour. As many writers have pointed out, however, in many kinds of normal regressions such as reveries and daydreams, phases of artistic activity and creative endeavour, primary processes govern the sphere of thought without signs of regression in other aspects of the individual's life. Though the supremacy of primary processes in an individual's life may indeed lead to a distorted perception of

outside reality, to an impaired ability to grasp the real meaning of external events and relationships, these processes serve another fundamental human purpose, namely, preserving the continuity of the self.

Here, since I have been present in some of the discussions, I must define that the self I am talking about in a psychoanalytic sense is a different one from that talked about in philosophical discussions 'Self' in psychoanalysis is taken as the set of mental representations of the body and the mental self, starting from the body itself, or images or illusions about the body. So, in a sense, the self is always illusory, which would make an interesting distinction from *ātman* : 'Self' in psychoanalysis is really *māyā*.<sup>1</sup>

RAMCHANDRA GANDHI :

A little more on this would be very helpful.

SUDHIR KAKAR :

Like other disciplines, psychoanalysis has also struggled with the problem of definition, because we have three or four terms which are very similar : self, ego, identity. Personality is not an analytical term, but comes from other psychological disciplines. Ego is used in psychoanalysis as an agency of the mind, and it is defined according to its functions, such as perceiving and thinking, which mediate between the inner and the outer world, although these can perhaps be defined better through relationship with the psychic structures of the well-known id and the super ego. 'Self', on the other hand, is not defined according to its functions but as a psychic structure which contains the representations, starting in the early years, of one's body, and later on of the mental self. These representations can be conscious, preconscious and unconscious, all existing at the same time, so that one can have a self-representation, a feeling of grandiosity at the conscious level, but at a pre-

1. Who is the individual human being who is the subject of the illusion of the self? A certain living being, a self-identifying living being, *that I am*, for example. Am I an illusion, is *I am* an illusion? Who am I? This is the autological question, the *vichara marga* of Sri Ramana recalcitrant to all forms of reductionism—Ed.