

The possibility of a synthesis or integration of the East and the West and their respective cultural values is too big a theme for a modest seminar paper. It is also doubtful if "pure contemplation" and "pure action" (whatever these phrases may mean) would exhaust philosophical activities of mankind all over the world. Therefore it will not be plausible to look at the "development of eastern and western thought within the perspective" of contemplation and action. I have therefore thought it not very wise to run after a wild game, over-looking what small pleasure can be obtained from things around. It will be my endeavour to examine the concepts of theory and practice as the two ideals philosophy is supposed to achieve and to see if the two are or can be or ought to be integrated. The method of procedure adopted here is largely analytic; largely because for me the analysis of concepts is not an end in itself. Concepts are conceived by human beings and therefore each concept bears the stamp of the man. Analysis ought therefore to be carried on within the confines of human dimensions, with a view to relate each of the components of the analysed concept to one or the other dimension of man. What defies this attempt has naturally to be discarded as non-human.

From a close scrutiny of the statement about the "theme of the Seminar" one easily gathers the impression that under the guise of "Philosophy: Theory and Practice" the organisers want us to discuss the perpetual Vedāntic theme of the relation between *Jñāna* and *Karma*. Theory is also designated as "pure contemplation" and practice is called "pure action". The former is a translation of "*jñānam-eva*" whereas the latter represents the Sanskrit phrase "*karmaiva kevalam*". Sometimes they are taken to be concepts having cultural significance and value; sometimes they are designated as ideals having philosophical meaning, implications and consequences. There is also a mention of the "possibility of integration of the two concepts". It is through these bewilderingly diverse expressions that one has to reach a clearer understanding of the problem.

I: Theory: A Thing of the Past

'Theory', among others, means speculation as opposed to practice. If philosophy is conceived as a theoretical enterprise it would imply that philosophy has no concern with practice. Similarly

if it is practice or action it would exclude speculation; action which need not proceed from speculation or be guided by it. In this sense theory and practice are opposed to each other and in order to emphasise this opposition the adjective 'pure' has been used. But what does it mean to say, one may legitimately ask, that philosophy is theory or philosophy is practice? Let us examine these questions.

Speculation or contemplation is a cognitive act consisting in observation or examination of something given; without an object no mental act of this kind is ever possible. The entire vocabulary of that philosophy which is conceived as theoretical in opposition to practical philosophy is bound to be cognitive in character and statements of this philosophy are necessarily factual and descriptive. Philosophical communication would, in the present case, demand as a link between a speaker and a listener something which is there, i. e. which both of them can look at and refer to in common if there be a need.

Though we talk of things to come, things which are not there, yet such a talk can be meaningful only with reference to things with which we are already familiar. The statement 'It will rain tomorrow, is meaningful if and only if the meaning of 'It rains' or 'It has rained' is known. To a person who does not know what 'It rains' means, i. e. the person who has never seen it raining, a statement about the future rain has no meaning; no communication with such a person can be established. Similarly, if there is a person, whose brain function being disrupted is unable to recognise succession of events, he cannot understand the meaning of 'will' or 'shall' or any specification of these, such as tomorrow, next Thursday, the year 1980 and so on. Hence in speculative or theoretical philosophical communication there is no room for talks about the future *qua* future. All reference to the future must necessarily be in terms of what is already known. In other words the future is as it were dragged back and conceived in terms of the past.

Because the future is robbed of its futurity, the truths of 'It rains' and 'It will rain' are conceived to be of the same nature. This device may ensure a truth-value to the future-tensed statements and we may say that 'It will rain' is either true or false. But this cannot solve the problem of knowledge of its truth. If I know, in the ordinary sense of the verb 'to know', that it will rain, the future is determined, i. e. it is as good as it has rained. If, on the other hand, I do not know whether it will rain I have no right to state that it will be so, i. e. my statement is not a statement; it is an expression of hope or wish. But in that case it is obvious that in theoretical philosophy such statements have no place.

Things and events of the past alone can be proper objects of knowledge. Knowledge itself is an event occurring in the present but the object of knowledge must necessarily be an event that took place

in the past. To know a thing entails temporal priority of the thing over knowledge. What has happened in the past has acquired an unalterable and definite character; it could not have been anything other than what it was. Knowledge would be complete if a definite object is given in it. Thus it is immaterial for knowledge whether a thing or an event is present at the time knowledge takes place. The given in knowledge has, of necessity, a reference to the past; how remote this past could be would depend upon the extent to which tools for digging the past have been effective. Hence history is possible and all sciences based on history can be given a place in speculative philosophy.

Theoretical sciences formulate their theories by using already existing theories and also on the ground of observations which is but a method of looking at how things have been behaving. The predictive element in science represents therefore an attempt to extend the past over the future. Experiments carried out for the confirmation of a theory, looked in this light, indicate the way things have been behaving. The philosophical notion of eternity is an outcome of our attempt at binding all the future states of a particular thing in terms of its past. Those who are interested in discovering causes or chain of causes of events are necessarily digging the past out. The orientation of all sciences is towards the past; sciences make us aware of how things have been behaving or what had been those stages through which things have passed.

The communication in science and for that matter in any theoretical venture can be effective only with reference to things that have or had been there. Description and demonstration would be the only modes compatible with theoretical communication. In fact logical proper names such as 'this', 'that' and 'now', which seem confined to the present, are actually connected with the past. 'This' may stand for a flash of light the same way as it refers to the paper on which I am writing. 'Now' meaning at this moment of time involves the idea of succession and thereby excludes any reference to other moments. This shows that even the idea of the present can be significant only in its relation to the past.

If knowledge alone is all that philosophy is intended to achieve, philosophy, like sciences, must necessarily be concerned with what there is and what there has been. 'Speculation' or 'Contemplation' used in the sense of knowledge can be the ideal of philosophy in the same sense in which the ideal of science is knowledge of things as they are. Even when philosophers like Śaṅkara talk of liberation (*mokṣa*) while maintaining that philosophy is *darśana* i.e. seeing the truth, they have to conceive *mokṣa* in terms of the "knowledge of Brahman". Brahman is called *bhūtārtha*, a thing which has been there and the identity of the individual *ātman* with Brahman is not something to be

achieved. In other words this identity has been there forever; one has to simply recognise this identity. Therefore philosophy as a body of theory (*jñānameva*) ceases to be of much use when knowledge is achieved.

It would be improper to demand of a philosopher, in this sense, anything more than a set of theory. In his capacity as a philosopher he is not concerned with moral, social or political problems as they are obtaining in the world. We very often hear a slogan to the effect that knowledge ought to be translated into practice. This may mean either of the two things: knowledge by nature ends in practice and it is desirable that knowledge has a corresponding action. In the former case every bit of knowledge must necessarily be translated into practice, until then it would not attain the status of knowledge. Moreover in that case since the meaning of a cognition-word would include action, one would be justified in substituting an action-word by a cognition-word. But our language would not permit us to use 'knowing' when we ought to say 'walking'. It may be possible to maintain that to know is to act but its reverse may not hold. Now this position is somewhat different from the position that every knowledge ends in action. Here knowledge itself is conceived as an act of some kind. 'Knowledge leads to action' and 'knowledge is action' are two different statements. The former implies the idea of transition from one psycho-physical state to another, according knowledge somewhat independence. The latter statement does not recognise any such distinction. One has to explain, if the former position is upheld, why and how this transition is effected. Unless some kind of necessity is conceived in respect of knowledge it would be difficult to maintain that position. What necessity could there be? At least at the conceptual level or at the level of linguistic usage no such necessity is found to hold.

The position that knowledge itself is an act of some kind is more difficult to hold. Action is a process resulting in some achievement. The result is thus contingent upon the process and the entire action is complete only when the result is achieved. In the case of knowledge either one knows or one does not know; there is nothing like incomplete process of knowing. When one says 'I am trying to know', knowledge is yet to come and the efforts to know are not cognitive acts; they are the acts of a different kind. In other words knowledge is not spread over a period of time like writing or walking is, nor is there a possibility of incomplete knowledge. Hence the relation between knowledge and action, wherever such relation is obtained, would be accidental. In some cases it may be desirable to act in accordance with knowledge. But desirability is not a factor either of knowledge or of the action. Certain extraneous considerations, such as social expediency, emotional involvement and economic considerations may

induce a person to act in accordance with his view.

Thus philosophy, if conceived as "pure contemplation", has a necessary connection with the past and its primary aim would be to make us know what things there are. Emancipation of man from the grip of ignorance about the nature of things, can be the only result philosophy may bring about. The degree of this emancipation would depend upon the extent to which we can extend the horizon of our knowledge. If we can know, in any sense of that word, all that there is or there has ever been, i.e. if we can own the entire history as our own by making it a part of our consciousness, as the Advaita Vedānta holds, we can be said to have achieved the limit of knowledge (*mokṣa*). Nothing can conceivably be added to it. Similarly if we can know all that there is or has ever been as a part of the history not my own self but as that of the history of things (non-soul), we can be released from the grip of the notion of our involvement in the history of the world. This can be brought about only by knowing that the self is actually not involved. This way our consciousness would be divested of any content and, according to Buddhism, through the process of disowning the entire history. We can achieve emancipation (*nirvāṇa*). In any case philosophy as a cognitive activity has concern with that dimension of man which extends over to the past.

II: Practice : A Thing For The Future

There are philosophers who find it difficult to hold that philosophy is speculative or contemplative. If philosophical statements are about facts or things that there are, then philosophy must fall in line with sciences and philosophical statements must stand the test of verification or confirmation as scientific statements do. But it has been shown that many speculative philosophical statements cannot stand this test. Therefore, philosophy cannot be placed on the same footing along with sciences. A different status is sought for philosophy with a view to allocate it on the plane of human acts.

This dissatisfaction with the alleged role that philosophy is supposed to play along with sciences arises not because philosophers have any doubt about the cognitive function of philosophy. They have objected to the type of cognitive function that has hitherto been assigned to philosophy. Thus if these people think that philosophy is a second-order activity i.e. it is not concerned with the knowledge of facts but with statements of sciences and for that matter with any statement, they simply want to restrict the operation of cognitive faculty upon statements. Barring the difference in subject matter both sciences and philosophy operate through observation, analysis and drawing inferences. In this sense philosophy conceived as a subject concerned with the analysis of statements is as much cognitive or speculative (not in its bad sense) as sciences are.

The view that philosophy is practice should not be taken to mean that philosophy is the same kind of act as writing or helping a blind man. It is practice with a difference. It confers upon the philosopher an additional responsibility. Because a philosopher, by virtue of his vocation, is in a better position to know what the benefit of his better understanding to others and to make the world more comfortable for living. Thus this means not that philosophy is not concerned with knowledge but it means that the philosopher ought to translate his ideas into practice. The genuine philosophical activity would cover both knowledge and subsequent practice. This position needs further elucidation.

To begin with, this position presupposes that since a philosopher ought to practice in accordance with his ideas, he is free to act or not to act. Secondly, since philosophy is practice, its quality would be evaluated in terms of desirability or undesirability which would in its turn depend upon whether the practice of a philosophy leads to the betterment of the world. Thirdly, the idea of a better world implies two things: there is a norm governing the idea of betterment and the present state is not what is wanted. There may be many more presuppositions of this view, but for our purpose the consideration of the presuppositions given above would suffice.

The obligation conferred on a philosopher to translate his ideas into practice does not seem to me to be of any material difference from that of a non-philosopher. A politician, a social worker, an industrial worker or a clerk in an office ought to translate his knowledge into practice in order to bring desired change in his surroundings. A citizen ought to act in accordance with the knowledge that his education has provided him. A man ought to deal with his fellow beings on humanitarian grounds. A philosopher who is a citizen, a man and perhaps an educated man has this obligation along with others by virtue of his being a member of a society. There is no special reason why he should, of all the people, be singled out and given this additional obligation. If the desirability of the application of any specialized knowledge be a consideration in this matter, we should expect the person who invented the atom bomb to also drop it on a city. According to the idea under discussion it should be approved and encouraged. But if this translation of theory into practice is not encouraged, why should we expect a philosopher to do the same?

Well, the matter is not so simple as it appears. A philosopher's act, and for that matter any act, is to be judged in the light of certain values. It is not enough that a philosopher acts, he has also to see that his acts conform to certain values. That means that a philosopher in order to be recognised as philosopher has to draw up a list of values and then to act in conformity with them. If his acts are in keeping with those values he is a philosopher, if not he would not

be a philosopher. This is a necessity as long as philosophy is regarded as practice. A question that may further upset us would be as to whom should the task of determining the set of values be assigned. If a philosopher himself has to determine these values which would subsequently make his acts desirable, he is given absolute power and made into a tyrant. If he has to follow the values he himself has not determined, then the norm for philosophical evaluation would itself be non-philosophical. In other words a philosopher would have no means of his own to check the quality of his philosophy; it will be done for him by others. It is as if a scientist is not allowed the freedom of evolving his own method of checking his own theory. The autonomy of philosophy as a discipline is put in grave danger if a philosopher is asked to act in accordance with his knowledge in such a way that his act conforms to the values evolved in non-philosophical contexts.

The autonomy of philosophy is endangered because philosophy has been viewed not merely an act but the *translation of a view in action*. It is practising what one thinks and holds. Therefore, a way out of this difficulty can be found in holding philosophy to be nothing but practice. Accordingly, philosophy has sometimes been conceived as an instrument of change. It implies that the present is not what is desirable; dissatisfaction with the present is an essential condition for philosophical activity. Hence philosophy may be taken to be an instrument for bringing about a better future. The future cannot be an object of knowledge; it can be made and entire human effort can be directed for its achievement. But it would be difficult to set any limit to the future. What is the future today may be the present tomorrow and there is no guarantee that tomorrow will make us satisfied for ever. In other words the possibility of change extends over the future moments to it. It can therefore be argued that there is always a possibility of the future becoming the past and undone.

Just as science provides a paradigm case for the past dimension of man, similarly religion may be the paradigm of the future dimension. In religious vocabulary 'sin' plays a very significant role. Sin is that act which is not conducive to the achievement of the desired result and the idea of hell embodies all that a man would not only not desire but would detest. Merit on the other hand consists in an act helpful to the achievement of the desired future and the corresponding idea of heaven is likewise that of a state where all that a man may desire is available. Though the idea of desirability is largely governed by psychological, social and educational background of a man, yet it is difficult for him to decide which particular act simply appears to lead to the desired goal and which does really lead him to it. A scripture is a record of all that is desirable and it presents also an inventory of

all those acts which lead to those desirable results. Thus a scripture, on the other hand, prescribes only certain kinds of acts as efficacious for the achievement of the desired result. The former is the source of restrictions, prohibitions and taboos and the latter is the source of ritualism.

Since scriptures deal with things to come in the future and how to achieve them, they have also to create dissatisfaction with the present. If the present of a man is desirable, no religion will be needed. Moreover, religious books, concerned as they are with the future, cannot be said to embody true statements in the propositional sense. Even if these statements are true in themselves, their truth cannot be known. Statements about the past contained in a scripture may be found to be true or false as the case may be. But this does not affect the religious value of a scripture. Their value lies in presenting an evaluation in terms of the future and not in stating a fact. Religious statements thus are not factual; they are evaluative and prescriptive. Hence they derive their sanction from faith and not from factuality. Scriptures are authoritative and their authority must be accepted before they are followed.

Philosophy, conceived as practice, must necessarily take into account the future and it has to draw up a plan or a blue print for the future. This plan has to assume the same role as a scripture plays in religion. The plan has obviously certain reasons for the disapproval of the present, things to be achieved and the method of achieving it. An example of this kind of philosophy is provided by Marxism which, as we all know, proceeds from one's implicit faith in the writings of Marx.

One difficulty which we encounter in this kind of philosophy is the problem of faith. In ideal conditions faith ought to be strengthened by reason. But this enlightenment faith is difficult to achieve. One may have faith and then invent arguments in support of it or one may follow the dictate of reason and have faith in what reason supports. In the former case our *having faith* is independent of the reason we may later on adduce in support of it. In other words reason is not very relevant for faith. In the latter case the object of faith is reason and consequently faith is not relevant for reasoning. Therefore for practical philosophy faith alone, and not reason also, would be the starting point.

The position of a philosopher who himself plans for philosophical action is somewhat analogous to that of a prophet. A prophet is said to have a vision of a better world and in this vision he is not guided by reasons and arguments. This vision in essence consists in the act of imagining or visualising. A philosopher has likewise a vision and his philosophy consists in spelling out the plan of action which he thinks does lead to the actualization of what is only in imagination. It is

difficult for me to explain the genesis of this vision, as I have none so far, nor do I see the possibility of any recognised procedure being adopted to explain this phenomenon. But if it is true that a practical philosopher aims at achieving something, his endeavour is to bring the future a man visualizes for himself to become a part of the history of man, and the task of practical philosophy is complete. In other words philosophy conceived as practice remains philosophy only so long as the desired result is achieved; thereafter it ceases to be philosophy, as practice is no more needed. But as long as philosophy is relevant it looks ahead, to the future.

From the explanation of philosophy as theory and philosophy as practice given so far in terms of human dimensions it is clear that these two ideas about the nature of philosophy cannot be reconciled. The past cannot meet the future unless the future becomes itself a thing of the past. But in that case the practical philosophy would cease to be philosophy.

III: Aesthetic Interlude

It is true that philosophy in anyone of the two senses is done at the present, but it is equally true that the direction of philosophy as theory is towards the past and the direction of philosophy as practice is always towards the future. From this one may be tempted to explore the possibility of uniting the two ideas about philosophy with reference to the present dimension of man.

Apart from figurative use of the present tense where unmistakably the reference is to the immediate past or future, there seems no logical justification in holding that factual statements can really refer to the present, i.e. to a thing or event which is coeval with the time a statement is made. It has already been stated with some justification that the very fact that we make a factual statement implies that there is a fact prior in time to the statement made about it. In this sense no cognitive assertion of "now", "here" and "just at this moment" is possible. So-called statements of the present tense are therefore statements not about the present.

But take for instance the case where a man is having acute pain in his stomach. He is making some noise which we all know to be an expression of the feeling of pain. Take also the case of a person who while standing on the sea-shore sees for the first time the rising sun. His exclamation 'how beautiful' does neither refer to the rising sun nor to any idea he might have had; it is the feeling of beatitude assuming the form of language. In such cases experience that a person is undergoing bursts forth, as it were, and the language a person is habituated to use is automatically associated with this experience. Such expressions truly represent the present. In the state of feeling or emotion it is not the language but the intensity of feeling which is

important. To me this represents the present dimension of man where his being is neither a continuation of the past nor is this an aspiration for some thing yet to come. It has arrested the flow and has confined itself to the immediate. Enjoyment and, for that matter, suffering represent man bereft of his association with the past or the future and aesthetic expressions of a creative artist are to be appreciated only with reference to the present.

But when these expressions become objects of scrutiny and critical examination they become things of the past. Similarly when they are used as means of achieving something in the future they are no more objects of art experience as in both these cases their immediacy is lost.

But the duration of the present can be, speaking theoretically, extended in the future infinitely. Thus there is a possibility of arts becoming the objects of religion and the religion becoming a matter for art.

IV: Dimensional Intermixture : A Fact

Just as the future and the present tend to get mixed in religious art and artistic religion (*bhakti*), similarly the past may also extend its sway over the present. In other words this seemingly neat division of human dimensions is actually an abstraction based on ideal paradigm cases. In fact in practice philosophy can hardly be divided into pure theory or pure practice or art can hardly be a matter of the bare present because refinement of sensibility carries in it the grains of training received in the past and holds some hope for the future. Religion is not practice alone as rituals are found to have aesthetic values (present) and they take into account the past of man, as in the case of expiatory rites.

It will be too much to expect a practical philosopher to do or to recommend to do some act without at the same time offering explanation based on certain theory. No such philosophy is as a matter of fact ever possible. Practice presupposes a theoretical background. At least the theory that knowledge must be translated into action (which is itself not practice of any kind) is the basis of all practical philosophy. Viewed this way no separation of practice from a theory can be conceived. Knowing itself is a mental act and is distinct from any other kind of practice in so far as it does not lead to any achievement. In this sense it is an act like the act of sitting. But its distinction lies in the fact that unlike sitting, knowing has an object, albeit its object is not what one achieves. I may know the General Theory of Relativity, but I cannot be said to have *achieved* that theory, although I achieve some contact with the bread I am eating.

Hence though theoretically one may be justified in holding that theory and practice being concerned with the past and the future dimensions respectively cannot be brought together in a unified whole

yet one forgets, while making this claim, the fundamental fact that both these dimensions (i.e. the past and the future) are after all human dimensions. It is the man who speculates or contemplates and also acts. Any consideration of theory and practice in isolation from the total man, i.e. all human dimensions, would not only be onesided but it is also likely to become useless for mankind. Complete isolation of the past from the present or the future and vice versa leads one to think as if science or contemplative philosophy has nothing to do with the man of the present, i.e. his aesthetic sensibility and also with the future he aspires for. This schism among various dimensions I call inhuman because it is the man who is slaughtered at the altar of achieving such neat divisions as science, religion and art.

V: Philosophy: A Review of Human Dimensions

Practical life suggests an ideal state where all the three dimensions are put under one unified whole. But the question is how to achieve it? What are the principles which would make this unification possible? It may not be out of place to explore the possibility of arriving at such a unification theoretically. But what follows can be only a suggestion for further investigation and elucidation and should by no means be treated as final opinion on the question.

It has been made clear that if philosophy is treated as theoretical pursuit it cannot fare better than all those branches of human knowledge which are based on cognitive content. Philosophy in this regard is like science. But it would be wrong to believe that philosophy provides any information about what there is. Go to any philosopher and ask him what he has been doing he will be frank enough to admit that he has not been doing something of the kind atomic scientists do. Similarly a philosopher while philosophizing is not engaged in the kind of act a social reformer does, nor does he, as philosopher, engage himself in the kind of act in which, for example, Saint Paul took interest. Far less is the possibility of any philosopher admitting that his work belongs to the category to which also belong the acts of Picasso or Beethoven or Shakespeare. The situation in which philosophy finds itself is very peculiar. Philosophical activity is not like that of a scientist, yet he is placed along with scientists by those who think philosophy to be theory. Philosophical activity is not like that of a religious teacher or social reformer, yet he is preferred to be an activist by those who want to see philosophy nothing but practice. But it is not possible, as we have seen, to properly locate philosophy in one or the other of three human dimensions.

It is suggested then that philosophy is a unifying force among different human dimensions. The task of philosophy in this sense would be neither to give us knowledge nor to induce us to act or to enjoy. It will act like a constant reminder of the fact that one

dimension is not complete man. Philosophy will make us aware of the fact that science, for example, is a human product; a product brought about by man for man and as such if at all used can be only for the betterment of man's future. Similarly through philosophy we may become conscious of the fact that the future we want is for us human beings. It cannot and should not be a state of complete annihilation of what we are or had been. In the eye of philosophy art would be an experience that leads man from his past to the future through the moments of the present. In short philosophy would dig the past in order to show that it contains the seeds of the future and it would visualize the future in order that a man with a past history would find solace and comfort in it. Philosophy can show that every theory is a possible practice and every practice is actualized theory; every art is the culmination of the past and the starting point of the future. But in this sense philosophy would be neither theory nor practice. It would be a *review* of all human endeavours, including theory and practice, in the perspective of the totality of human dimensions.

Philosophy as the perspective study or review of human dimensions though would be an act of the second order, yet it need not be taken to be theoretical. What is sought to be reviewed is not statements of various sciences but the human element hidden behind these statements. The task before philosophy in this sense would be to assess the extent to which man's aspirations can be served by these sciences, and to evaluate various scientific advancements in the light of man's needs and demands. Similarly philosophy will also determine the role aesthetic elements ought to play in human endeavours. On the basis of man's past and his state of affairs of the present philosophy also would draw up a plan for the future course man ought to take. This plan, as already indicated, would have both scientific background and aesthetic attraction. In that sense philosophy will be an autonomous discipline having a three-fold function. It will, on the basis of man's past and his aspirations for a future which is conceived as something better than available at the present, evolve a set of values. Determination of values then would be followed by the evaluation of the past and the present. Taking elements from thus evaluated situation, as the last step, philosophy will draw up a plan. This plan cannot be divorced from the past and the present of man; it will therefore be neither "pure contemplation" or "speculation" as some speculative metaphysical systems are, nor will it be "pure action" as some ritualistic religions are. Philosophy in this sense will be evaluative and constructive. It will not be the concern of a philosopher whether his plan is being acted upon or will ever be translated into practice. He will also not bother to answer the possible charge that the plan he has drawn is scientifically testable. But all the same philosophy will remain an intellectual pursuit not of the cognitive type but of

a type where all the three dimensions of man, i.e. past, future and present, are amalgamated and reviewed. A fusion of theory and practice at a level different from that of either of the two would make philosophy not only possible but also will accord it autonomy which is not available to it when it is conceived as theory or as practice.

G. M. C. Sprung

My comments will consist of stating briefly what I understand to be the result or conclusion of Dr. Pandeya's paper and then of raising some questions about that.

Dr. Pandeya chooses to approach the matter of theory and practice by distinguishing what he calls "the three human dimensions". They are at once basic human functions: cognitive, active and aesthetic experience, and time dimensions: past, future and present. Cognition is of things past, action points to things future and aesthetic experience (or feeling) is of the present.

Throughout the early portion of his paper Dr. Pandeya treats philosophy as theory, identifying it with cognition of what things were in the past and of philosophy as practice concerned with carrying out plans of action in the future. I found myself uneasy at both these notions because, on the one hand, philosophy does not understand itself as knowledge of the past: I am sure that Nāgārjuna was convinced that the concept of causality was unthinkable as such and hence would be as unthinkable tomorrow as it was yesterday. On the other hand a "practical" philosopher would have to become indistinguishable from the prophet or religious reformer, as Dr. Pandeya insists, worries me because for the prophet his faith is impervious to thought whereas for the philosopher nothing is spared the ordeal of being tested in thought. My uneasiness, I think, rests on what appears, in the first part of the paper, to be a trichotomy of the human situation. That we can know only the past — but not the present and future. But there is an element of knowing or understanding in the present — and indeed in the future. This is not "knowing" in Pandeya's definition — but turned to the present or to the future we exist only by some kind of understanding.

In short Dr. Pandeya's description "present and "future" does not seem to do justice to the complexity of these dimensions.

However, as it turns out, Dr. Pandeya is himself not content with the trichotomy of cognition, action and feeling. He says these are abstractions. "It is *the man* who speculates or contemplates and also acts." To consider theory and practice in isolation from the total man "is likely to become useless." And again, "It is the man who is slaughtered at the altar of such divisions as science, religion and art." At this point we have a new category in the game: that of "man" or

"the complete man". Philosophy is at this point clearly related to "the complete man"; "It is suggested that philosophy is a unifying force among different human dimensions." "Philosophy will act as a constant reminder that one dimension is not man". "Philosophy is a review of all human endeavours including theory and practice in the perspective of totality of human dimensions."

At the end we are told that philosophy will be an autonomous discipline having a three-fold function: 1. evolve a set of values 2. evaluate past and present 3. draw up a plan. It will be an intellectual pursuit — a fusion of theory and practice.

So much for the way I understand the central argument of the paper.

And now I would like to ask a few questions of Dr. Pandeya.

1. His concept "man" — which seems to be the key to his argument, for philosophy is a function of "man". What is there in man which is above knowing, action and feeling? How is philosophy to be understood as capable of *unifying* these three? With what does it do this? And what kind of human process is it if it is not knowing nor feeling nor action? The paper says it "fuses" theory and practice — but this seems to mean that it is a highly sensitive planning for action and somehow philosophy does not seem to be primarily planning for action. To do this, is to have reached conclusions about one's values and philosophy is surely to be open and not closed off. How then is philosophy related to them?; and how is man related to his dimensions? How are we to think this?

A second question. If philosophy draws up a set of values and then draws up a plan for the future course man ought to take — is the philosopher not acting as a prophet or religious reformer? Does he not become subject to the very criticisms that Dr. Pandeya levelled at practical philosophy? How does the fusion of theory and practice differ from practice as already rejected? My worry when I hear about "practical philosophy" is that it differs from what one thinks of as being philosophy in that it has ceased to search for the adequate ground. Will "thought" not always be eroding the base of the practical plan? And if it is, what are we to call the thought which can erode philosophy?

Philosophy East and West: Necessary Conditions for Meaningful Comparative Study

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The Tower of Babel in which modern man resides makes communication most difficult at a time when outward contact between men seems to have become easier than at any other time in human history. The common language of wisdom having been lost, there exists no common ground to make any meaningful communication possible, especially between the modern world and the traditions of the East. Men talk of a single humanity at a time when there has never been as little inner communication between them as now. Today, outwardly cut off from the umbilical cord that has always connected them to the common Divine Ground, men are reduced to islands set apart by an insuperable chasm which no amount of humanism can bridge. In no field is this as true as in "philosophy" or that knowledge which determines the ultimate framework of all of men's other modes of knowledge and the values of his actions.

Because of the lack of discernment which characterizes the modern world and which is to be seen even more among Westernized Orientals than among Westerners themselves, all kinds of fantastic excesses on both sides, in East and West, have prevented for the most part a meaningful intellectual communication and a comparative study of philosophy and metaphysics worthy of the name from being carried out. The greatest gnostics and saints have been compared to skeptics and different levels of inspiration have been totally confused. A Tolstoy has been called a Mahatma; Hume's denial of causality has been related to Ash'arite theology on the one hand and to Buddhism on the other; Shankara has been compared to the German idealists and Nietzsche to Rūmī just to cite a few examples. The Western students of Oriental doctrines have usually tried to reduce these to "profane" philosophy and modernized Orientals, often burdened by a half hidden inferiority complex, have tried to give respectability to same doctrines and to "elevate" them by giving them the honour of being in harmony with the thought of this or that Western philosopher who in fact is usually out of vogue by the time such comparisons are carried out. On both sides usually the relation of the "philosophy" in question to the experience or direct knowledge of the Truth which is the source of this "philosophy" is forgotten and levels of reality confused.

A first step toward a solution of this problem is to clear the ground

of existing confusions in order to make clear exactly what is being compared with what. One must first of all ask what we mean by "philosophy". To this extremely complicated question one can provide a clear answer provided there is the light of metaphysical certainty. But precisely because this light is lacking in most discussions the worst kind of confusion reigns over the very attempt at a definition of the subject matter at hand. Moreover, the traditions of the East and the West have given different meanings to this term, although at the highest level of the *philosophia perennis*, the *sanatana dharma* of Hinduism or the *hikmah laduniyyah* of Islam, there has always been the profoundest agreement concerning the nature of the *sophia* which all true philosophies seek and in whose bosom alone East and West can meet.¹

To begin with it can be said that if we accept the meaning of philosophy current in the West and in most European languages today, then it is nearly synonymous with logic, and its applications² leaving aside the current anti-rationalist movements based upon such sentiments as anxiety and fear. In the West this philosophy has sometimes allied itself with revelation and theology or truly intellectual intuition (intellect being understood in its original sense) as in St. Bonaventure or St. Thomas;³ at other times it has become wed to mathematics or the physical sciences as in the seventeenth century; and at yet other times it has sought to analyse and dissect the data of the senses alone, as in British empiricism, and to serve solely the function of praxis. Also in the West metaphysics in its real sense, which is a sapiential knowledge based upon the direct and immediate experience of the Truth, has become reduced, thanks to Aristotle, to a branch of philosophy. As a result men like Plotinus, Proclus, Dionysius, Erigena and Nicolas of Cusa have been treated as ordinary philosophers, whereas if we accept the meaning of philosophy given above, they cannot by any means be classified in the same category with men like Descartes and Kant, or even with the Aristotelian and Thomist philosophers, who occupy an intermediary position between the two groups. As a result of the forgetting of the fundamental distinction between the intellect, which knows through immediate experience or vision, and reason, which being *ratio* can only know through analysis and division, the basic distinction between metaphysics as a *scientia sacra* or Divine Knowledge and philosophy as a purely human form of mental activity has been blurred or forgotten,⁴ and even in the different philosophical schools of the modern world all has been reduced to a least common denominator.

To make the problem more difficult, despite the currently accepted definition of philosophy in the West, the echo of philosophy as the doctrinal aspect of an integral spiritual way on as metaphysics and theosophy (in its original sense) still lingers on in the meaning of the word and continues to possess a marginal existence.

One can in fact distinguish, at least in popular language, two meanings of the term philosophy:⁵ one in the technical sense alluded to above and the other as wisdom, against which in fact most professional modern European philosophy has rebelled more than ever before so that this mode of thought could hardly be called *philo-sophia* but rather should logically be called *miso-sophia*.

As far as the Oriental traditions such as Buddhism, Taoism, Hinduism and Islam are concerned, the situation is just the reverse. Except for certain schools such as the *mashshā'i* or Peripatetic school of Islam, which corresponds in many ways but not completely to Aristotelianism and Thomism in the West, 'certain individual Islamic figures such as Muḥammad ibn Zakariyyā'al-Rāzī, and some of the peripheral schools in India and China, there is nothing in the Oriental traditions which could be considered as philosophy in the prevalent current sense of the term defined above, precisely because the major and dominating intellectual traditions of the Orient have been always wed to a direct experience of the spiritual world and intellectual intuition in the strictest sense of the term. What is usually called Oriental philosophy is for the most part, the doctrinal aspect of a total spiritual way tied to a method of realization and inseparable from the revelation or tradition which has given birth to the way in question. That is why to speak of rationalistic philosophy and Chinese or Hindu philosophy in the same breath is a contradiction in terms, unless we use the word philosophy in two different senses; the one as a wisdom that is wed to spiritual experience and the other as a mental construct completely cut off from it. It is a lack of awareness of this basic distinction that has made a sham of so many studies of comparative philosophy and has helped to reduce to nil the real significance of Oriental metaphysics in the eyes of those whose sources of knowledge are the usual academic works on the subject that have been available until now. This metaphysics, far from being the object or fruit of mental play, has the function of enabling man to transcend the mental plane itself.

When one has taken into consideration the above differences as well as the essential role of religion and spiritual methods of realization in the creation and sustenance of most of the diverse schools of what is usually called "Oriental" philosophy, in contrast to what is found in modern Western philosophy, the first necessary condition for a meaningful comparative study will be complete awareness of the structure and levels of meaning of the religious and metaphysical traditions of the East and West. One can compare religions themselves; that belongs to the field of comparative religion. One can also compare the mystical and esoteric teachings of the East and the West in the field which has recently come to be called comparative mysticism⁷ and which is in reality an aspect of comparative religion. These are

disciplines apart from what is called comparative philosophy. Now, comparative philosophy *per se* is either shallow comparisons of apparently similar but essentially different teachings, or, if it is to be something serious, it must be a comparative study of different ways of thinking and matrices determining different sciences and forms of knowledge in reference to the total vision of the Universe and of the nature of things, a vision which is inseparable from the religious and theological background that has produced the "philosophy" in question. The outward comparison of an Emerson and a Hāfiz or Sa'dī will never have any meaning unless what they have said is considered in the light of Protestant Christianity and Islam respectively. Comparative philosophy without reference to the religious background, whether the religion in question has had a positive influence or has even been treated negatively, is as absurd as comparing single notes of music without reference to the melody of which they are a part.

Nor is comparative philosophy between East and West possible without considering the hierarchic nature of man's faculties and the modes of knowledge accessible to him. One of the most unfortunate and in fact tragic elements that has prevented most modern Western men from understanding Oriental teachings and in fact much of their own tradition is that they wish to study traditional man in the light of the model of two dimensional modern man deprived of the transcendent dimension. The very concept in the modern world of who man is is the greatest obstacle to an understanding of traditional man, who has been and continues to be aware of the multiple levels of existence and the grades of knowledge accessible to him.⁸ If a blind man were to develop a philosophy based upon his experience of the world derived from his four senses surely it would differ from one based upon those four senses as well as upon sight. How much more would a "philosophy" based upon man's rational analysis of sense data differ from one that is the result of the experience of a world which transcends both reason and the sensible world! The functioning of the eye of the heart, (the '*ayn alqalb* or *chishm-i dil*) of the Sufis, which corresponds to the third eye of the Hindus, makes accessible a vision or experience of reality which affects man's "philosophy" about the nature of reality as much as perception by the eye colours completely our view of the nature of material existence.

Without a full awareness of the hierarchy of knowledge, which can be reduced to at least the four basic levels of the intellectual, the imaginative (in its positive sense of *imagnitio* or *khayāl* in Arabic),⁹ the rational and the sensible, again no meaningful comparative study is possible. When people say that Shankara said so and so which was confirmed by Berkeley or some other eighteenth century philosopher, it must be asked whether the same means of gaining knowledge was accessible to both. Or when it is said that this or that existential

philosopher has had an "experience of Being" like a Mullā Ṣadrā or some other Muslim sage,¹⁰ it must first be asked whether it is possible for a philosopher who negates Being to have an experience of It, for in reality we can only have an experience of Being through the grace provided by Being Itself and by means of the paths provided by It through those objective manifestations of the Universal Intellect called religion or revelation. Whenever comparisons are to be made it must be asked what the source of the "philosophy" in question is, whether it comes from ratiocination, empirical analysis or spiritual vision, or in other words, upon which aspect of the being of the knower it depends. One must always remember the *dictum* of Aristotle that knowledge depends upon the mode of the knower.

In certain limited fields such as logic or the "philosophy of nature" comparisons can be made for the most part legitimately without need to have recourse to the total background alluded to above, although even here elements cannot be divorced totally from their background. But to a certain degree it is possible to compare Indian or Islamic logic with the different logical schools in the West, or atomism as it developed in India or among the Muslim Ash'arites with atomism in the West, at least before the modern period. But once this limit is transgressed the total background and the question of the "source" of the knowledge in question remain factors of paramount importance.

For example, it is possible to make serious comparative studies between Indian and Persian doctrines and the Greek ones or between Islamic philosophy and Western scholastic philosophy before the modern period. These studies can be meaningful both because of morphological resemblances and historical relations. But once we come to the modern period the situation changes completely.¹¹ From the point of view of Oriental metaphysics the whole movement of thought in the West from the Renaissance to Hegel, not to speak of twentieth century philosophy, is a movement toward "anti-metaphysics" and an ever greater alienation from all that constitutes the very basis of all true "philosophy", namely the twin sources of truth, which for the traditional or perennial philosophy are none other than revelation and intellectual intuition or spiritual vision. Comparative studies made of this period either should be concerned with showing dissimilarities, conflicts and contradictions; or they should concern themselves with the schools that have stood at the margin away from the mainstream of the history of European thought. A comparative study showing similarities between Oriental doctrines and modern Western "thought" could have meaning only in the case of such Western figures as those known by the collective name of the Cambridge Platonists, or Jacob Boehme, Claude St. Martin, Franz van Baader and the like who are not even generally well known in the West to say nothing of the East or on another level with such mystics as Meister

Eckhart and Angelas Silesius. Otherwise, to say that this or that statement of Hegel resembles the Upaniṣads or that Hume presents ideas similar to Nāgārjuna is to fall into the worst form of error, one which prevents any type of profound understanding from being achieved, either for Westerners wanting to understand the East or *vice-versa*.

In this order of indiscriminate comparisons without regard to the real nature of the ideas involved and their meaning within the total context of things, Orientals have been even more at fault than the Western scholars who concern themselves with Oriental studies. In both cases the nature of the experience upon which the "philosophy" in question is based and the total world view in which alone it possesses meaning are completely overlooked. And often the sentimental desire for bringing about harmony between completely contradictory and incompatible premisses — such as those upon which the traditional societies and the anti-traditional modern civilization are based — depicts apparent resemblances where there are the deepest contrasts and reduces the role of comparative philosophy at best to that of a sentimental charity, whereas its function should be to serve the truth and to reveal contrasts and differences wherever they exist.

In speaking of differences we must also turn our glance for a moment to the question of the comparative study of doctrines, not between East and West but between the Eastern traditions themselves. One of the results of Western colonialization of Asia during the last century has been that even today the different civilizations of Asia see each other, even if they be neighbours, in the mirror of the Occident. "Comparative philosophy" is taken for granted to mean the comparison of ideas between what is called in a general sense East and West. Moreover, Oriental authors who undertake comparative studies usually take their own tradition and the West into consideration and nothing else. A muslim considers only Islam and the West and a Hindu Hinduism and Western thought. For example, as far as relations between Hinduism and Islam are concerned, even now contemporary Hindu and Muslim scholars must strike to their utmost to attain today anything like what was achieved by men like Dārā Shukūh and Mīr Abu'l-Qāsim Findiriskī three centuries ago. Only recently in fact have a handful of Oriental scholars begun to take seriously comparative studies within the Oriental traditions themselves, and a few outstanding works have been composed in this domain.¹² Here one finds of course a much firmer ground for comparison than when one is dealing with the modern West, seeing that Oriental civilization are all of a traditional character, rooted in the Divine Principle which presides and dominates over them. But even here it is necessary to proceed with a spirit of discernment, avoiding shallow and sentimental comparisons and equations and situating the many schools and doctrines which exist in

each Oriental tradition in their appropriate place within the total matrix of the tradition in question. Although in a profound and symbolic sense there is an East or Orient which stands, *vis-a-vis* the Occident, a truer picture, which would give the appropriate depth to comparative studies, would be to see several Orients juxtaposed against a modern Occident whose historical tradition, however, has possessed elements and periods very akin to the Orient, a term which, more than a geographical location, symbolizes most of all the world of light and illumination.¹³

It might be asked of what use a comparative study of philosophy and metaphysics is. To the West its primary function can be to help future intellectual creativity itself and to provide the criteria necessary to criticize in depth Western philosophy itself, which although outwardly critical is hardly ever exposed to criticism in its totality and its basic premisses. Moreover, Oriental doctrines can fulfil that most fundamental and urgent task of reminding the West of truths that have existed within its own tradition but which have become so completely forgotten that it is as if they had never existed. Today, it is in fact nearly impossible for Western man to rediscover the whole of his own tradition without the aid of Oriental metaphysics.¹⁴ This is particularly so because the sapiential doctrines and the appropriate spiritual techniques necessary for their realization are hardly accessible in the West and "philosophy" has become totally divorced from experience of a spiritual nature.

In the traditional East the very opposite holds true. "Philosophy" as a mental play or discipline which does not transform one's being is considered by the dominating schools of the different Oriental traditions to be meaningless and in fact dangerous. The whole of the teachings of such Islamic philosophers as Suhrawardī and Mullā Ṣadrā and of Sufism are based on this point, as are all the schools of Hinduism and Buddhism, especially Vedānta and Zen. The very separation of knowledge from being, which lies at the heart of the crisis of modern man, is avoided in the Oriental traditions, whose dominating characteristic is to consider only that form of knowledge legitimate that can transform the being of the knower. The West could learn no greater lesson from the East than the realization of the central role of spiritual discipline in the attainment of any true knowledge of permanent value.

As far as modern Easterners are concerned one observes among most of those who are affected by the modernist spirit the most abominable lack of discernment and the dangerous tendency of mixing the sacred and the profane, creating an eclectic collection of sacred doctrines and profane and transient "thoughts" which becomes a most deadly instrument for the destruction of all that survives of true intellectuality and spirituality in the East. The errors committed

by Easterners in this domain are perhaps even graver than those of Western scholars, because there is more possibility of spiritual damage in the East where traditions have been better preserved. Some of the most destructive of those forces that have played havoc in Eastern societies during the past century are the result of shallow and facile "syntheses" of Eastern and Western thought and superficial attempts at their unification. A more serious comparative study would therefore also serve Eastern scholars by enabling them to know better the very complex and complicated thought patterns of the modern world and the real nature of the modern world itself, so that they may be able to defend more carefully and from a stronger position the authenticity of their own traditions while seeking at the same time to express the timeless truths of these traditions in a contemporary manner without betraying their essence. In this supreme task that today stands before every genuine Muslim and more generally Oriental intellectual, the fruits of comparative study carried out on a serious basis can be of much value.

Finally, a comparative study in depth of Eastern doctrines and Western schools can help achieve an understanding between East and West based not on the shifting sands of human nature which cover the more profound permanent nature within man or some form of humanism but on immutable truths, whose attainment is made possible by the spiritual experience that is accessible to qualified men, whether of East or West. It is only intellectual intuition and the spiritual experience, of which a metaphysical doctrine is in a sense the fruit, that can make possible the attainment of that Unity which in its transcendence comprehends both the East and the West. Today many men who have been exposed to the modern world in a sense carry both the Orient and the Occident as two poles and tendencies within themselves. A comparative study in depth can make possible, through the removal of those current errors which together comprise the modern world, the attainment of that "light that is neither of the East nor of the West"¹⁵ wherein alone can the East and the West be united. To seek this noble end, which would mean also the re-discovery of the immutable nature of man so generally forgotten in the modern world and which is the only way possible to correct the optical illusions to which the modern world is victim, must be the purpose of all serious comparative studies of Eastern and Western doctrines and philosophies. It is a goal to whose achievement the truly contemplative and intellectual elite of both East and West are urgently summoned by the very situation of man in the contemporary world.

1. "We recognise that the only possible ground upon which an effective entente of East and West can be accomplished is that of the purely intellectual wisdom that is one and the same at all times and for all men, and is independent of all environmental idiosyncrasy." A. K. Coomara-

- swamy, "On the Pertinence of Philosophy," *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, London, 1952, p. 160.
2. "Philosophy, in the sense in which we understand the term (which is also its current meaning) primarily consists of logic; this definition of Guénon's puts philosophic thought in its right place and clearly distinguishes it from 'intellectual intuition', which is the direct apprehension of a truth." F. Schuon, *Language of the Self*, Madras, 1959, p. 7.
3. "Logic can either operate as part of an intellection, or else, on the contrary, put itself at the service of an error; moreover, unintelligence can diminish or even nullify logic, so that philosophy can in fact become the vehicle of almost anything; it can be an Aristotelianism carrying ontological insights, just as it can degenerate into an 'existentialism' in which logic has become a mere shadow of itself, a blind and unreal operation; indeed what can be said of a 'metaphysic' which idiotically posits man at the centre of the Real, like a sack of coal, and which operates with such blatantly subjective and conjectural concepts as 'worry' and 'anguish'?" *Ibid.*
4. "A metaphysical doctrine is the incarnation in the mind of a universal truth.
"A philosophical system is a rational attempt to resolve certain questions which we put to ourselves. A concept is a 'problem' only in relation to a particular ignorance." F. Schuon, *Spiritual Perspectives and Human Facts*, trans. by D. M. Matheson, London, 1953, p. 11. This distinction has also been thoroughly discussed by R. Guénon in his many works.
5. Coomaraswamy also distinguished between two kinds of philosophy whose unity is embraced by wisdom alone: "Philosophy, accordingly, is a wisdom about knowledge, a *correction du savoir-penser*... Beyond this, however, philosophy has been held to mean a wisdom not so much about particular kinds of thought, as a wisdom about thinking, and an analysis of what it means to think, and an enquiry as to what may be the nature of the ultimate reference of thought." *Op. cit.*, pp. 151-152.
6. See S. H. Nasr, *Three Muslim Sages*, Cambridge (U. S. A.), 1964, chapter I.
7. This field has attracted the attention of several well-known scholars during the past few decades, men like R. Otto, L. Gardet, D. T. Suzuki and A. Graham. It has received its profoundest treatment in the writings of F. Schuon, who has followed the path tread before him by R. Guénon and A. K. Coomaraswamy to its sublimest peak.
8. See S. H. Nasr, "Who is Man? The Perennial Answer of Islam," *Studies in Comparative Religion*, Vol. 2, 1968, pp. 45-56.
9. See H. Corbin, *Terre céleste et corps de résurrection*, Paris, 1961.
10. See H. Corbin (ed.), *Le livre des pénétrations méta-physiques (Kitāb al-mashā'ir* of Mullā Ṣadrā), Tehran-Paris, 1964, Introduction.
11. In the case of certain seventeenth century philosophers such as Descartes and Spinoza it is also of course possible and legitimate to trace influences of Islamic and Greek as well as Scholastic philosophy, as has been done so ably by E. Gilson and H. A. Wolfson.
12. We have in mind especially the two volume work of T. Izutsu, *A Comparative Study of the Key Philosophical Concepts in Sufism and Taoism: Ibn 'Arabī and Lao-Tzu, Chuang-Tzu*, Tokyo, 1966-67, which contains a profound study of these men and then a comparison of their doctrines.
13. This symbolism is the basis of Suhrawardī's "Theosophy of the Orient of Light" (*ḥikmat al-ishrāq*), which is at once "Oriental" and "illuminative". See Nasr, *Three Muslim Sages*, pp. 64 ff. and the two prolegomenas

of H. Corbin to Suhrawardī, *Opera metaphysica et mystica*, Vol. I, Istanbul, 1945; vol. II, Tehran-Paris, 1952.

14. Concerning the teachings of Guénon on this subject Coomaraswamy writes, "It is only because this metaphysics still survives as a living power in Eastern societies, in so far as they have not been corrupted by the withering touch of Western, or rather, *modern* civilization..., and not to Orientalize the West, but to bring back the West to a consciousness of the roots of her own life and values..., that Guénon asks us to turn to the East." "Eastern Wisdom and Western Knowledge," A. K. Coomaraswamy, *The Bugbear of Literacy*, London, 1949, pp. 69-70.
15. This is in reference to the light verse (*āyat al-nūr*) in the Quran (XXXV, 35).

Metaphysics and Life

Kalidas Bhattacharyya

Introduction

Philosophy is after all some *study*. In case it is also a *way of life*, that is quite another business of philosophy. Primarily it is a study, and as study it has usually been as systematic as possible, employing, wherever needed, the methods of analysis, deduction (including *reductio ad absurdum*) and induction, jointly or singly. Philosophy, so far, is theoretical. Whether, it is also a *theory*, i. e., *knowledge* or a *body of knowledge*, is another question to be taken up later in proper contexts.

An important question for this seminar is whether this theoretical study is of any practical use for our life, and, if so, how? Parallel with it, and disquietingly enough, there is another question, implied though, viz. whether if philosophy cannot be of any such use it should be retained even as a theoretical study.

The studies called science are useful that way. One may list, among other uses of science, the development of technology, the effect of correct predictions on our social life and, least of all, the revolutionary change in our general attitude to life, called *scientific* or *rational*, as opposed to *commonsense* which, we are told, is only half rational and half mythological. Even the most basic of the theoretical sciences — pure mathematics and logic — are not without use. Pure mathematics has a direct bearing on other sciences (notably on Physics) which, in their turn, have practical uses; and the relation of pure logic to computer machines is a marvel of the day. Has philosophy any such contribution? Or, can it have any? All depends on how one understands the business of philosophy.

I

The oldest notion of philosophy is that it is a systematic study of reality, 'reality' meaning the entire field of reals, there being no *ad hoc* limit imposed. The field includes, in other words, not merely what is called Nature where every item is observed or observable or at least intelligible wholly in their language — no surd remaining in the content — intelligible, in other words, as the *function* of the observed or observable; it also includes, unless denied on specific grounds what lie beyond this nature, viz. God, pure self, values, things like Platonic Forms, being, number, logical constants, etc., and, if permissible, space and time also.

Relations are understood in this philosophy in different ways.

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Relations that obtain between the items of Nature are sometimes understood as themselves natural in the sense indicated above; but sometimes, again, as in Indian philosophy, some of these relations, those, viz. which are nowadays called 'logical', are understood as neither natural nor over-natural but only as *in use*, not asserted — formal relations, in other words, are according to them, just used, not talked of. Others, however, have taken these as either of a piece with Nature or as over-natural. As for relations obtaining between items accepted as over-natural, these had *per force* to be taken as over-natural. Some, again, have preferred that relations, whether among natural items or among the over-natural, and also the logical relations, should be taken, all equally, as over-natural.¹

In so far as this old-day philosophy is concerned with Nature, it is but science and had all the bearing on our practical life as science should have. Only, its conceptual framework is different from that of modern science. Its framework is *philosophical*, laboriously built up in different ways by the philosophers through their studies of basic concepts like *matter, motion, space, time, substance, change, causality* and the like; and not even the practising scientists of the older days, concerned though they were with greater empirical details, transgressed the limits set for them. Religiously attached to those structures, they could not embark upon revolutionary experiments.

Modern science is free that way and goes on with experiments endlessly. But some framework there must be, and though the task of discovering — or, if one likes, *constructing* — it has fallen to the lot of philosophers, scientists themselves bothering little about it except in recent days,² the situation has in the meantime changed. As science has already held the field the philosophy that studies its framework can no longer be prescriptive. At the most it is a *clarification* of the issues involved, there being no rationalization which is not *post facto* and no recommendation which is not apologetic despite the fact that some of these philosophers claim they have discovered (or constructed) the framework without reference to what science has achieved.

Older philosophy had, in this respect, a profounder effect on life. It not merely dictated to sciences — rightly or wrongly — almost invariably through a concatenated study of basic concepts, including the concept of self, it arrived at a system — in some cases a hierarchy or sometimes two or more systems, but clearly defined in relation to one another — of basic principles covering all aspects of life, these basic principles being all considered real and convertible into prescriptions in appropriate circumstances.

II

Modern philosophy³ is partly a study of the framework of science and partly — in many cases — concerned with other frameworks

through the study of basic concepts used in other fields of life. So far as it studies the framework of science it is *merely clarificatory* and has little practical use. Perhaps the only use it may lay claim to is that in its limited region of influence it re-enacts what science has already accomplished, viz. the change-over of our general attitude from commonsense to scientific. This, in its turn, may have encouraged the growth of the naturalistic studies of man which are so useful today. But only encouraged! These studies owe their origin to the sciences themselves.

The case is different, however, so far as the study of *other frameworks* is concerned. Modern philosophy has often studied these other frameworks and not necessarily as appendages to, or applications of, their study of science. These frameworks they have often arranged in appropriate order and studied thereby the different aspects of life in appropriate relations to one another. Such a study is obviously as useful as the older philosophy, except that, unlike older philosophy, it leaves science undisturbed in its own field and is even prepared to take methodological lessons from it.

All modern philosophers have not studied the *other frameworks*. Many of them, particularly in recent years, have either ignored these altogether or understood them *in the light of* their study of the scientific framework, keeping the latter in mind as the paradigm case. To be fair to these philosophers, they have not even claimed that their philosophy could be of any practical use, except, of course, the therapeutic one of curing the mind of nonsensical metaphysical pursuits. Philosophy, for them, has nothing to do with reality directly. Its thinking, or the language it uses, is never in the *material mode*. It is never more than a second-level retrospect, almost a pleasure study, mostly, if not wholly, a linguistic analysis.

Not that the older philosophy was never a second-level linguistic study. It had to resort to linguistic analysis whenever needed, and sometimes it resorted to it even for the sake of some additional clarity, if not also for the pleasure of intellectual exercise. But, decidedly, the primary interest of the older philosophy was in *reality*. The extreme of the modern philosophers are thus just against what is *characteristically* older in philosophy. Their main points against the older philosophy are as follows:

(1) The part of reality, called Nature, is exhaustively explored by the different sciences, and there is no portion of it left over for philosophy.

(2) There is nothing beyond Nature. The so-called over-natural is generally an illegitimate hypostatization due mainly to category-confusion generated by misuse of language. Some of the over-naturals, again, are found, on closer scrutiny, to be, every bit of them, natural, though passing, for whatever reason, under the august name

'metaphysical'.

(3) The only legitimate business of philosophy is to expose these confusions through correct analysis of the language used, or, at the most, to discover intentions, if any, behind these paradoxical uses.

If philosophy, as thus understood, is a study *entirely in formal mode*, surely it ceases to have any significance for our practical life. But is the case really so bad?

First, even if no special part of Nature be earmarked for philosophy, scientists working in different fields may choose to work *in collaboration*, and the grand science so developed, with or without anything that is over-natural, — but certainly without many of the details of each particular science — would not be very different from what the old-day people called philosophy. Science here is understood as a study in material mode⁴ and so, therefore, the grand science also.

Secondly, the old-day philosophers may resent that their over-naturals are so easily explained away. They postulate over-naturals very deliberately and on specific grounds. If some of their over-naturals could be discovered, on closer analysis, to have only pretended that way, that is, of course, quite another question.

Thirdly, if the over-natural is not to be brushed aside as illegitimate hypostatization, may it not be the specific field for philosophy (provided philosophy is something other than what we have called grand science)? Philosophy, in that case, would still be investigating *reality* and ought not to be called upon to carry on mere formal study at a grade removed. Formal study — call it linguistic analysis or not — is undoubtedly a methodological necessity for any good philosophy and even the *ancient* philosophers did that, but this does not mean that it is all that philosophy should be.

I do not claim that in proposing to defend older philosophy I am in any way insisting that it is right and its opposite is wrong. I am not also concerned with the ultimate question whether any philosophy could be true for good and another finally condemned. All I am concerned with is to show that the older philosophy has its points too and is therefore at least *presumably* justified, so that the age-long notion of philosophy having significant bearing on our practical life need not be thrown away so light-heartedly.

But before that we must be familiar, if once again, with all the major features of the older philosophy, and either in course of stating them or in subsequent sections we shall offer as much justification for these as possible.

III

The central points to be noted are as follows :—

(i) When it is said that philosophy discovers (constructs) the framework of science 'framework' does not necessarily mean *one*

systematic structure. It is what comes out after a thorough study of the basic concepts of science and common life. What comes out may be a nice self-contained grand structure, covering science and all aspects of life; it may equally be different structural systems in different fields, or even no systematic structure anywhere but only a series of some basic propositions in every field.

(ii) For older philosophy, however, there is either one all-comprehensive structure, or if there are several they stand clearly defined in relation to one another. Also, for this older philosophy every such structure is *real*. The idea that there could be discrete basic truths which neither form a system nor stand defined in relation to one another, or that the basic truths and their system arrived at through the study of basic concepts are not *real*, was unknown to these thinkers.⁵

(iii) The method of philosophy, these thinkers hold, is primarily *analysis*: philosophy analyses basic concepts to find out what exactly they stand for. All along, however, it is presupposed that what they stand for are all reals, provided, of course, the concepts are basic. Analysis may, on occasions, reveal that some concepts taken as basic from science and ordinary discourse do not represent basic features. In that case the truly basic features could be arrived at through further analytic search, and when that happens what *appeared* basic are found to be either empirical generalizations or conceptual or linguistic confusions. This progressive analysis also reveals the inter-connexion of the basic features, if any, or their position *vis-a-vis* one another and not unoften finds them reducible to one or a handful of ultimate features, truly basic. The precise nature of this analysis and its relation to what is nowadays called linguistic analysis will be discussed later.

(iv) As these basic features are *presupposed* by Nature many of these philosophers thought that they could not themselves be natural (things of the field called Nature). It follows that if even of two such over-natural features one is found, on progressive analysis, to be presupposed by another, it must be relatively more over-natural. The analysis which these philosophers performed is thus not one-level analysis it was multi-level. Nature, it should be noted in this connexion, is not physical Nature only, it includes man in so far as he is a part of Nature.

(v) A basic feature to be over-natural need not mean that it is *more real* than any item of Nature. Yet it has been so understood by many of the older philosophers. This, again, need not be just a too easy identification of over-naturality with reality. The idea behind is that if A is more *essential* than B it must be more real. This is a line of thought neither wholly unintelligible nor much too naive: it proceeds at least on *just another* definition of reality — another sense in

which also the word 'reality' is actually used.

'More real' may, again, be a figurative way of saying 'more truly real', meaning just what *has got a greater right to be called* real, so that the difference in degree is only epistemic, not ontic. Ontologically, a thing is either real or not real. It follows that only the truly basic, the truly essential, structure is real, all else being appearances that are not real. But 'more real' may also mean *ontically more real*, in which case grades of reality, and the corresponding grades of un-reality, have to be admitted.

Just the other way about — for the empiricists, the word 'real' stands for the observed, observable, etc., in which case, obviously, the structure *as such* is not real, 'not real' meaning here — as also when the non-empiricists say that the items of Nature are not real — either what is just zero or what only *subsists*; and the subsistent is either what, being not real, is only referred to by some sort of awareness, generally called thought, or it is what is only posited by language, though for the non-empiricist to say that it is posited by language would involve an unusual use of the word 'language'.

(vi) Even those who take the structure or the items of Nature as zero cannot deny that at least *proximately* these are either subsistent or posited by language (in which case also, as posited, it has some kind of subsistence); or — and this is what many have preferred — just reducible to the awareness-of-these or to mere use of language, provided it is explicitly understood that there is normally no mere awareness nor mere use of language but awareness-of-some-object or language-positing-something. Awareness-of-object need not point to any transcendent object: it may well be wholly an awareness-situation, the object spoken of being only a part of it; and similarly with language-positing-something.

(vii) Reduction of the transcendent object whether to awareness-of-object or to language-positing-something is not immediately subjectivism in the sense that each one of us is confined to his private world. *Prima facie* my use of a language is not wholly private — somehow I feel that others too are using that language; and if this is granted with regard to language, there is no reason why one should challenge the other thing also which is equally felt, viz. that if I have some awareness-of-object others also have a similar awareness, unless, of course, there is some special reason to hold that a particular language used by me, or a particular awareness I have, is *entirely mine*. Gregarious beings as we are, we normally feel that our fundamental attitudes are communal. Each individual is convinced that the type of awareness he has is possessed or possessable by others of the relevant community. In other words, the very question whether my awareness-of-object is private or not is illegitimate: it cannot be even raised without presupposing the communal character.

III (continued)

(viii) The subjectivism spoken of in (vii) of the last section is either mentalism, as in the case of awareness-of-object, or linguism, as in the case of language-referring-to-something. Elaborate linguism is only a recent development, but mentalism is comparatively older. If some philosophers have turned to mentalism, this is because they could not otherwise explain the exact status of the objective subsistent. Subsistence, they hold, is no self-contained primary status: it is intelligible only as the *what* of *what is, was, could be, may be or will be real* (existent). Subsistents, in other words, are only (conceptual or verbal) abstractions from the existent; and not the other way about: the existent is not constructed out of these, nor is existence only another name of the mere attitude of asserting the alleged subsistent. The inadmissible subsistent, thus, has got to be understood as either not distinguishable at all, being only felt or just followed up by habit, or distinguishable only through the use of language, or — if of any ontological status at all — reducible to awareness-of-object which, as awareness, is a *mental existent*. The mentalists prefer this third alternative. Sometimes, indeed, they have used the expression 'object-as-apprehended', instead of 'awareness-of-object'; but they never understood the apprehension-portion as a part of the object, they rather took the object as *necessarily* attached to some apprehension and, therefore, as ontologically controlled by it.⁷

That some of these reductionists have yet denied the status *existence* of the mental affairs to which the subsistents are reduced does not, however, go against our point. What they primarily intend is that *these* mental affairs are not items of Nature — they are over-natural; — but if some of these reductionists have preferred again the empiricist's thesis that Nature alone could be real, we are helpless. The three dichotomies — subject-object, real-unreal and natural-over-natural — are not identical with one another. They are different and often crisscross.

There is another consideration also for this thesis of mentalism. It is as follows:—

Certain features of the world — or, if one likes, of the corresponding propositions — are *a priori*, i.e., *necessary*, in the sense that their negation is either (psychologically) inconceivable or (logically) self-contradictory. Inconceivability is not necessarily a private criterion for an individual: there are propositions the opposites of which are not entertainable by any individual, and these are not necessarily *analytic*. The opposite of a synthetic proposition, we are told, is inconceivable only in so far as we are not prepared to consider its background system otherwise, which means that the opposite turns out conceivable as soon as that other system is constructed, and

'constructed' means *actually constructed*. Wherever, therefore, such a system has not been actually constructed there is no objective reason for denying the inconceivability of the opposite, and the case is strengthened if, as it often happens, one does not even feel any urge to construct an alternative system. Factually, there are many such cases, and, conceivably, many more. Obviously, one should not doubt a proposition on the flimsy basis that an appropriate background system *could be* or *may be* constructed. It has to be *actually constructed*, at least to a good extent. But there are cases and cases where this has not been done, and cases, where there has been no urge even to proceed that way.

Anyway, the criterion — inconceivability of the opposite — is not psychological in any pejorative sense. In fact, properly understood, it is as much psychological as logical; and this is true equally of any criterion for analytic proposition. In either case the inconceivability of the opposite of *p*, that the old-day philosophers spoke of, was objective. Another name for this 'inconceivability of the opposite' is *absolute certainty* (absolute assurance), and often these philosophers have used the two expressions, 'absolute certainty' and 'necessity', side by side.

Some of the philosophers, now, insist that such absolute assurance I can have only of myself and my awareness⁹ which, as they are never other than me, are believed as thoroughly explorable. In contrast, they hold, I can never have such assurance about any *object*⁹ object being, almost by definition, foreign to me and, therefore, not thoroughly explorable. It follows that *a priori* features, of which we have absolute certainty, cannot be objects: they must be modes of myself or my awareness. If, further, these apriorities are over-natural, it would further follow that the *I* and the awareness, spoken of here, are not what the empirical psychologists mean by these terms but belong to some higher order.¹⁰

That some philosophers have thus reduced the subsistents or apriorities to forms of subjectivity does not, however, mean that all old-day philosophers are with them. All depends on how far an apriorist is satisfied with the argument given above. It should also be noted — a point we have already touched — that, in general, subjectivism *vs* objectivism is quite another problem covering the whole field of philosophy in another dimension, and old-day philosophers were not so much attracted to this general problem as to one particular aspect of it, viz. in connexion with the status of apriorities.

IV

If older philosophy has to be even *presumably* justified, some of its characteristics, noted in the preceding sections, would require closer study. They are:—

(a) The basic feature — whether one systematic structure, or several structures or just several discrete propositions — as presupposed by Nature has a status of its own *beyond Nature*.

(b) That status is not *subsistence* but *reality*, as much subjective according to some as objective according to others.

To take up (a) first. The whole idea, as formulated in the modern proposition language, is that the structure is a *propositional function* — itself a logical constant or constituted of logical constants — and that the items of Nature are variables. Obviously, the constants cannot be apprehended in the way the variables are. While the latter are either observed or observable or understood as their functions¹¹ the former are not so and, therefore, of a different status altogether. Further, it is difficult — well-nigh impossible — to pinpoint an ultimate variable. Many of the variables designated that way transpire, on further analysis, to be a related whole of variables, and so involving constants. Even sense-data cannot be so pinpointed. Old-day philosophers would doubt if ever we could have any actual awareness of these as discretes. Discrete sense-data, according to them, are abstractions, the actual being at every step some whole constituted of variables and one or more constants. A pure item of Nature is an abstraction in the sense that it is entertained in thought as only what could be there when all constants are abstracted from, never as what it could be by itself, never as what could be *manipulated* by thought. In contrast, the constants, though themselves also abstractions, can each be described as having a nature of its own and is, therefore, manipulable by thought. Indeed, we have a whole discipline, called logic — if not also mathematics, and one may go further and add metaphysics — as a result of the thinking manipulation of these constants. The constants, therefore, and their system (if any) — another name of which is 'basic structure' — have some status of their own.

There are only two kinds of entities *with status* — (i) the related wholes constituted, on the one hand, of ever-receding data and, on the other hand, of structure or structures and (ii) these structures themselves. The related wholes are the items of Nature, and the structures are obviously a grade removed, for while such a whole necessarily involves some structure and cannot, therefore, be entertained without it, the structure can not only be entertained apart from the whole, it can be played with in conjunction with other such structures. The type of this analysis of the whole that reveals the structure is thus not the same-level analysis. Structures — we mean the basic structures — thus belong to another region, called over-natural, presupposed by items of Nature which are always wholes as delineated above. The dichotomy is not between matter and form, but between *formed matter*, on the one hand, and *mere form*, on the

other; and the formed-matter is not, again, form and matter, as though the two stand distinguished from the beginning, but just a homogeneous whole at the level of Nature, from out of which the form alone could be livingly distinguished; and that done, what is livingly left over is not matter as such, but that homogeneous so-called form-matter whole; an inevitable conclusion of which is that matter by itself is ever *indefinite*.

The basic structure, as presupposed by Nature, is thus not itself natural. One cannot, however, argue, as though in a similar way, that as the structure is presupposed by reality it cannot itself be real too. For that depends, the philosophers under consideration would protest, on an *ad hoc* limitation of the word 'reality' to Nature. If Nature is real, so is the structure also; only, it belongs to another level of reality, called over-natural.¹²

V

The other point,¹³ to be studied in this section, is why the old-day philosophers took the over-natural as *real*. Modern empiricists argue that most of these so-called over-naturals are illegitimate hypostatizations due to misuse of language, and some of them natural, every bit, though masquerading as more profound.

We are not concerned here with those which so masquerade. Old-day philosophers would not mind this being pointed out to them. But with regard to the other items of the over-natural they would argue they have definite reasons for treating them as real, even though they are beyond Nature.

For, there are words corresponding to them and these are used in the material mode of speech. 'Existence', 'beauty', 'good', 'negation', 'space', 'time', 'self', 'God', etc. are some such words. They are used as predicates and subjects in material mode quite as much as normal words, and if these latter could signify real entities exactly corresponding to them, there is no reason why the former should not. Even *logical* words are not *very* different in this respect. Normally, indeed, the logical words are only used without signifying special real entities, and when they are used in a *meta* fashion they, it is true, are often but the words themselves now being considered reflectively as *how they were used* and not signifying any real entities corresponding to them. But this is true as much of every other word. The only distinguishing mark of *logical* words is that what they signify are mere *relations* that never stand as relata except in the formal mode of speech. All other words, unless they are artificial technical ones, signify each a full-bodied real corresponding to it. This does not, however, mean that there is no distinction between ordinary words and those which are called *metaphysical*. While the former signify distinct full-bodied reals whether in unreflective or in

reflective use, the latter do this only when they are used reflectively.¹⁴ This will be discussed in greater detail in the next section.

Those who deny over-natural reals could do this either because a real, according to them, is *ex hypothesi* natural — observed or observable or a function of these — or because they could translate every metaphysical word in such a manner into an assemblage of other normal words that the so-called over-natural corresponding to the original word would be reduced to an assemblage of natural reals.

Such translation, however, even granting that it is possible in every case and always in full measure, would mean nothing if the translators had not at the back of their mind the idea that the natural alone is real. But why should it be so?

If it depends on my private assurance, there is no lack of such assurance for one who claims he has intuited the over-natural. We have also pointed out that this psychological assurance is from the beginning communal, unless, specified otherwise. As for the possibility of error, it is equally present in both the cases so long as no logical or pragmatic justification is forthcoming. If, again, it is a question of our being on guard that error may not have taken place, this too is equally true of both the cases — this greater psychological assurance has in each case to be attained through self-examination. Only in the latter the self-examination is more difficult and requires systematic training.

Anti-metaphysicians hold that the over-natural cannot be demonstrated to others. Obviously, this cannot mean logical demonstration, for metaphysicians have done that and others *have not* examined their demonstrations. The demonstration is then either ostensive or pragmatic, and both are possible in the case of the over-natural. Demonstration presupposes that the person to whom something is demonstrated must be of a like mind with one that demonstrates and each must be sympathetic to the other. This also is true of both the cases. Only, obviously, in the case of the over-natural the two conditions have to be accomplished through a sort of culture. The difference is in degree only.

As a matter of fact, the old-day philosophers — I mean the metaphysicians — have not always claimed that they *have intuited* the over-natural. Often their claim does not go beyond the assertion that either through their analysis of the basic concepts they feel assured that such and such over-natural *demands* to be real and *demands*, therefore, to be intuited (directly apprehended), quite as much as a natural real which is not actually observed *demands* to be observed, or all they have done is the inference of the over-natural from certain facets of the natural.

Belief in the over-natural reals, the old-day philosophers protest, is not due to category-confusion. There is indeed a huge difference

between the predicates 'red' and 'existent' in the two sentences 'This flower is red' and 'This red flower is existent', but why should this difference mean, *on that ground*, that the predicate-term 'existence' — or, for the matter of that, any predicate like 'truth', 'beauty', 'good', 'space', 'time', etc. — does not signify a full-bodied real, much as 'red' and similar predicate-terms do? In the absence of any further consideration one may well hold that they signify reals, though at different levels. The main point of the anti-metaphysician is not, then, category-confusion but that existence etc., *being not observable*, are not real. But this would be moving in a circle.

Or, their main point is that the common-sense picture theory of meaning is untenable. This may, again, mean two things:

(a) There may not be a full-bodied real corresponding to every word. A word may well mean an assemblage of simple reals which, of course, are directly meant by appropriate words. A full-bodied real corresponding to the word in question is replaced by this assemblage, only because this, according to them, is a more *logical* use of the word, in whatever manner this logicity is understood.

(b) A word never means a real. Its significance lies only in the way or ways it is used in language, or in the logic, if any there is, of the use or uses in question.

Logicity in (a) above means consistency, adequacy and economy. Postulation of a full-bodied real corresponding to every word, except where the word is an *explicit* complex of several simpler ones, is neither less consistent nor less adequate than how a reductionist interprets it. The whole question is whether it is less economical. But it is not so, seeing that while the reductionist reduces the number of reals he not only increases the number of entities in a particular situation but makes that situation itself more logically complex. Besides, it is a question whether this criterion does not fail where normally we take something to be real, as in the classical case of Moore's *hand*.

As against (b) above, it may be pointed out that every word which is not explicitly ambiguous or explicitly complex does *prima facie* mean a full-bodied real corresponding to it. The word 'game' is not explicitly ambiguous and it *does* mean that which is common to the different activities called game, though this common feature may not be pinpointed and is, therefore, representable only as a *family*. Or, if one prefers to be a nominalist, it may mean just those activities themselves through a vague, but nonetheless felt, common feature. Nobody takes the different things meant by an ambiguous word as forming a family. At least concrete particulars, if not real universals, are meant by words, and metaphysical words are not primarily names of *abstract* (real) universals. Space, time, self, God, etc., signified by the corresponding words, maybe through common features, are

particular substantives, though less solid than chairs and tables. These words do not stand for mere abstractions like redness, humanity, etc., which are always adjectival. Even the *existence* or *reality* of the metaphysician is a self-contained particular substantive — not a sheet abstraction corresponding to an ordinary abstract noun — even though it covers all particular existents. Covering is possible in different ways: in the present case it means that all particular existents are its modes (real or illusory), much as small apple, sized apple, green apple and ripe apple are modes of a particular apple.

VI

Metaphysical words, like all normal words, thus stand for full-bodied reals. Not that these words are *all* simple in the sense of being unanalysable. But even as complex they do not signify mere assemblages of simple entities. They are complex in the sense that each, *having a status of its own*, though as such incapable of being pinpointed, contains some simple entities, 'containing' meaning here a type of covering much as a substance contains its attributes or a gestalt its parts.

Analysis, with the old-day philosophers, is the reflective discovery of these elements that are contained, in their relation to one another and also in relation to the undefinable core. In a full analysis the whole entity in question is also differentiated from other whole entities, through, it may be, the analysis of each into its constituents.¹⁵ Both the analyses are, it is true, possible only through the analysis of corresponding words, as used in different sentences. But this linguistic analysis is at the same time analysis of the corresponding reals.

That an over-natural entity is real can be shown in some detail as follows:

Take the case of *existence* (*reality*). Compare the following sentences:

- (i) This is a horse.
- (ii) This horse is a horse.
- (iii) This horse is an animal.
- (iv) This horse is something.
- (v) This horse exists (is existent).

The first is a clear synthetic sentence, and while the next three are all analytic this is not so certain with regard to the fifth. But there is another difference more profound. The first and the third are empirical.¹⁶ But others are all non-empirical; and yet while 'This horse is a horse' is a sheer tautology any 'This horse is something' is absolutely useless, 'This horse is existent', is quite of another sort. For, while there is no possible doubt or denial of 'This horse is a horse' and 'This horse is something', there may be occasions where

one may doubt or deny that this is a horse.¹⁷ It is against such doubt or denial that one asserts 'This is a horse', i.e., 'This horse exists'. Unless specifically denied from the beginning and only sportively entertained, whatever is spoken of is *ipso facto* taken as existing, so that when one says 'This is a horse' he *presupposes* that this horse exists. Hence when this existence is explicitly asserted in the sentence 'This horse exists', it, so long undistinguishedly fused with this horse, comes now to be distinguished and posited in its status, though yet as adjectival to this horse. This is not what happens when a red flower being presented one says, 'This flower is red'. For, first of all, while *red* is an empirical feature existence is not so, and, secondly, *red* was not previously undistinguishedly fused with the flower.

This distinguishment of existence immediately poses a problem: What is meant by 'This horse exists' over and above the fact that this is a horse? Subjectively interpreted, it means that the subject who says this asserts that *he* has either proved or intends to prove his earlier saying 'This is a horse'. The whole attention is thus sought to be turned from the objective situation to one that is a subjective process. Though existence, as meant by the word 'exists' in the sentence 'This horse exists', appears first as an objective character of this horse it demands immediately to be understood in its proper status as a subjective process of proving, much as the beauty meant by the word 'beautiful' in the sentence 'This picture is beautiful' — which in its first explicit form is understood as an objective character — the picture, as a connoisseur apprehends it — demands immediately to be realized as a subjective process of creation, as it is to a creative artist.

It is not necessary, however, that these floating adjectives — existence, beauty and, for the matter of that, all metaphysical entities — should be realized *only* in the subjective attitude. If these floating adjectives demand separation from natural contexts and realization in their self-contained status, they may well tend, alternatively, to be realized as transcendent, self-contained, over-natural *objects*. Beauty, from this point of view, would demand to be realized as an objective metaphysical entity and there would be no distinction ultimately between a true connoisseur and a true artist, except that the latter has mastered certain techniques of production which the former has not. Similarly with regard to *existence*: the objective philosopher would perceive it as an object, though over-natural, and would regard the subjective philosopher as making an *end* of the subjective means of perceiving it.¹⁸

The distinguishing feature of the over-natural, as understood at the fringe of the natural, is that it only *demand*s to be had as real, not as so had immediately. In other words, it is, at the fringe, understood as what *ought to be* real, not as what *is* real immediately. Ought-to-be is distinct from ought-to-do in that while the latter is not yet real the

former is; only, the reality of the latter is at the over-natural level, it standing at the level of Nature as fused undistinguishedly with the items of Nature and, therefore, as *demanding* to be had in its self-contained status.

This is true *mutatis mutandis* of every other over-natural. Self, for example, is understood at the normal natural level as the mineness or privacy of a certain situation and tends at appropriate fringes, where half distinguished it stands yet as adjectival, to be realized as a self-contained substantive. Space, again, stands at the normal level of Nature as the size of a thing, its distance from another, its being to the right or left of another and demands at an appropriate fringe to be realized in its true character. Similarly with time which first appears as the freshness of a thing or situation, its decay, etc., and similarly with every other over-natural entity.

Older philosophers thus discover — and, therefore, assert as real or as what ought to be real — the over-natural entities through the analysis of the basic concepts in different contexts. If one likes one may call this analysis the analysis of the corresponding words as they are used in different sentences. But the distinctive feature of the older philosophy, as opposed to the modern philosophy of *analysis*, is that the linguistic analysis in question *reveals novel realities*. In the field of Nature reals are either perceived (observed) or inferred¹⁹ (observable) or analysed out. But where they are analysed out they are believed as what were there in exactly the same form in which they are now analysed out. With regard to the over-naturals, on the other hand, when they are analysed out they are *not* believed as having been there *in the same form*, and this constitutes their novelty.²⁰ They are revealed now as self-contained substantives whereas prior to this revelation they were apprehended as only half-distinguished adjectives.

Older philosophers have often also *inferred* over-naturals. But this inference is either a make-believe — pseudo-inferential attempt to bring home to others what they have discovered otherwise — or, if logical, very different from what is ordinarily called inference. For, while to logical inference, which starts from observed data, the inferred is inevitably *observable*, what is claimed to be known through metaphysical inference is *ex hypothesi* beyond every conceivable range of observation. Such inference, if logical, is either no more than *reductio ad absurdum*, or only the inference of just *something* as presupposed — the exact nature of that something requiring to be gathered from other considerations, mostly through metaphysical analysis — or, again, confirmation, *as far as possible*, of what has already been discovered through that analysis.

VII

There are thus two kinds of theoretical study. Either it is a study

in the material mode where we speak directly of reals, with or without adequate intellectual analysis, or it is that analysis itself, and nothing more, as we find it with Kant or the present-day philosophers of *analysis*. The first kind of theoretical study, inasmuch as it is concerned directly with reals, constitutes what is called *knowledge*, as distinct from the second kind which is concerned not so much with reals themselves as with our knowledge of these or the corresponding statements. Modern science and old-day philosophy belong to the first group of theoretical study.

Knowledge, as distinct from mere intellectual study, is a form of communion with the real and, as such, a sort of *involvement*, though one of a higher order and subtler than what we experience in normal practical life. As knowledge, it is free of all influence of emotion, passion and personal consideration, but, decidedly, it dictates, and that necessarily, to our action: if we act we have to take note of the reals as they are and their relations, we have to act *according to* these; and this constitutes the involvement in question. This, in no way, jeopardises freedom of our action. Freedom of human action lies only in undoing actual *set-ups* and bringing about new ones, and this can be achieved only by manipulating the reals according to their natures and laws. There is never a question of undoing these natures and laws themselves, do except where these, passing as real, are not truly so; and even then the so-called undoing would only be *theoretical* replacement—a matter of cognition, none of action.

The involvement in question does not in any way imply that cognition *must* lead to some action or owe its origin to some urge for action. All that it implies is (i) that *if there is to be any action* it has to be guided by the relevant cognition and *also* (ii) that *cognition dictates this*. The situation, again, is not so simple as that while cognition is completely indifferent to action this latter depends on the former in that action has to be according to the natures and laws of the relevant reals already cognised. Cognition is neither dependent on action nor indifferent to it. The actual situation is that the person who cognises *x* being identical with the one who acts, and action necessarily requiring to be according to the nature of *x* and its relation to other things cognised, the person who has cognised *x* and other things in their inter-relation will have to be disposed to utilizing these for his actions. This is what is meant by 'Cognition dictates this'. Actually it is the person who cognises — and *qua* cogniser — that dictates to himself as an actual or possible actor. *Person* in the case of cognition is no unjustified notion. If one has to admit *person* in the case of action, there is no reason why it should not be admitted in the case of cognition, and the two persons need not be different.

At the level of Nature reals and their laws are discovered by science,²¹ and our actions at that level have to be in accordance with

these. If, therefore, the older philosophy has discovered over-natural reals and their structure, and if any of our actions has any reference to these, it too will have to be in similar accordance. Traditionally, our moral and religious actions, including much of what is called social, belong to this group. Anyway, our knowledge of reals, whether in the field of Nature or over-natural, inevitably disposes us in a certain way and this constitutes the fundamental practical bearing of knowledge. Moral and religious actions, along with the corresponding disposition, are, if they have any concern with the over-natural, called *spiritual*. Those who deny the over-natural may translate such actions and disposition in naturalistic language; but they too hold that these actions and the disposition are the direct inevitable result of science.

For older philosophy, quite as much as for the modern, moral actions — in appropriate cases, religious actions too — emanate from the dispositions achieved at different stages of our discovery of reals and their laws (structure). By 'stage' is meant *critical stage* where the previous *total* knowledge of reality — whether scientific or spiritual — has undergone some revolutionary change. The disposition, at each stage, gives rise to a set of moral rules, sometimes called values. Theory is inevitably translated this way into practice.

These moral values, including what we called social — and also religious values where they are in question — are not themselves real or existent. If they are only rules or patterns of action they have the same status as actions have. Actions have indeed a sort of existence *after they have been done*, and in that sense values may also be said to exist, i.e., only as accomplished. But all moral questions about them concern only their pre-accomplishment status. Actions considered in their pre-accomplishment status are, in a way, parts of the relevant *disposition*, and a disposition, unless it be just a word or, as some hold, none other than the *logic* of those actions,²² is only an existent that from the beginning tends to translate itself into action. At the level of Nature the dispositions are natural, but at the over-natural level they are spiritual in the true sense of the term. It may be noted, in this connexion, that the old-day philosophy, in its search for the over-natural real, has probed the natural man as much as the external Nature and has not merely discovered the over-natural in man at different stages but has sometimes found that the highest over-naturals in the external Nature and in man coincide. These different findings have corresponding practical bearings.

Theoretical attitude (that amounts to knowledge) presupposes that there are reals²³ which are under investigation, and we have seen that, although action is another side of man, rules of action proceed from theories. It means that in the realm of being theory precedes rules of action. But in the history of philosophy we often come across

another line of thinking purporting to show that it is rather the rules of action which place us in proper perspectives in order that we may discover reality appropriately, whether in the field of Nature or outside. This line of thinking has assumed different forms as follows:

(i) Theoretical attitude may be as autonomous as the practical, but we have to be made fit for correct theorizing and this is possible only through some sort of practical training. Cool observation and correct logic (meaning analysis and inference) are indeed the immediate guides, but there must be *practical* training to make the observation cool and the application of logic correct. Mind must be freed of personal idiosyncrasies and made resistant to the disturbing influences from outside.

(ii) All theoretical pursuit is in the interest of our practical life. Modern science, for example, carries on its theoretical activities primarily for practical benefits like material well-being, better and better social order, etc., and greater amenities for the free exercise of innate human virtues. Philosophy, similarly, if at all it is recognised as a significant discipline, owes its origin and development to some interest in practical life like making ourselves more truly what we are, individually or in the wider social context. Much of what is science or philosophy may be pure theoretical pursuit, but that is only in another *dimension* and concerned with side-issues that branch off from the main line of problems. The idea is that, left to itself, theorization, however cool and logical, runs the risk of losing itself in wilderness. According to this line of thinking, only that theorization is valid ('worth pursuit' would be a better expression) which serves, directly or indirectly, some of the practical interests stated above.

(iii) There is no theoretical pursuit anywhere. What is ordinarily called theoretical is some form of practical activity in the normal sense of that term. In other words, there is nowhere a real already existent: it is we who make reality, we bring it into existence by some sort of action.

But none of the three theses (i), (ii) and (iii) are faultless. The crucial point against (i) is that although as a matter of fact practical training is often found to make our mind cool and free from distractions this is not necessary in the sense that in the absence of such training the mind could never be so cool and free. Such training is not more intrinsically necessary for this purpose than one's turning the head for observing something. Further — and this is the second point against the thesis — instead of physical elimination of personal errors may we not, as we do in science laboratories, *make allowances for these and then be on our guard?*

As for thesis (ii), it only exaggerates and, therefore, misinterprets, the *involvement* that we said we undergo in a cognitive situation. We

have already shown that this involvement does not amount to cognition's *dependence* on action, although cognition is not also indifferent to it. What exactly the relation is we have explained.

Regarding the point that theoretical pursuit is not valid till it is tagged on to some practical interest, this too, as we have argued, is only a too easy way of stating quite another fact, viz. that unless so tagged it is not *worth pursuit*, unless, of course, as in thesis (iii), there is the further contention that there is no real anywhere except what we bring into existence by some sort of action. But before we turn to this thesis (iii) we may note that the expression 'worth pursuit' in the context in which it has occurred is worth anything at all only because practical interest has been rated as alone what is intrinsically worthy of pursuit. But why should it be so? A mind of contemplative disposition might decide otherwise.²⁴ How possibly can one decide which of these two views is correct? Any decision that is possible here is only *existential*.

Thesis (iii) is extraordinarily revolutionary. It is a *total* alternative to the traditional notion of the relation between cognition and conation, meaning thereby that philosophy — and for the matter of that, all theoretical study — has to be completely re-oriented, recast and re-built from this new point of view. The test of this new alternative would lie in its success in this business of total overhaul. The slightest failure here or there would mean disaster. Let the pragmatists, Marxists and existentialists work it out. They should be given sufficient time.

We have shown in this section that theoretical study can have practical bearing on our life *if only* it amounts to knowledge — if, in other words, it speaks directly of reality, not of the *knowledge* or *description* of reality. We have also seen where basically this practical bearing lies: it lies in cognition dictating rules of action and, therefore, having an eye on action itself, actual and possible. Science and the old-day philosophy, as bodies of *knowledge*, have this basic practical bearing, and the detailed bearings we listed in the earlier sections are really the basic one elaborated in diverse contexts.

It follows that the philosophy which we have called typically modern — I mean one that is not concerned directly with the reals but only with the knowledge or description of these — has no practical bearing. Whatever practical bearing it may be said to have is only what modern science has, maybe in a less accentuated and less systematic form.

Throughout the earlier sections I have defended older philosophy *only to an extent*, just trying to show that its findings are not *prima facie* absurd as the anti-metaphysicians boast they are. It is not impossible, I admit, that ultimately these anti-metaphysicians come out successful. But then their philosophy will have no practical bearing, it will only play second fiddle to science, whether by studying the methods of

science, or by clarifying its concepts and theories or by analysing the types of sentences it uses — all second-level. Or, even by remodelling our general picture of the world and man's place in it, in the line of the basic concepts of modern science; in which case, however, philosophy would itself be the practical bearing of science and would not claim, in its turn, to have further practical impact.

But in spite of all the triumphs of modern science and all the loud claims of contemporary de-ontologie, we are increasingly facing a peculiar situation, viz. that whatever gap is left by the philosophy that is ousted is being filled largely by *literature* which is even today, more than half, that old-day philosophy in disguise. More than half, because to whatever extent literature is influenced by science—possibly also by the philosophy that is typically modern — it resists this influence at the same time and consciously chalks out newer paths not only for itself but also for humanity at large; and the strangest of all things is that the present-day deontologists have not protested, even seeing that literature has a much greater hold on people than philosophy. Literature translates the sharp-edged (clear) concepts of philosophy (metaphysics) and science in the fluid and, therefore, easily absorbable language of life. One will have to think afresh what is gained by proscribing metaphysics and permitting at the same time a confused version of its findings, which is literature.

1. In older philosophy there are all sorts of discussion on the exact nature of relation *vis-a-vis* the items related. While some would accept it as something real and over and above the items, others would reduce it, as far as possible, to these; while still others would go the length of rejecting it (and often also the very concept of plurality with all its associates) as self-contradictory.
2. In recent days scientists themselves have taken to this task. But they do it largely independently of what the modern philosophers say.
3. By 'modern philosophy' I mean one which recognises the autonomy of science, although otherwise it may be in line with the older philosophy. Positivism and the contemporary philosophy of *analysis* have only drawn out the full implication of this modernism.
4. If science too is taken, as it has been by some, as a study in the formal mode only, it would mean that there is no systematic study of *reality* anywhere — a doctrine very hard to digest.
5. I am excluding the Buddhists and the Heracleiteans.
6. 'Is real' and 'was real' are, of course, intelligible. But is *future* reality or *possible* reality so easy of understanding? If not, does not subsistence reappear through the back door? It is not difficult, however, to interpret possible reality and modality in terms of existence.
7. What applies to subsistent objects applies equally to false appearances like those in perceptual errors (corrected).
8. Only in the sense of mental subjectivity, not in the sense of subjectivity which is private to an individual. See p. 10.
9. Not object as a part of awareness in awareness-of-object (another name of which is 'content'), nor even the object-as-apprehended where the independence of object is not necessarily postulated.
10. The question whether of other knowers and their awarenesses we have the

type of certainty that I have of myself and my awareness need not be asked here. We have already shown (See III, vii, *supra*) that according to these philosophers every individual is convinced that the type of awareness he has is possessed or possessable by other members of the relevant community.

11. Not 'function' as in 'propositional function'.
12. Some of these philosophers, belonging to the extreme right, have even sought to *reduce* the items of Nature to the structures. They have, in other words, tried to understand matter itself as some function of form, the function being that of self-negation, transcendence, intention, reference, meaning, etc. When asked to account for the inexhaustible variety in matter, they have either brushed it aside as an ultimate mystery or declared that a philosopher need not bother about that.
13. The point (b) toward the end of the last but the preceding section.
14. There are, of course, non-metaphysical normal words which are said to signify *relations*, and it is doubtful if relations are real entities like chairs and tables and — if one allows — their qualities and actions. We are not considering here the words which signify *such* relations.
15. These two analyses constitute the essence of *understanding and explanation*.
16. Incidentally, an analytic proposition is not *ipso facto* non-empirical.
17. Not doubt or denial suggesting that this may be another species of animal, but a more profound one, viz. whether this horse at all exists or not.
18. There is undoubtedly a difficulty about this existence being over-naturally *real*. I confess I am unable yet to remove it.
19. One may add 'remembered', in which case it is what *was* perceived or inferred or analysed out.
20. This raises certain logical and epistemological problems which I have discussed in 'The Nature of Metaphysical Analysis' in my *Philosophy of Language and Logic*, published by the Allied Publishers, India.
21. Whether like reals their laws are also *discovered* may, of course, be questioned, but of one thing we are certain, viz. that they are asserted as real, at least adjectivally to the reals.
22. Older philosophers would not admit this.
23. As already noted, there is some difficulty about the sentence 'The real is'. We are ignoring that here.
24. Unless, of course, theoretical pursuit is wholly identified with second-level intellectual analysis. What the anti-intellectualist normally revolts against is this second-level intellectualism.

H. D. Lewis

I am very pleased to be responding briefly to this paper, and I had better say at once that I am in close sympathy with the main concern of it. I find it hard to see how anyone who has taken the point of the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist* can fail to recognise that there is at least a central philosophical problem about structures and their interrelations, and while the word 'structure' (or, more questionably, I think, 'framework') are used in a very wide sense, it seems clear to me that what it covers, in most cases, must be presumed to be real in some sense.

Indeed, I have long felt that the more rigorous reductionists have never had the full conviction of their principles in practice. When Bertrand Russell propounded a very sharp form of relativism in ethics he would be found none the less admitting, disarmingly and somewhat ruefully, that it did not do justice at all to what he thought when he denounced the atrocities of Nazi concentration camps etc. This was not just something that happened to disgust him; it was truly bad in itself in some way. Likewise, for intellectual standards, the more tough-minded down to earth of our contemporary colleagues would none the less be shocked by work being passed for a journal or a degree or review when it was shoddy, sententious or ill expressed or ill argued. Nor do we ever argue at random. There are plausible arguments and there are silly ones, in philosophy, logic or mathematics as elsewhere, and if not the most inept could try his hand as well as the next man. And, if so, there must be something 'in the nature of things' which determines how a sound argument should go. This need not be a 'pattern laid up in heaven' or some standard out there to be peered at. But it must in some way be real; we can decide to argue or not, and what to argue about, and we can choose and vary our premises, but once started we just cannot leave it all to convention. It is not a convention that we must not contradict ourselves¹—that is the way things are in the universe.

With this, and with the warning to friend and foe alike, that we must not hypostatise abstractions to make them real, I fully agree. Perhaps I feel more acutely than Prof. Bhattacharyya the predicament of trying to say just how these non-factual or non-existent items are real—how are numbers real? We do not make them, and arithmetic is not tautologies; but numbers are not things. Perhaps there is not much that we can say here beyond invoking words like 'in the nature

of things' etc. But this is certainly one very central issue for us today as in the past which the paper very properly presents, and it will be interesting to note what you say on it.

There are many other matters in this understandably wide ranging paper which I am much tempted to take up. But I will confine myself to one. I suspect that Prof. Bhattacharyya is a little in peril of falling foul of the warning so impressively given to us by Prof. Eliot Deutsch in his paper when he insisted on the place of disciplined reflection and indispensable insight. Bhattacharyya seems over keen to ram his case home by irrefutable argument, and in some measure at least make it all *a priori*, he falls for what I have elsewhere called the lure of the foolproof argument. But the way the different 'reals' in question are real varies a good deal from one case to the other, and in each case something must be *seen* to be the case.

To be more precise look at what Prof. Bhattacharyya says of a central point of his paper in section V. He contends that there must be some 'over-naturals' because 'there are words corresponding to them and these are used in the material mode of speech'. Now I do not really think this will do. On the same page we are told of 'illegitimate hypostatisations' which 'masquerade' as genuine cases. But we refer to the masqueraders too by words in the material mode of speech. How do we distinguish the genuine from the masqueraders? Take the writer's own list—'existence', 'beauty', 'good', 'negation', 'space', 'time', 'self', 'God'. All these are in fact very different cases raising very different problems. Let me say, somewhat dogmatically to be brief, that I readily concede the last four in the list. 'Space' is not indeed a part of space or itself extended, it is not a container. But it is in some way obviously real, a 'given', we do not invent it, we cannot do what we please with it, and it is quite other than some part of space or item 'space'—in some strange sense it is without end or 'infinite'. Likewise time. It is absurd to say that this is not real, we are reckoning desperately with it at the moment. Our way of measuring time is arbitrary and conventional, but not the passage of time itself. Everyone, the most naive and the wisest alike, must come to terms with it, it is also in some way given, though not itself a stretch of time or item in time. It is somehow real though curiously not to be timed itself, however much we feel that it gallops with a thief to the gallows etc. In what way real? Well that is another matter, and there may again not be much to say. But the main point I readily concede.

The self is a different case. For though I maintain that the self, in the most basic sense of the term, cannot be described or identified like some other entity or the content of experience, I still put it in the class of entities, it is not just a form or focus. The problem of God is different again. But I myself reject reductionist views which make God

just some depth of our own being. God is not indeed one object among others, he is unconditioned and eternal, and there are well known problems here. But it is all the same better to say with the others that there is no God (or that we cannot know that there is) than just think of Him in terms of ourselves or the world. He is 'other' and He is real.

Of existence I am not quite so certain, but when I say that something exists I clearly mean more than some description of it. I am describing reality, but this is not the same as saying that existence is itself a reality.

I have much graver doubts about 'beauty' 'good', and 'negation'. For even though I hold that goodness is non-natural (in Moore's sense) I do not think that there is any real goodness other than the goodness of this or that work of art, experience, action, etc.. There is no goodness, or 'realm of values' or the good existence or subsistence in itself. Negation is even more obviously not 'a real'. We learn this early from Plato's account of non-being. There is surely no such reality as negation.

I conclude then that Prof. Bhattacharyya is generally right in claiming reality for the 'over-natural' but that we have also to be very careful how we handle such reals and that we must not suppose that the problems involved are settled in some once for all way for all the cases in question. We need *in each case* the disciplined reflection that Prof. Deustch speaks about.

1. cf. C.H. Campbell's rebuttal of the conventionalist view of the principles of non-contradiction in *Analysis*.

Herbert Herring

Prof. Bhattacharyya has presented a paper which seems to me, on the whole, so plausible and convincing that I would like to confine myself to some additional rather than critical remarks. Since philosophy in his opinion (and one should agree with that) is primarily a study and not a way of life, he sets out to answer the question (which is, in a way, the cardinal question of this seminar), whether this theoretical study can be of any use for our life and if so, how. If, on the other hand, it can be proved to be useless for practical life, then we shall have to ask whether it should be abandoned and abolished, even as a theoretical study.

After having critically investigated the modern, anti-metaphysical philosophy in the shape of logical positivism and its more recent offsprings, namely logical analysis, linguistic analysis, and therapeutic positivism, Prof. Bhattacharyya concludes that philosophy in this sense has no significance for our practical life, no practical bearing, and could hardly be more than playing second fiddle to science.

In Prof. Bhattacharyya's argumentation (where he gives a fairly good number of examples in order to show that the traditional philosophy was not all that bad as logical analysts, for instance, would like to make us believe,) the *concept of reality* is of special relevance, and thus I want to make a few remarks with regard to this concept and Prof. Bhattacharyya's treatment of it.

Logical analysts — it is said — hold that an over-natural reality cannot exist, since it cannot be demonstrated to others. This seems to me a slightly over-simplified interpretation of the logical positivist and analyst attitude towards metaphysics. They are not aiming at the denial of the metaphysical, of the over-natural; what they want to prove is that the problems of metaphysics are pseudo-problems which came into being by category-mistakes or the misunderstanding of the workings of our language. Thus Moritz Schlick, one of the most ferocious opponents of traditional metaphysics, in his revolutionary speech at the International Congress on Philosophy at Oxford, 1930, did not proclaim the non-existence of the metaphysical but the pseudo-existence of metaphysics which has to be banished from the realm of philosophical research "not because its problems cannot be solved, but because they do not exist at all" (as philosophical problems). Thus what Schlick was demanding came near to what Kant in his critical foundation of transcendental philosophy called the impossibility of a

scientific metaphysics, leaving completely untouched metaphysics as a natural inclination of man, which is always transcending the realm of possible experience towards that which is totally unexplainable by means of rational thinking. (By the way, the clue to Kant's rejection of all scientific metaphysics can be found in the distinction he draws between the *constitutive character of concepts* and the *regulative character of ideas*. We cannot deal with this here. I can only draw your attention to the relevant paragraphs in Book II, chapter 3 of the "Transcendental Dialectics" in his "Critique of Pure Reason")

Even Ayer, who has never been on good footing with metaphysicians, confesses in the Introduction to the revised 2nd edition of "Language, Truth and Logic" (1946) that the abolishing of metaphysics would not necessarily mean the denial of the metaphysical.

What Kant, the old and new Kantians, logical positivists and analysts have in common, apart from their otherwise essentially different outlook on philosophy, is their rejection of the possibility of dealing with the over-natural, the metaphysical, as if it could be proved by means of those procedures which are the only conditions of scientific knowledge: sense-experience and rational discourse.

Whether the reality of the over-natural can be demonstrated by means of some other faculties of the human mind is quite another question, the answer to which depends entirely on the respective concept of "philosophy".

In the context of his discourse on reality, Prof. Bhattacharyya deals with the term "existence" which he calls a predicate. This may sound a little misleading, but I take for granted that in calling "existence" a predicate he means the function of that term in the logical and grammatical context of a sentence and not in its ontological sense; for there is no doubt that whereas "red", "hot", "heavy", "angry", "philosophical" are proper predicates in the ontological sense, "exist" is not, unless one would like to draw a distinction between "to be" in the plain sense of just being there ("There is a man in this room") and "to exist" in the Existentialist understanding of the term, i.e. being in full awareness of one's own being ("There is a man existing in this room"). While in the case of "There is a man in this room" the word "is" does not add anything essential to the subject of this sentence, in the case of "There is a man existing in this room" it puts an additional meaning to the subject of the sentence explaining its particular mode of being.

Let us proceed to Prof. Bhattacharyya's statement at the end of his paper, wherein he says that any "theoretical study can have practical bearing ... if only it amounts to knowledge, if, in other words, it speaks directly of reality, not of the knowledge or description of reality."

Here I find myself rather puzzled, for I cannot see how "to

amount to knowledge" and "to speak directly of reality" could possibly mean the same, could be synonymous. If that were the case, then Kant and the whole of Kantian philosophy would fall under this verdict, for Kant calls his critical investigation of the capacity, scope and limits of human knowledge transcendental idealism, and the transcendental method of this philosophy means that it is "occupied not so much with objects, as with our a priori concepts of objects" ("Critique of Pure Reason", Introduction to the 1st edition.)

But I think that in Prof. Bhattacharyya's statement the term "knowledge" may have a twofold meaning: "theoretical study ... if ... it amounts to knowledge",— in this context *knowledge* may be meant in the sense of *knowing about the real essence and structure of things*; whereas in the context of theoretical study which "speaks directly of reality, not of the knowledge ... of reality" *knowledge* may mean *the description and interpretation of things as they are given to us in space and (or) time*. And hence the question arises which marks the two main attitudes towards philosophy in the history of human thought, namely whether we can really know things as they are in themselves, in their objective structure, or whether we are bound to confine ourselves to knowing things as they appear to us, as they are given to us according to the structure, the natural limitations of the human mind.

If the latter is the case (and I personally subscribe to this concept of philosophy since I cannot see how one could overcome the subject-object-relation in the ontological as well as in the epistemological sense and thus gain direct access to reality), then even logical analysis can have some practical bearing by testing and sharpening the tools instead of using them carelessly in the fields of theory and practice, as has always been done in dogmatic metaphysics. But I agree, that many logical analysts behave as if their only interest were in the sharpening of the tools for keeping them, nicely displayed, in the show-cases of their innumerable publications where they have, obviously, no bearing whatsoever on practical life.

I

The problem of personal identity has always been a central one for philosophy, and it has also obvious ramifications, of a very wide-ranging nature, for all practical and social problems. It is not likely that we shall have any profound understanding of practical issues, in personal ethics or in politics, unless we have a sound appreciation of what individual persons are like, how they feel and react and how, if I may use a somewhat old-fashioned term, their ultimate destiny is to be conceived. We may have moved very far from the days when eminent thinkers wrote elaborate works with titles like that of Bosanquet's *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*, and there are those, like myself, who believe that something has been lost as well as gained in the process. But even the most *avant garde* and fashionable of down to earth contemporary philosophers find their thoughts centred as much as ever on the question of personal identity, and they seem to find this no less inescapable in dealing with legal and ethical problems than in the remoter spheres of epistemology and speculative thought. This paper is, at any rate, written, in the consciousness that the question of personal identity has the utmost significance for practice; and it may not be inappropriate to remind ourselves, in an Indian Conference, how closely this view accords with the attitude of the great classical thinkers of the East as well as the West. 'Know thyself' is a theme of the major cultures, however varied the answers. I submit that this is as true today as it has always been.

For us today the main point of attack on this problem must be the challenge presented by various types of reductionist and materialist interpretations of personality. It will also help, in a short paper, if I declare my own interest at the start. I am convinced that monistic doctrines of personality are not only radically false in themselves, however plausible in some regards, but also seriously misleading and inhibiting in our treatment of practical problems, though here again the reverse is frequently claimed, as in Professor Ryle's celebrated dismissal of the traditional problem of the freedom of the will as a 'tangle of spurious problems'.

I cannot give too much of space in this paper to an attempted rebuttal of the prevailing monistic views of personality. But I can indicate one or two major ways in which they seem utterly inadequate. By 'monistic views' I understand here of course the views which reject any radical distinction to be drawn between mind and body,

such as we find in Plato and Descartes and many besides. The dualism of Descartes has been a particularly exposed target of attack in recent work, but I myself, without describing myself as a Cartesian or being committed to Cartesian views and methods at all points, find the main position taken up by Descartes to be altogether sound in essentials and profoundly relevant to problems of today. What then are some of the main recent objections to Cartesian dualism?

(1) One objection which is sometimes considered to be peculiarly deadly is that those who defend Descartes's sort of dualist and interactionist type of theory are disconcertingly reticent about the transactions which they must, it is supposed, assume to occur between various states of our minds and states of our bodies. How, it may be put, is the influence transmitted from one side to the other, by what media is it carried? And, if anyone takes up the challenge at its face value and tries, by introspection or in some other way, to locate or describe these purported transactions, he at once gives serious hostages to fortune. For it is unlikely that any such media will be found. What could they be? Dispositions of some ethereal substance? If so, what evidence is there for it? The defender of dualism is at once on the run and outmanoeuvred if he lets himself be induced to take up this particular challenge as it stands. Nor would his case be much improved if he could produce evidence of the required transactions. For, as Ryle observes, this would only throw the problem a stage further back. How, on the presuppositions conceded is the influence carried from the purported media to the initial terms on either side, and if further intermediary terms are invoked we seem committed to an infinite regress.

The proper course is to say that we know of no mysterious interactions of the sort required, and that there is nothing in an interactionist view to necessitate them. In the last resort, any particular causal relation is contingent. We may have good reason to believe that causal relationship as such is necessary, and in that case we must regard specific causal relations as necessary ones. But we still discover what causal relationships there are in fact by noting or observing them or deducing them from the way we generally find that things happen. But then we do find that certain mental states affect physical ones, that if I will to move my arm, my arm moves; and we likewise find that certain physical states, like my body being here and my eyes open, do result in experiences like my present perceptions and so forth. We may explain much of this in one sense, that is we can provide more and more of the detail of what happens on one side or the other, ask the physiologist for example to tell us about nerves and muscles and states of the brain etc. But none of this finally explains why, given the brain state, the appropriate physical change is initiated. We just find that certain things happen, that I can normally do certain things

and not others; and in the last resort we have just to accept this. We certainly cannot deny it because there is a limit to causal explanation or because we cannot produce any inherent necessity for the way things are. We must accept what we find, and this is surely as much in line with the genuine insights of empiricism as anything could be. We have Hume himself as our ally here.

(2) Another allegedly powerful objection to dualism is this. It is observed that there are many ways in which our friends, or sometimes an expert like a psychiatrist, may discover certain things about us which we do not know ourselves. What, in that case, of the much vaunted private access? The answer here is again simple in essentials. No one who claims that he is aware of his own thoughts and experiences in having them has to deny that he may be mistaken, sometimes seriously, about himself in other ways. He may not provide the best description of what his state of mind is like, he may not remember always what he felt exactly on some past occasion, he may not anticipate what he will feel or think or do on some future occasion. Private access is not a matter of inspecting our dispositional nature or character to learn what they are like as we might examine a machine to learn what it will do. We only learn about our dispositions on the basis of what we or others observe of what we do at various times, and there is much that we overlook in making our deductions and many ways in which we may be biased. It is after all in respect of our dispositional tendencies that Freudian scholars and others claim that much is hidden from us which others may be better placed to discover about us; and those who defend private or privileged access have not the slightest cause to be perturbed about that.

(3) Perhaps the most serious objection to dualism is the claim that it commits us to solipsism. As Ryle puts it, on the Cartesian view, "absolute solitude is the inductable destiny of the soul".¹ If this accusation rests, the dualist is clearly put out of court from the start. No one seriously believes that he is — or may be for all he knows — the only person in the world. There are other people and without them life, as we know it, would be impossible. If, therefore, any theory committed us to the view that we had no communion or fellowship with others, it would clearly stand condemned. In some way, however we finally account for it, we do have knowledge of other minds. But why should any Cartesian doubt this, or be embarrassed by it? No one claims private access to the mind of *others*, or that 'privileged access' is the only way we know minds. We know others in some mediated or indirect way, and this is clearly what we all seriously think. True, we may say 'I saw he was sorry', 'I heard him explain it' and so on. But there are elliptical shorthand ways of speaking. All we really see is a man's body, all we hear is his voice. We learn from this what he thinks or feels. Some kind of inference is involved, unless

we are prepared to reduce all experience to sheer physical movement — and that would be a desperate expedient indeed.

Some, however, hesitate at one point here; and the matter has been made so much of in recent discussions of the subject that it will be well to pause a moment over it. Many feel — and Ryle has again given forcible expression to their view — that any notion of an inferential or mediated knowledge of other minds is open to a fatal flaw. For how, it is argued, could we possibly establish any relationship between the movements of other people's bodies and their minds if, as the hypothesis goes, we never have access to any mind other than one's own. In Ryle's famous comparison, we know what must have happened in the signal box if the points are securely locked, but this is because we can get inside the signal box, or the equivalent, at some time and establish the initial correlations. We do not do this with minds. Of course we do not. But why should we? The correlations are established initially, not by observing that one state of mind, already known to be such, is accompanied by a particular physical state. It is rather a case of finding it impossible to account for the peculiar movements of certain physical bodies on any supposition other than that they are animated by beings with intelligent purposes similar to our own — much, in this regard, as some have argued teleologically to the existence of God, though whether or not we accept this argument in the case of God is a quite different matter.

This is why I am puzzled, as I have stressed elsewhere², that a philosopher like A. J. Ayer, who is convinced that reductionist theories of mind are mistaken, should all the same find himself forced to seek some form of identity thesis of mind and body almost solely to meet the difficulty that, unless in knowing another body I ipso facto know the mind involved, there is no way of getting across the gap and avoiding the absurdities of solipsism. Curiously, Ayer also assumes that a realist view of physical entities is required in the same way. Ayer could be more consistent and vigorous in what seems a prevailing inclination to dualism were he not daunted, in common with many other thinkers today, by what is in fact a very unfounded fear that the nemesis of solipsism is inescapable along that course just because there is no way of directly confirming the correlations of mental and bodily processes. So much are we haunted still by ghosts that are easily laid.

There is also much involved, in the present controversy about mind and body, the curious supposition that any conception we have of distinct mental processes or mental acts has to be in terms of isolable atomic incidents, erupting somewhat inconsequentially now and again. Such notions are easily ridiculed, though the targets at which all this is directed are not readily identifiable. When, we are asked, did we perform the mental act of will to dive into the pool or drive to College, how many acts of will did we perform this morning? The answer is

simple. We have been willing all the time to do whatever the situation required as it developed. We do not stop all else to perform disjointed acts. We are active all the time in a great variety of ways.

It has also been suggested that whatever is involved in mental existence over and above the movements of our bodies can be accounted for entirely in terms of our dispositions. But I have urged elsewhere that, while dispositions are obviously of very great importance, very little sense can be made of them apart from the mental processes in which they continue to be actualized. We do not tell the whole story, but on the contrary leave out the main item, when we note only dispositions and manifest physical behaviour.

A somewhat different sort of objection to dualism comes from those who remark on the obvious continuity of intelligence in the life of brutes and of human beings. Dogs and porpoises behave and respond, in some respects, in highly intelligent ways, however hard it may be to describe animal intelligence and the difference between it and the minds of men. Why then, it is asked, do you draw this somewhat high-sounding distinction of soul and body in the case of human beings, not of other creatures? The answer is again straightforward. There may not be a case for using the word 'soul' in speaking of sub-human beings, as the term does usually imply a possibility of moral and spiritual attainment beyond the reach of beings who lack our powers of reason. But in all other regards precisely the same distinction should be drawn. The dog and the horse have their 'inner life' just as we have. They have sense experience, they smell and see, they have sensations of touch or taste, they endure pain. It would be as absurd to give a wholly behaviourist account of a dog yelping in pain as it would be of us. The dog does not know of his pain, or his fear for the matter of that, by noting his own behaviour. He knows at once that it hurts. And so much lower down the scale, wherever indeed there is sentience; something goes on which is not observable.

The point is also sometimes made that ordinary language does not reflect a sharp distinction of mind and body. This is not strictly true. Much that we do say (as Socrates was well aware) implies that we think of ourselves as quite distinct from our bodies. But even when common speech does not do this, as when a man says indifferently 'I am tall' and 'I am thinking what reply to make' (or 'I am thinking about Kant and Hegel'), it does not follow that we do not have the distinction in mind. There is no need to note it all the time, and speech has its own economy. We all know that 'I am tall' just refers to my body and that my thoughts about this subject now are not parts or changes of my body. This is a point where the appeal to ordinary language or to the alleged 'structure of language' is apt to be very misleading.

It does not follow that we should not be very mindful of the very

close dependence of mind on body in the present existence, even though note may be taken of some alleged 'out-of-the-body' experiences etc. But this dependence is a causal and contingent one. It does not reduce mind to body or imply that the mind could not function in some other way or under different conditions. A somewhat less astringent form of 'identity thesis' thus takes the following form. It is admitted that mental and physical processes are different in themselves but that they may have identical referents. The talk of referents in this context is often obscure, partaking something of the idea of a Lockian substance and also being continuous in some fashion with the data referred to it. But surely, if referents are to be invoked in this way, they must be thought to have some common nature with the relevant data, and no use of Ockham's razor could justify reducing the referents to one where the facts plainly require two (if any).

A more impressive point, and one whose consideration advances the subject more, whether we accept it or not, is made in contending that, however different mental processes may be from physical ones, there can be no continuous identity of persons apart from the continuity of our bodies. How, it will be argued, can I be thought to be the same person now as I was a moment ago, or last year, if I do not have memories of past events? Without memory we seem to have just a flow of mental events. But their memory makes no sense unless memory claims can be checked and, in some cases, substantiated. This in turn requires the corroboration of persons other than the agent himself who witnessed what he claims to remember; and such witnessing implies observation.

To this there are two main replies to be made, although very tersely in a short account. *Firstly*, there is no reason to question the need of a distinct subject of experience even if the experience is a very short transitory one. I should contend that, even in the most rudimentary experience there is a being to which the experience belongs, though the belonging is of a very special sort here. Moreover, there is no reason to suppose that, even if there is total loss of memory and change of character as well, the being who underwent the experience now lost to memory could not be the same as the one who has certain experiences now. He could not know this, and perhaps no one could know it, but that would make no difference to the facts. Some ideas of re-birth imply something very like this, although that does not rid them of difficulties of another sort. But, to come to my *second* main point. I am not convinced that memory in all cases requires the sort of observable confirmation instanced. Although memory is fallible, may we not contend that, in a great many cases we do just rely on memory *simpliciter*. I remember drinking a cup of tea a moment ago, even though the cup has been removed. I do this, not because I feel refreshed, or because I usually have a cup at eleven. Nor

is it any vivid image of my having this drink, though I do have that. I just remember.

There are no doubt difficulties here, and I fear that I cannot go further into these now. But if they can be overcome, as I believe they can, then we have, in these cases of strict memory, a firm indication of a continuous identity. We may indeed, in one sense of the terms, remember many things in which we were not involved, like many things that happened before we lived, we may remember what Mr Gladstone said or when and how Caesar crossed the Rubicon. But this is remembering something we have learnt. To remember, in the strict sense is remembering something which I did or was otherwise aware of at the time, like having my cup of tea. And if it is the case that there are memories of this sort which require in substance no external vindication, then we have a core of continuous identity around which further items may be built in ways which are as conclusive as we could ever need.

It is my contention that we are aware of ourselves in this way, although other persons are known by ascription of what we find to be inescapable in our own case to other cases where similar ascriptions of experience is made. There are thus no criteria for the strict ascription of identity to oneself. Each one knows himself in being himself, and for this reason no description is possible of what it is to be a self or what makes each of us the particular being that he is. In this basic sense selfhood and self-identity are unique. In a subsidiary sense, indeed, criteria abound. I can be known, from appropriate evidence, to be this sort of person with this sort of history. You can describe the kind of person I am, listing my habits, interests etc. But in the basic sense, all this belongs to me as the being I find myself to be, and it so belongs in a way to which there is no proper parallel elsewhere. Major mistakes in this area of philosophy come about through our looking for too close analogies in external events.

There is thus, I maintain, an inner or non-observable awareness of our own experiences in having them and of oneself as the unique being who has them though the experience could have been different; and we are aware in memory firmly of a continuous identity of which we have further less direct indication in appropriate evidence. The self, so conceived, is elusive in the sense that it cannot be described in the finality of its distinctness. But there is nothing mysterious about it in any other way. It is not known *a priori* or as a postulate — or pushed in some way out of the picture. Everyone knows himself is being himself, whether he reflects upon this or not. This does not give us an indestructible soul, such as Plato and McTaggart, in our own day thought we had. Nothing finite is indestructible. But we have an awareness in ourselves and in our own lives of our own existence as non-material beings, having an ultimate irreducible identity and

capable, as we have already existed for some time, of continuing to exist — perhaps in vastly different conditions. What importance can all this have for practice?

II

If we hold the view that the self, in its most essential nature, is other than the body and also more than its passing states, however much involved in the latter, then we have an entity which can be conceived as existing after the dissolution of our bodies and the end of our present existence. What form this could take is another matter. There is a case for saying that some sort of body is needed to be a focus for activity and experience, and for identification by others than ourselves. But this could be a very different body, and there is no case for saying that it is through the body that we are particularised. The self, in itself, is the most distinctive particular there is. Some would also hold, as I do, that the idea of a totally disembodied existence is not to be altogether dismissed. But whatever we say on these scores, we have, in the notion of the elusive self already set forth, an entity capable at least of existing under conditions very different from those to which we are subject now.

It does not follow that the self *will* survive. There is no inevitable immortality. To hold that we do survive we must have additional reasons, provided for some by psychical research, for others by metaphysics or religion. But the possibility cannot begin to be entertained if we are convinced of the soundness of the views about the nature of persons which hold most sway in philosophy at present. The death of the body on those views spells the death of all. That is not a reason for rejecting them. They must be considered on their merits as accounts of what we find consciousness and selfhood to be. But if the way is open to think of ourselves as having a further existence, and if we have further reason for supposing that we have some destiny beyond our life as we know it now, then this could bring an additional perspective, perhaps of immense importance, in which to view the problems which confront us now. I hold, in fact, that our attitudes would be transformed, and that we could approach many problems with greater serenity and a more balanced judgment, if we were enabled to renew the sense of a deeper spirituality and hope which the thought of an existence not subject to our present limitations could bring.

I leave this thought with you, presented in outline only. But I shall be particularly glad to know how you react to it in the context of your concern about practical and social questions of today.

I turn now to a point that has more obviously to do with practice, namely the bearing of my theme on the sense in which it may be said that value is personal. I have maintained that we cannot describe what each person is in his own essential being as known to himself, but

it would be altogether wrong to regard the self so conceived as an appendage, a functionless further thing we carry around with us. Our experiences and dispositions could have been different, but they do belong in a peculiarly intimate, indissoluble way.

I am in my experiences, even if I am more than them. My dispositions are also essentially my dispositions. They are not something of which I have charge or some particular stewardship, they are me; and to draw too rigid a wedge between the self, in its finality, and the course of all that happens to it could well be an even greater mistake than to reduce the self wholly to its passing states. However hard it may be to provide a satisfactory philosophical account of the relation of the self to the course of experience, and I doubt whether there is any more baffling philosophical problem than that (as may already be evident), the self is really in its experiences in the most intimate way. I need not have a pain at the moment, but if I do I feel it; it is I who thinks certain things, feels despondent or elated, like or dislike people etc. I am not a thing apart from all this.

It follows that the distinctions of worth we make at all levels are really ascribable to each as a whole person. A man is entitled to be proud of his attainments, they are pre-eminently his; it is he who should be sorry for his shortcomings, or ashamed if shame is in order — they are also essentially his. No one should be encouraged to be indifferent to what his life is like or what he becomes. On the contrary we have a duty to cultivate the best that is in us, as our lot or situation allows. We cannot do this without other people, there is very little that we ever attain entirely on our own; but each of us has, all the same, a peculiar involvement in what he himself becomes, and also a duty to mind it.

This is, in itself, a matter of non-moral values, although there is the important moral duty indicated of promoting, in ourselves as in others, every sort of worth we can. A word should perhaps be interpolated here about the distinction of moral and non-moral good which is of such radical importance for good sense in ethics. Among non-moral goods are health and physical well-being, physical skills (in athletics, for example), artistic and intellectual attainment, personal relationships and qualities of character, like affection or courage. Opposed to these are non-moral evils, like pain, stupidity, insensitivity and excessive concern for oneself. We cannot change these directly at will, we cannot instantly summon up appropriate feelings of sorrow or kindness or boldness, although these and their like may be cultivated (or discouraged) as the case requires. Our natural endowment, and all, of good or ill, that circumstances do to these are the lot we have — they are gifts of nature or fortune. But they are no less personal for that reason, and a due regard for the delicately inward character of personal attainments and the peculiar significance

they have for each in being the attainments of the unique and distinctive being he is, as known to himself and recognised by others, brings a peculiar flavour and subtlety, and an element of great dignity as well, to personal relations and the respect for persons which has often been accorded so central a place in ethics.

There could, indeed, be a case for the notion of respect for persons even if this were thought of in some less absolute way as a unique combination of certain properties or mental states. But I leave with you the suggestion, which I cannot follow up further now, that the most subtle and impressive feature of our regard for persons, at the reflective and non-reflective level alike, is found in the way each person is involved, in the distinctness and finality of his own being, in all his experiences.

This is peculiarly marked in our more intimate relationships, friendly or hostile; and I have tried to bring this out in my book, *The Elusive Mind*; in my discussion of what I take to be truly important in the notion of an *I-Thou* relationship as presented by Martin Buber and his followers. The sense that we are really dealing with 'the other' brings a very special quality or dimension to our more intimate dealings with one another — and it should never be absent.

For similar reasons we should be very wary of collectivist ways of thinking even of non-moral worth. We can indeed speak of national pride or other good or bad characteristics of groups of people. But this is metaphor and generalisation. There is no proper bearer of any worth other than the individual. The 'soul of a people' is metaphor. There are only individual souls; and if I may be pardoned again for referring to my own work, I have been at pains often⁸ to expose the ills that ensue from passing from useful metaphorical idioms to a more strict or literal form of collectivist notion of human relations. Few matters seem to me to have more relevance than this to major world issues of today.

When we turn to properly moral worth, the importance of heeding the finality and uniqueness of the distinctness of persons, as indicated earlier, is even more evident. No man, as the famous quotation has it, is an island. But we come very near to it in moral choice. Our aptitudes and our likes and dislikes are set for us together with the external features of the situations within which a choice must be made. So are our moral convictions at the time, or the light according to which we are judged. But how we respond when our duties seem to be in courses of action not in accord with what we most wish at the time — this is where we have to make an absolute choice which is not itself determined by character or environment or anything else. Such a choice can only be made by a self which is more than its formed character at the time, and what can this be other than the self in the sense in which it can not be characterised or observed?

Few will doubt that the restoration of the sense of responsibility, eroded by much in contemporary thought and practice and not least in influential sociological theories, is a great need of our time. I will not enlarge on a theme so evident in recent and contemporary history.

This brings me to metaphysical and religious considerations that have a close bearing on practice. Many deny the finality of the distinctness of persons and hold, in many forms of monism and mystical philosophies or religions that the individual is eventually merged in the Absolute or in some Supreme Universal Self or Universal Mind. Various disciplines are meant to further this end. But if I am right, however much we may hope to attain closer union with God, or whatever takes his place in our system of thought, there is no absorption of the individual in the being of another, whether man or God. A finite being could always be eliminated, but, however restricted and dependent, the core of his being remains, as long as he exists, intact — now or hereafter.

Since much of the philosophical arguments for the alleged mystical elimination of the distinctness of persons turns on the seemingly contentless character of the 'pure self', as allegedly disclosed to the mystic in the more distinctive introvert forms of his experience⁴, it is important to note well that the way in which the self, in its true being as known to itself, is without specifiable criteria of its distinctiveness, requires at the same time that it be recognised as ultimate and irreducible.

This has specific relevance to the religious and kindred practices by which it is sometimes hoped to attain to certain spiritual states. It calls for an involvement in the lives of others even in the more profoundly personal forms of spiritual devotion. But it also relates more directly to social problems as affording an essential corrective to excessively other-worldly forms of religious or metaphysical commitment or to other views which reduce the significance of the rich and varied course of our lives in this world and tend towards apathy and uniformity as opposed to vigour and creativity.

On the face of it the great religions of the East, and especially Hinduism and Buddhism, seem to favour more the collectivist and monistic attitudes which I oppose. But there is also much in the literature and history of these religions which support another view, and there have also been raised recently distinguished voices, like those of Aurobindo, to plead for a more dynamic form of their own religions with greater recognition of the worth and variety of life as lived here and now.

To what extent metaphysical and religious attitudes affect practice and social policies is perhaps a moot point, and Aurobindo may himself have suggested the influence of the more other-worldly features of Indian philosophers and religions. But the influence is there and

requires direction. In the case of Buddhism, and, I should maintain, in some features of Hinduism also, there has been much distortion and misunderstanding of their basic notions and attitudes. The reluctance of Buddhist thinking to recognise some specifiable entities over and above our passing states could be looked at afresh with profit in the light of a subtler understanding of what precisely is the elusiveness of the self. We may find here, as in many other matters where recent controversy has sharpened our understanding — in thought about God's transcendence for instance — that the Pali Canon is more on our side than against it.

I offer this as a suggestion which could be followed up much more exhaustively today than has hitherto been the case, and must leave it, for the moment at least, to those more expert than I to ponder. It seems to me a much more profitable line of investigation than that which would cast aside or question a tremendous spiritual heritage just because it seems, on a reading which may in part be misleading, to be inimical to urgent practical needs. If the needs of the whole person are to be considered in a balanced way, then there may be a strong case for continuing, or restoring when lost, a great spiritual tradition which we can now examine afresh and which may have a great deal to do with the rounded ordering of our lives in the world — as individuals and as members of society.

A further aspect of contemporary problems which is bound to be much in our minds when we think of practical issues is the upsurge of violence and unreason in our time. There are many aspects of this that must fall outside the scope of this paper. But there is one that has very close relevance to our theme. I refer to the extensive but unhealthy and perplexing preoccupation with violence and other excesses of passionate excitation on their own account. Why should these have so much force and appeal independently even of any further end they may be thought to promote? Part of the answer lies in the mismanagement of that inwardness of experience and the distinctness of persons to which we are prone in several ways. We resent the limitation imposed upon us by our finite nature which precludes our breaking wholly into the inner sanctuary of the lives of others. We expect to know them as they know themselves — or as God knows. This we think we attain when we catch people without the usual disguises, when convention and habit fall away, as in extremes of terror or excitation. The expectation is ill-founded, for whatever is disclosed in this way, it still does not give us a wholly unmediated glimpse of 'the other' as he is for himself, it is a persistently self-defeating enterprise which can become inflamed to the level of daemonic and ruthless destructiveness. The remedy is to understand ourselves better, as we are well equipped to do today, and to see our state and its limitations in a corrected perspective which will enable us

to balance the awareness of our essential inwardness or privacy, and the respect that deserves, with the properly realistic view of our place in the world around us and the lives of others. The right sort of subjectivism prescribes its own correlative realism, and there is much that may be done here by philosophical thought, as well as by more explicit exhortation or censure, to induce the appropriate frame of mind. The influence of philosophy in the context of the layman's thoughts and attitudes is often more extensive than we think, and nowhere to my mind more so than in matters like the one instanced here.

Nor is it in the broader setting of politics or of explicitly religious situations that this has significance. I suggest that it could be followed up with great advantage by students of psychology and social pathology, and it could well help to break the stalemate of continuing a fruitless round of variations on themes of repression and complexes to which the practitioner, like the theorist, often only clings in desperation in the absence of any better scheme for their work. We need a new and better psychology, and the way to attain it could well come from a better understanding of the inescapable inwardness of personal existence.

I have referred incidentally from time to time to religion, and this is a subject which cannot, in my view, ever be very far from social and political issues, however much we may also need to be on our guard to preserve the proper autonomy of these and the disciplines concerned with them. A central theme of religion is 'what, (in Whitehead's famous phrase) a man does with his solitariness'. It is remarkable how much this has become a major concern in literature and life today. Even Bertrand Russell, in no sense a pietistic person, made a great deal of what he himself called 'a sombre solitude' and the oppressiveness and fear that breeds in it. To this, the ultimate answer, in my view, is found in religion. At the core of most religions is this problem of inwardness and solitude. For some the way of salvation lies in escape to a wholly transcendent existence where finitude and its problems no longer oppress us. For others there are ways in which the transcendent may come into the citadels of our finite being without total disruption but rather, however disturbing and demanding, as the ultimate value. That this has importance for the rounded conduct of our lives at all levels should be plain. But there is one aspect of it which I should much like to mention specifically before I close.

Among the consequences of the wrong that we sometimes do one another is the repercussion of our wrong-doing on ourselves, and the most prominent feature of this — what I should regard as the true meaning of 'the penalty of sin' — is the encasement of a person more and more in his own inner life. We cannot take with due regard and seriousness the things we violate — and we cannot therefore heed other

people properly when we do them wrong. There sets in in this way a spiritual debility, a sense of inner emptiness often remarked upon, which, if not averted, leads to distortion and a sense of being cast adrift to suffocate in the airless existence of unrelieved privacy. These lead to a dissolution of all that matters in personal existence for which total elimination could perhaps be a merciful release — and some have sought it and so understood their faith. For others there are offered other ways of salvation, costly for God as for man; and while it can hardly come within my proper purpose now to examine these, I should like to close with the suggestion that the meeting of religions on this particular theme, and a new understanding of them thereby, in their unity and their undoubted differences, has a profound, indeed inescapable, relevance to all major practical concerns. We all, the speaker no less than any, have a horror of a false intrusion of religion into moral and political fields. Confusion and escapism has often been the result of that. But I also hold that, with the understanding which the best attainment of our thought today can provide, nothing matters more for our social and political problems than to understand properly where religion impinges upon them. Even at the strictly academic level, and in field work and more mundane investigation, in devising the right technique in sociology and anthropology, this matter has importance much greater than is usually thought. In the excruciating ultimate test of practical decision and enterprise, it has a great deal more — and that, from my own point of view, is to put the matter cautiously.

1. *The Concept of Mind*, p. 15.
2. *The Elusive Mind*, Chapter XII
3. See the chapters on 'Universal Sin' and 'Collective Responsibility' in my *Morals and the New Theology*, and the chapters on 'Collective Responsibility' and on 'Guilt and Freedom' in my *Morals and Revelation* and my book, *Freedom and History*.
4. cf. W. T. Stace's *Mysticism and Philosophy*

John Hick

In his impressively argued paper Dr Lewis argues, along lines which are more fully developed in his very important book *The Elusive Self*, first, that the mind is to be regarded as an entity distinct from the body, and second, that a number of important practical consequences follow from this. My comment on his paper is going to be very brief, in the interests of allowing time for the give and take of general discussion. And it will be on the second part of the paper, partly because this is the part which he has read to us this morning and partly because it is the part about which I find that I want to express certain reservations.

For I am inclined to disagree with Dr Lewis's thesis that it makes an important practical difference whether one thinks of the mind as elusive and detachable from the body, or as an aspect of an indissoluble psycho-physical unity.

The main difference to which Dr Lewis refers concerns the possibility of human immortality. He seems in his paper to make not only the psychological claim that belief in the separability of the mind or soul makes it easier to anticipate a life after death, but also the logical or the ontological claim that only if the mind is indeed elusive and detachable can there in fact be a life after death. If I have misunderstood him at this point, and he is not after all making this claim, he will I am sure put the record straight.

At any rate, if Dr Lewis is arguing that immortality necessarily presupposes mind-body detachability, I want to question this argument.

I would remind you that Western religious thought is by no means unanimously committed to the doctrine of an immaterial soul which inhabits the body and which is capable of continuing to exist after the dissolution of the body. On the contrary, the Christian, as also the Jewish, scriptures teach the resurrection of the body and not the immortality of the soul; and the Creed of the Christian Church speaks of "the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting". The resurrection of the body does not, in the New Testament, mean the resuscitation of the physical corpse, but the divine reconstitution or re-creation of the psycho-physical person. To conceive of this one probably has to think in terms of spaces in the plural, and of the divine creation in another space of psycho-material units which have sufficient likeness to earthly human beings to be rightly described as the same persons re-

created or reconstituted, or in traditional Christian language, resurrected. I have attempted elsewhere to work out more fully what this means (see my *Faith and Knowledge*, 2nd edition), and will not develop it again here. I do however want at least to remind you that a Judaic-Christian understanding of the nature and destiny of man does not necessarily stand or fall with the viability of the body-mind dualism which Dr Lewis so persuasively advocates. Such a dualism entered into Christianity through the powerful influence of Greek philosophy upon the development of Christian thought. But it has always co-existed in tension with the Hebraic emphasis upon man as a psycho-physical unity; and the debate has often been heard within Christian theology between the advocates of the rival concepts of the immortality of the soul and the resurrection of the unitary person.

Thus it does not seem to me safe to say, as Dr Lewis seems to do, that the idea of human immortality depends upon a rejection of the understanding of man as an indissoluble psycho-physical unity. Accordingly I doubt whether it can be counted as a consequence of the doctrine of the elusive mind that it alone shows human immortality to be possible.

But neither does it seem to me safe to accept the other examples which Dr Lewis offers of the practical consequences of the idea of the elusive and detachable mind. He says that this notion is important as a basis for respect for persons as persons, for moral choice and the sense of responsibility, and as a bulwark against contemporary irrationalism. I must confess that I fail to see any of these connections. If one regards a human being as a psycho-physical unity, rather than as a mutually separable body and soul, why should this reduce one's respect for persons as persons, or one's sense of moral responsibility, or any other of the values which we all hold dear? The ancient Hebrew prophets were conspicuously gripped by the demand for righteousness and social justice; and it is out of their tradition that Martin Buber came whose I-Thou category Dr Lewis uses; and yet these men regarded the human person, not as a soul attached to a body, but as an indissoluble unity with both physical and mental aspects. Thus it is not clear to me why a body-mind monist need have a different ethic, or a different attitude to and respect for persons, or a different view of modern violence and irrationality from that of a body-mind dualist.

N. K. Devaraja

This important paper deals with the complicated problem of the nature of the self and the person. In the first half of the paper, affirming his faith in mind-body dualism, Prof. Lewis directs his polemic against monistic and reductionistic theories about mind, body and their inter-relationship. He believes that mind is a substance which cannot be completely resolved into the flux of mental states, though it cannot be conceived to be absolutely distinct from those states. The mind, according to Prof. Lewis, is a subject which owns what are called the mental states; it is 'a being to which the experience belongs'. Thus Prof. Lewis is inclined to distinguish the self, on the one hand, from the body, and, on the other, from the mental states. The distinct continuity of the self is attested to by memory. However, this account seems to overlook one significant fact: some of the mental states, such as sensations and feeling, seem to be closely bound up with the organic processes of the body. Does the self own these organic processes in the manner in which it does the mental states, or not? Further, is the identity of the self constituted by memory alone, or has it anything to do with the continuity of the body? Prof. Lewis concedes the weight of the objection that, 'however different mental processes may be from physical ones, there can be no continuous identity of persons apart from the continuity of our bodies'. I don't find any convincing reply to this objection in the paper. Prof. Lewis is also constrained to concede that 'memory is fallible' and that there are 'no criteria for the strict ascription of identity to oneself'. However, Prof. Lewis thinks that 'each one knows himself in being himself.' It seems to me that this statement is both vague and questionable. There is certainly a sense in which I know myself as something that continues to be there irrespective of the experience that occurs to me. But, on the other hand, the image that I have of myself and, shall I say, of my essence, is not something fixed and unchanging. As the existentialists point out, in the case of man existence precedes essence. The essence and core of my being is being constantly modified through the addition of new experiences, aspirations and accomplishments. How these experiences, aspiration, etc. are related to the continuing identity and core of my being is a problem that defies solution. Several Indian systems of philosophy including the Sāṅkhya and the Advaita Vedānta, rid themselves of the problem by declaring all sorts of experience and mental states to be alien to the true essence of the self. Under these

metaphysical schemes there can be no question of any growth or improvement in the stature of the self. Both according to Sāṅkhya and Advaita Vedānta attainment of perfection by the self consists, not in its coming to have something which did not belong to it originally, but in its being restored to its original nature through the destruction of its association with material nature including the body brought about by ignorance or *avidyā*. Neither in the Sāṅkhya nor in Advaita Vedānta is there any scope for the union of the soul with a Godhead conceived as a distinct and more perfect entity. I agree with Prof. Lewis in rejecting the view that the self can be conceived to be entirely distinct from its experiences and the so called mental states. In addition, I find it difficult to visualize the existence of the self as revealed in our experience without association with a body. This does not necessarily imply that I reject dualism outright and wholly, nor that I subscribe to monistic and reductionist theories of the self. There can be no doubt that the human personality exhibits several aspects and seems simultaneously to belong to several dimensions of being.

It is significant to note that there is a far larger number of sciences or scientific disciplines dealing with man than those dealing with any other class of objects. The laws discovered by all the sciences, physical, biological and social, are applicable to man; in addition, in some mysterious fashion, he is subject to the pull and attraction of norms investigated by such disciplines as ethics, aesthetics and logic. Man not only behaves in accordance with his dispositions, needs and inclinations, but he also sits in judgement on these, seeking to inhibit some and encourage other dispositions, attitudes and inclinations. Man is endowed with self-awareness, he also practices self-criticism. Prof. Lewis is inclined to accept mind-body dualism in its traditional form; he also alludes to the distinction between moral and non-moral goods. But there are other distinctions. Thus pursuit of excellence in a utilitarian type of activity such as business management or engineering leads to the development of one kind of character and personality, while the aspiration and endeavour to excel as an artist, a poet, a philosopher or mathematician leads to entirely different results. So far as I can see there is very little in common between a successful business magnate and, say, an efficient minister for health on the one hand and a theoretical physicist, a philosopher of values and a poet on the other. Of course there remain important differences even among those engaged in non-utilitarian cultural pursuits of different types. The acceptance of mind-body dualism hardly enables one to comprehend the different directions of excellence and worth adopted by different types of persons. Nor, speaking from the level of our common experience, can it be denied that the colour of our skin and our facial features play an important part in building up our self-image both for us and for others. This is attested to not only by the practice of apartheid in several coun-

tries but also by the enormous amount of time and attention given by men and women alike to health and personal adornment.

The phenomenon of interaction between mind and body is admittedly a mysterious one. But there are innumerable mysteries of other kinds confronting us in different spheres of experience and inquiry. How is it that elements so different from one another in chemical and other properties as oxygen and sulphur and gold should emerge out of the same elementary particles or electric charges, positive and negative? How comes it that mathematical equations, obtained by man through analytic operations, should be found applicable to the workings of nature? It seems that the philosophers feel more exercised by the mysteries encountered by them than the scientists who confine their investigations to what is reasonably manageable.

One of the main findings of twentieth century philosophy is that the domain of philosophy is distinct from that of science and that it is the latter and not the former that deals with facts. Thus, Collingwood defined philosophy as thought about thought and analytical philosophers have unanimously declared that philosophy deals with language or expression of thought in language. Inasmuch as the existence of facts is bound up with that of objects, philosophy may not occupy itself with the investigation of the nature of objects. Viewed in this light, it is no part of the business of philosophy to discuss the nature either of the soul or of the body, and to offer to resolve the mystery of interaction. The questions relating to the existence and nature of the soul are factual questions; as such, I submit, they fall beyond the purview of philosophy. The reason is that the philosopher does not possess any tools with which to carry on his investigations into the nature of things. He has no business to ontologize, to postulate objects, substances and forces. Philosophy is not an empirical discipline, it has no privileged access to objects and entities, physical or spiritual, that are supposed to be hidden from science. The difficulties of conceiving interaction arise mainly from certain preconceptions regarding the nature of mind and matter. The philosopher has no right and no need to cherish any such preconceptions.

What, then, is the proper function of philosophy? This is a major issue and I cannot possibly discuss it in the course of a comment on another paper. I have dealt with the issue at length in my book *The Philosophy of Culture* and also in some papers. In a sense my view is not very different from that of Wittgenstein though it may claim to be more comprehensive and perhaps more systematic. Philosophy deals with those forms of man's life which are embodied by him in linguistic or other symbols and so are in principle sharable by all. Further, philosophy deals with those forms of life from the standpoint of values, or as embodiments of values. According to the present writer all the traditional branches of philosophy excepting ontology,

e.g. ethics, aesthetics, logic and theory of knowledge, which are concerned with one or other type of value, constitute legitimate parts of philosophy. To these may be added philosophies of different sciences, physical, biological and social. Philosophy reflects on the processes constituting the subject-matter of these disciplines with a view to disentangling the factors that determine the characteristic excellence of the processes or activities in question. Thus aesthetics scrutinizes the creative activity of the artist that results in the production of an art work; philosophy of science likewise examines those activities of the scientists that lead to the production and validation of scientific theories; and so on. Viewed in this light, philosophy may be looked upon as an instrument of the qualitative growth of the human consciousness.

This conception of philosophy has a bearing on the remarks that I am going to make on the problems of personal identity and worth. There is certainly a sense in which I may claim to be a unique being and a unique person having an identity and individuality of my own; however, it is equally true that, both as a citizen and as an educated and cultured person, my life is inevitably inter-linked with the lives of my fellow-beings. My mind and spirit have been and are being continually shaped by the opinions, attitudes and behaviour of others. Reflection on a single fact would be enough to show the extent of our involvement in the lives of one another; this is the fact of the dependence of our mental and spiritual life on language.

I believe with Wittgenstein that language is essentially social. The mind of the civilized man, as known to us, depends as much, if not more, on the use of language as it does on its association with a body. Now all life that is lived with the help of language, which is symbol-bound, is potentially sharable. This does not imply a denial of privacy in respect of our mental states; in this matter I agree with Prof. Lewis as against Wittgenstein and Gilbert Ryle. My purpose in stressing the fact of the essential dependence of mental life on language is different. I want to assert that some of the most important forms of our spiritual life are those that we are anxious to share with others. This is true of all configurations of perceptions and ideas embodied in works of art and thought. Viewed in this perspective the question as to the value and importance to be attached to the individual *vis-a-vis* society appears in a different light. Prof. Lewis states: 'there is no proper bearer of any worth other than the individual'. According to him the 'Soul of a people' is a metaphor. But is it? There is a sense in which the great classics in literature and philosophy, taken together, are more valuable than the life of any single philosopher, however gifted. The assertion that the individual is the source of all values is only a half truth. Certainly, it is the individual who produces the works of art and thought, but these productions remain worthless until

their validity or worth is attested to or sanctioned by the collective mind of the elite in a particular field. True, the individual adds to the stock of our precious cultural heritage through his creative work, it is also true that the individual frequently makes new contributions by questioning and rebelling against the tradition. But it is equally true that the individual's fine sense of discrimination, and even his rebellious attitude, derive, in the last analysis, from his peculiar reading and interpretation of the several traditions to which he has been exposed.

For this reason I find it difficult to go all the way with Prof. Lewis in attaching importance to the individual and his individuality. And here I am inclined to disagree with his assessment of the eastern religious tradition in general and Buddhism in particular. It seems to me that all the higher religions, including Christianity no less than Buddhism, are hostile to cherishing and attaching importance to the ego or the ego sense. The self as known to and cherished by us is declared to be a phenomenal entity by the Advaita Vedānta. Buddhism, taking a more extreme view, liquidates the notion of the metaphysical self for the reason that, according to it, men and women cannot finally overcome selfishness if they continue to believe in the separate identity of the self. According to Indian religious consciousness a truly spiritual or religious man is a man of detachment, a *sthita-prajña*, who cares little for the self involved in historical time. The greatest thinkers and writers, according to the present writer, are those who pursue excellence in their respective fields for its own sake, without any consideration of any reward in terms of money or power or fame that their works may bring. The true fulfilment of individuality lies in this that we dedicate our noblest perceptions and thoughts and actions to the cause of the moral and cultural progress of mankind. This is the teaching of the *Bhagavadgītā* cast in a humanistic mould.

Philosophy, Dialogue and Dialectic

N. A. Nikam

Inquiry

1. Philosophy may be clearly defined as Inquiry. If there is no Inquiry, there is neither Science nor philosophy; indeed, no knowledge. To inquire is to ask questions. If philosophy is what philosophers 'do', then, the only thing which philosophers 'do', which others do not do, is to ask questions. Asking questions is a continuous activity of the philosopher. Philosophy "arises" as a question and "lives" as a dialogue. And as philosophy "lives" as a dialogue and "arises" from a question, it follows that a philosophical question alone gives rise to a dialogue. But a dialogue does not arise merely because a question is asked. As not all questions are philosophical questions, he that asks a *philosophical* question is a philosopher. This means that no one becomes a philosopher unless he is already a philosopher, although he may deny that he is a philosopher. But the philosopher is not a member of a "class", and philosophy is no "profession". The philosopher is a "classless individual".

Dialogue

2. Although philosophy "arises" as a question and "lives" as a dialogue, philosophy as a dialogue does not "arise" merely because a question is asked. It arises because a question is questioned. Indeed, a question ought to be questioned. For, he that asks a question ought to become aware of what he asks. Of the two, asking merely a question, and questioning a question, the second is more important, and he that questions a question is called in the *Kaṭha* upaniṣad, "a good questioner", and a "good questioner" ought to be hailed and welcomed, even as a good man is hailed and welcomed in Heaven. A significant dialogue in the *Chāndogya* upaniṣad — between the teacher, *Prajapati* and his two pupils, *Indra* from among the gods, and *Virocana* from among the demons — illustrates not he that goes away satisfied, as *Virocana* does, but he that is dissatisfied and returns to the teacher for more inquiry, saying, "I see no good in this," makes a dialogue possible. This means that a dialogue is not only between a teacher and a pupil but what goes on in the mind of the pupil with himself. Inquiry therefore is *self-inquiry*. And he that is involved in *self-inquiry* gets the *authority* to question the teacher; and as there is no teacher in the upaniṣadic tradition who is not himself involved in *self-inquiry*, he alone, it seems, has the authority to question the question. This means that it is not easy either to ask a question or to question a question.

3. All this could be summed up by saying that he that asks a question does not ask out of mere ignorance but out of *awakened* ignorance. No question asked in mere ignorance is ever answered. The Buddha did not. Therefore to ask a question is already to *be* awakened.

4. But what is *awakened* ignorance? To know that you do not know? No; not enough. On the contrary, it is to say, as the pupil did in the *Kena* upaniṣad, "Not that I know well; nor that I know not at all". As philosophy is awakened ignorance, its function is to awaken ignorance: "Awake", "Arise" as the *Kaṭha* upaniṣad says. No one can "Arise" who is not "Awakened". And if he is "Awakened", it is unnecessary to say to him, "Arise". To "Awaken" ignorance is to *teach*, and the philosopher is, essentially, a teacher. He teaches you to become aware of that which you *think* you do not know, but which, in fact, you know and have never denied, viz. the Self, *ātman* as the upaniṣads say. Therefore there are two questions involved in "Awakening": (a) what is that knowledge by which you *know* that you do not know; and, (b) what is that *That*, which, in fact, you know but you *think* you do not know. Philosophy as *awakened* ignorance inquires into *That* to which it is awakened and, as the *Kaṭha* says, "stops not".

5. In a significant dialogue between father and son in the *Taittirīya* upaniṣad, the son asks his father, not a question merely, but to *teach* him *Brahman*. The father teaches him *Brahman* and says thus: "That, verily, from which or by which beings are born, that by which when born they live, that into which, when departing they enter. That, seek to know. That is *Brahman*". Matter, it seems, satisfies this definition. For, the father says: "For truly, beings are born from Matter, when born, they live by Matter, and into Matter, when departing, they enter". Matter, it seems, fully satisfies the definition of *Brahman*, and the son should have stopped with it, and said, *Brahman* is matter. But he did not. The son returned to his father after having examined the definition saying that he was not satisfied, and asked his father to teach him more. How did the son know that he should not stop with Matter? Had he already the knowledge of *Brahman* into which he was inquiring and went to his father seeking instruction from him? It seems, therefore, that, in a very significant sense he that inquires *knows*; otherwise how or into what will he inquire? If, indeed, the son had stopped with Matter as *Brahman*, he would have been the founder of Dialectical Materialism long before Dialectical Materialism was founded. But Indian philosophy lost a good chance!

6. Since a dialogue proper arises only when a question is questioned, a dialogue is or ought to be a "giving and taking reason". But this is not often the case. Very often, a dialogue is a cross examination only, a "taking" of reason from others, and not a "giving" of

reason. This is so even in the upaniṣads. In the *Bṛhad-Āraṇyaka* upaniṣad, *Yājñavalkya* performs a "feat", as it were, in standing up to a plethora of questions asked, and silences all his questioners by his answers. Here is an example: "Yājñavalkya", said he (the questioner), "since everything here is pervaded by death, since everything here is overcome by death, by what means does the sacrificer free himself from the reach of death?" (*Yājñavalkya* said) "By the *hotṛ* priest, by fire, by speech, verily, speech is the *hotṛ* of sacrifice. That which is this speech is this fire. This (fire) is *hotṛ*. This is freedom, this is complete freedom". (III. 1.3.).

Dialectic : "Giving and Taking Reason"

7. In Book VII of *The Republic* of Plato, Socrates asks a question: "But do you imagine that men who are unable to give and take reason will have the knowledge which we require of them?" Socrates seems to mean that: (a) that there is a knowledge that is *required* of some men; and, (b) that those who are "unable to give and take reason" are not those that have that knowledge. This implies that there are at least *some* who are able "to give and take reason" and therefore have "the knowledge that is required of them". Otherwise, Socrates would be talking merely of a "class", the "class" of those who are both able to give and take reason and have the knowledge that is required of them. There may be such a "class" but it may have *no* "members". Therefore, there is philosophy *because* there are *some* who are philosophers. May this be the reason why the upaniṣads, for instance, refer invariably to the "Knowers of *Brahma*", "Knowers of *Brahma* say so", *yad brahmadevā vadanti*, as they say.

8. But when Socrates refers to men who are "unable to give and take reason" does he mean "giving and taking reason" is an "ability", a kind of "skill" that is either acquired or taught? No. Socrates denies that it is a "skill". Socrates distinguishes those who "give and take reason" from those who are "skilled reasoners". Socrates refers to the "skilled" mathematician to distinguish him from the "dialectician" who alone "gives and takes reason". He says, "For I imagine that you would not regard the skilled mathematician as a dialectician". But it is not impossible for a mathematician to be a dialectician; what he says is: "Very few mathematicians whom I have ever known are reasoners in that sense". But the distinction is not merely between mathematicians on the one hand and the dialectician on the other. Socrates refers to a general distinction between "giving and taking reason" and having only "skill" in reasoning. A lawyer also has a "skill" in reasoning but he is not like the mathematician one who "gives and takes reason".

9. Socrates distinguishes between the art or science which is "skill" in reasoning and that of "giving and taking reason" which is

neither an art nor a science. This is implied. And it seems to follow that the knowledge that is "required" of *some* men is not obtained or attained by mere "skill" in reasoning. Like Socrates, the Upaniṣad refers to the same futility, *naiṣā tarkeṇa matir āpaneyā*; "not by mere skill in Logic is (this Knowledge) attained or obtained". (*Kaṭha*. 1.2.9.).

10. It does not follow that "skill" in reasoning is unnecessary. "Skill" in reasoning is necessary but is not "sufficient". And it does not mean that "skill" in reasoning is not to be acquired. In attaining to that knowledge that is "required", what is "acquired" — for instance, "skill" in reasoning — is required to be *renounced*, if we may say so. In the same spirit as Socrates, the Upaniṣad requires us to "renounce learning", *pāṇḍityam nirvidya*: The "knowledge" that is "required" of *some* men is neither "learning" according to the Upaniṣads, nor mere "skill" in reasoning according to Socrates.

11. But how is one "to give and take reason"? How is one "to give and take reason" by *renouncing* "skill" in reasoning? By what should one "give and take reason" by renouncing "reasoning"?

12. Socrates means that the dialectician *knows* how to "give and take reason". How? On *how* he awakens reason. This seems circular. This means that there is no "theory" on how to awaken reason. The dialectician awakens reason *somehow*. How? Perhaps by a question as Socrates did. Perhaps by a blow as the Zen Masters do. Perhaps by asking the pupil to live with the teacher as the Upaniṣadic teachers do. But by no particular means.

13. There is no particular means by which the dialectician awakens reason or "gives and takes reason". Why? Because, the dialectical mind is a "comprehensive" mind; so says Socrates. A dialectical mind does *not* say "only this". It says, "Not-this" or "Not-this alone". But does the comprehensive dialectical mind awaken reason even or only by reason? As it renounced "skill" in reasoning so it may renounce even reason to awaken reason. If the comprehensive, dialectical mind says, "Not-this" or "Not even this", then, the comprehensive dialectical mind makes nothing "absolute" in its quest of what is Absolute.

14. Man is *ātma* said Gandhi. But the pure, living spirit that is in him is not awakened, he said, by reason alone. It has to be awakened through *conscious* suffering that the "pure in heart" take upon themselves. If so, conscious suffering is also part of "giving and taking reason". And he that does it is also a dialectician.

Two uses of "therefore"

15. What is using reason? *Using* reason in any form mathematical or dialectical, is using a "therefore". But a dialectical use of "therefore" is wider than a mathematical use of it. G. E. Moore once said that the notion of "follows from" is wider in philosophy

than the use of "follows from" in Logic. Why should the "therefore" as a conclusion be related to a number of premisses as in a syllogism? In Descartes *Cogito*, the "therefore" is only between two premisses. It would be absurd to reduce it to a syllogism.

16. But the question is whether the dialectical use of "therefore" restricted to only "theoretical" or "speculative" reason? Is there no "therefore" behind the Categorical Imperative of Practical Reason. Kant states the Categorical Imperative as a Commandment: "So act as to will thy law universal". Kant's statement seems to imply that there is no "therefore" behind a Commandment. But this is not the case in the Commandments of the Practical Reason in the *Gītā*. The *Gītā* does not merely say: "Arise for battle" but, "therefore, arise for battle", *tasmād yuddhyasva*.

17. But is the "therefore" of action in action? No. The "therefore" of action is not in action but in Being: You *are* a Member of the Kingdom of Ends, *therefore*, So act as to will thy law Universal. The dialectician discovers the ultimate ground of "giving and taking reason" in Being, in the nature of man's Being. The reason for *Karma* is in *Yoga*; therefore, *Karma-Yoga*.

The "Practice" of Philosophy

18. The philosopher "gives and takes reason" in the way he lives, and the way he lives is the "practice" of philosophy. And in order to know how a philosopher "practices" philosophy, we have to keep him under "Observation" as a doctor does his patient, and see as the *Gītā* says, "how he sits, how he talks, moves about, and how he behaves". The politician said Plato succeeds in every day life but fails in times of crisis. But not the philosopher. The philosopher arises like the soldier in times of crisis. Philosophy arises from the "practice" of the philosopher. And the philosopher's "practice" of philosophy appears rather unusual to the world. For, the philosopher as Socrates said in the *Phaedo* "practises" death: The philosopher "is ever pursuing death and dying" but "will not take his own life". This makes a difference. For, death that "pursues" others is "pursued" by the philosopher. The philosopher considers death "desirable" because he "desires" it.

19. But what is the death that the philosopher desires? "What is the nature of this death that the philosopher desires" asked Socrates? Now, what is death as we know it? Death as we know it is a silence which is a sorrow. And what is a sorrow is also a fear. Is this the death that the philosopher desires and pursues? It cannot be. But the death — 'this death' — the philosopher desires and pursues is also a silence, but not a silence that is a sorrow and fear. It is a silence of the "mind", *manas*: "*atman* is realised with *mṛta manas*" "dead mind", said Ramana Maharishi who *practised* "this" silence. It was

not a silence that was a failure of speech or mere speechlessness but a silence that communicated through silence. It was a silence that affirmed the truth, *mouna vākya prakāṣita tatvam*: "It was a silence that proclaimed the truth". The inner silence that the philosopher practises is not a mere absence, an absence of sorrow or fear, although "theories" of liberation in the Schools of Indian Philosophy have spoken in negative terms. "This death" that the "true philosopher" desires and pursues must be a *Happiness*: "Why, having had the desire of death all his life long, should he repine at the arrival of that which he has been always pursuing and desiring?". This is the question.

20. But as Simmias said to Socrates, the World will laugh at the philosopher and say, "Well, he 'deserved' the death that he 'desired'". But the philosopher also laughs: He laughs at his own death. He that desired and pursued and practised death is an *observer* of his own death? How could that be? Then, what is it that dies? And so, when Crito asked Socrates: "In what way shall we bury you Socrates?" Socrates replied: "In any way you like, but you must catch *me*, the real *me*. Be of good cheer, my dear Crito, and say that you are burying my body only, and do with that whatever is usual, and what you think best".

21. No one conquered logic but Logic in the end conquered him, said McTaggart. The same may be said of the Logic of *Māyā*: No one conquered *Māyā* but *Māyā* in the end conquered him. Philosophy as the pursuit of truth in which philosophers are at one with each other is veiled by the *Māyā* of disagreement. Like the power of *Māyā*, the disagreement of philosophers "conceals" and "distorts" the unity of search for truth. But greater than the *Māyā* of disagreement is the greater *Māyā* of agreement; for it does not follow that if there is agreement there is truth. For, if illusion and error are universal, illusion and error would appear as phenomenal truth. The Vedānta warns us against this. It is "best" for philosophy that philosophers do not agree. On the other hand, will philosophers *be* to disagree if they do not agree that the "best" is to *be*. The "practice" of philosophers is therefore better than their "theories". And it is "best" for the world if it follows the "practice" of philosophers.

The author seems to suggest that philosophy is *diversity* in theory but *unity* in practice. This is quite true. In fact, philosophy, in the *existential* meaning of the term as well as in its historical practice, is the disagreement of philosophers. Philosophy is not merely a 'doctrine' or a 'science'. Aristoteles says that philosophy is an '*epistēmē*', i.e. a science; but for him, the science par excellence is *metaphysics*, the inquiry into 'being' *qua* 'being'. We probably all agree on this definition of metaphysical 'science'. But philosophy is not *only* metaphysics. There are many branches of philosophy: logic as well as esthetics, epistemology, philosophy of religion, philosophy of history, etc. There is also a *personal attitude* of the philosopher towards philosophy and towards life: a sort of choice or self-projection.

I think, therefore, that in philosophy there is ample room for personal opinion. Philosophers should, *de iure*, agree on some main philosophical tenets, for instance, in *logic*; but, no doubt, they should respect different opinions (*doxa*!) of others resulting from different existential commitments. Truth cannot be reduced to a mere logical or phenomenological evidence. Because of its inexhaustible immensity, Truth has many facets and it always remains covered by a kind of elusive shadow. In Indian tradition, the delusive side of knowledge is called *māyā*. This veils and reveals, covers and uncovers. The human mind can never grasp Truth in its fullness, unless it reaches a superhuman stage above the normal conditions of earthy life.

It seems to me that the disagreement of philosophers reflects all the 'tricks' of *māyā* but also the continuous effort towards a *conquest* of at least some partial Truth. Even in the most skeptical philosopher there is a hidden longing for Truth. Skepticism is never a *complete* mistrust of reason; it is, probably, similar to disappointed love—a love which, in spite of everything, remains a love for wisdom, a *philosophia*.

The Witness (SĀKṢIN), Source of Thought and Action

R. V. De Smet

1. The Problem of the Central Seer in India

The question of the origin of thought and action, of the hub of the ory and practice, is an old philosophical question. And where the difference and contrast between the two is, as in India, perceived very sharply a doubt easily arises whether they have at all a common source and, hence, whether they can ever be reconciled. The antonymic expressions, *jñāna-ajñāna*, *vidyā-avidyā*, etc., in which non-knowledge really means action, or *karma-akarma*, etc., in which non-action means knowledge, testify to this feeling of contrast as much as the classical *pravṛtti-nivṛti* (activity-inactivity). *kiṃ karma kiṃ akarm'eti, kavayo'py-atra mohitāḥ*: "What is work? What is non-work? Herein even sages are perplexed," remarks Krishna in Bh. G., iv, 16, while *Īśā Up.*, 9 has the following statement which puzzles even Śaṅkara: "Blind darkness enter they who reverence unwisdom; into a darkness blinder yet (go they) who delight in wisdom" (*andhaṃ tamaḥ praviśanti ye' vidyām upāsate tato bhūya iva te tamo yau vidyāyām ratāḥ*). Often their contrast is understood as an opposition between works, which bind to this phenomenal world, and knowledge of the Ultimate (whether Fulness: *Pūrṇa* or Void: *Sūnya*), which delivers from it. Or works and their fruits are reserved to the finite self and wisdom to the transcendent Self, as in the parable of the "two birds, clinging to the same tree, the one eating of the sweet fruit, the other eating nothing but looking on, intent" (*Muṇḍaka Up.*, III, i, 1.)

Is the agent, then, different from the knower? Is the first finite and the second infinite? The variations of the wheel-analogy show how the centre of man is sought at various levels of depth. In B.A.U., I, v, 15, the hub of the psychic wheel is the finite *ātman*. But, in II, v, 15, the wheel is psychic-cosmic and its hub is the infinite *Ātman*. Similarly, it is the highest *Prāṇa* in *Chānd Up.*, VII, xv, 1 and the greatest *Puruṣa* in *Praśna Up.*, VI, 6. Finally, in *Śvet. Up.*, I, 6, the wheel is the universe, its impeller is the one God, and the finite *ātman* flutters as a wild goose (*haṁsa*) about that wheel until favoured (*juṣṭa*) by God it passes to immortality.

A similar alternance of levels of centrality is found in the Upanishadic and later texts concerning *ahamkāra*, the ego-sense or ego-principle. In classical Sāṅkhya, it is the chief axis of individual activity and of cosmic evolution. As such, it contrasts with the *puruṣa* which is

the inactive pure principle of awareness. In Epic texts concerned with spiritual values rather than ontology, the true conqueror is he who has become "without *ahamkāra* and possessed of *ātman*" (*nirahamkāra: ātmavān: Mahābhārata*, 5,83,37.)

Thus in diverse contexts the problem of finding the true centre of man arises again and again, the alternatives being chiefly three, the ego-principle, the individual *ātman* (under various names,) and the absolute *Ātman-Brahman*. Apart from the sweeping Buddhist solution, which is that man has absolutely no such centre, one finds exclusive as well as conciliatory solutions. A refined example of the latter is given by Krishna in Bh. G., iv, 18: *karmany akarma yaḥ paśyed-akarmaṇi ca karma yaḥ sa ... yuktaḥ*: "He who sees worklessness in work, and work in worklessness, is truly integrated." Rāmānuja, commenting on this passage, notes that *akarma* means wisdom, knowledge of the *ātman*, and further explains: "he who sees actions as being in their performance conformed to wisdom, because they inhere in the very essence of the self, and who sees wisdom as being conformed to action, because it indwells it, is well integrated."

A solution of this type has generally been accepted by all Vedāntins though with variations dependent on their different affiliations. In terms of this solution, the notion of *sākṣin*, 'witness', is important. In the Upanishads and in Śaṅkara's *advaita*, it designates the Absolute as as the inner ruler and illuminer of our very knowing. But in the writings of Madhva, it is the very knowing ego of man, the immediate seer of experience, who "is called *sākṣin* because he sees directly (*sākṣāt*)" (G. Bh., ix, 18.) It seems to me that this twofold understanding of *sākṣin* is the Indian counterpart of the twofold conception of the agent-intellect in the history of European philosophy. And I believe it may be profitable to compare them and eventually to derive from their convergence indications which may contribute to the elaboration of our common theme, "Philosophy: Theory and Practice."

2. The Problem of the Agent-Intellect in the West

For Aristotle, the faculty of intellection is surely different from the senses since, unlike them, it is absolutely universal in its scope. Being "apt to become in a way everything," namely, intentionally and immaterially, it cannot itself be organic but must be immaterial (cf. *Peri Psychēs*, iii, 429a.) And if it is thus transcendent and separate (*chōristheis*) from matter, it is obviously incomplex, incorruptible and impassible.

Yet, the intellect (*nous*) is not by essence in possession of its specific perfection which is to know the truth of all reality. Rather, it is in the beginning of each man's life a pure capacity which needs to receive a mass of information if it is to fulfil itself. As such it resembles a blank slate or tablet (*tabula rasa*) on which nothing has yet been written.

It has the potentiality of a receptive potency. As such it is called by Aristotle *nous pathêtikos*, the "possible" intellect.

However, the immateriality of the intellect forbids that it should be purely receptive. Besides, we are directly aware that we are active in our intellections, that we interpret the data of the senses somehow as a reader discovers by his own skill the meaning of a line of alphabetical signs. The *nous* is not only potency but power. In the words of Aristotle, "the *nous* is in one respect similar [to matter] inasmuch as it can become everything, yet in another respect it is similar [to an active cause] inasmuch as it can make everything [actually intelligible]" (*Ibid.*, 430a.) To this active or actuating intellect, Alexander of Aphrodisias will (around 200 A.D.) give the name of *nous poiêtikos*, agent intellect. Aristotle declares that "this intellect is separate, impassible and unmixed [with matter]," three attributes which it shares with the *nous pathêtikos*, but, unlike the latter, it is not made to pass from potency into act since, being an active power, "it is by nature ever in act" (*Ibid.*)

These lines, though slightly obscured by their concision, offer much less difficulty than the following ones: "Once it is separated [from matter by death, the intellect] is only what it itself is (*chôristheis d'esti monon touth' oper esti*) and this alone is immortal and perpetual; it does not, however, remember because it is impassible; as to the passive intellect it is corruptible and without it the soul cannot acquire intellection" (*Ibid.*) What is this passive intellect which is said to be corruptible? Those who identified it with the *nous pathêtikos* concluded logically that the only immortal intellect must be the agent intellect and that the latter must be a separate substance rather than a function of the soul. Others, however, refused this identification on the rather solid ground that Aristotle had demonstrated only shortly before that the *nous pathêtikos* is immaterial and impassible. For them the term 'passive intellect' was now used in a secondary sense as designating the imagination or inner sense which, indeed, is organic and corruptible and provides the sense-data without which the intellect cannot act.

Let us review rapidly the opinions adopted by the commentators of Aristotle. For Alexander the Aphrodisian, the agent intellect is completely distinct from man. For Themistius (ivth cent. A.D.), it is of man and is his highest form but to the question, whether it is one or many, his answer is not clear but seems to favour unicity which would explain how men can communicate and commune in truth. Around 1000 A.D., Ibn Sinâ (Avicenna) distinguishes between the possible intellect which is a functional part of the human soul and immortal like it, and the agent intellect which is one for all men, highest of the separate forms, and called the "Giver of forms." In the mean time, St Augustine had taught that the human intellect cannot function unless it is actually illumined by the absolute God

who is the perfect and living Truth "more interior to me than my innermost and superior to my uppermost" (*Confessions*.) Hence, we find some medieval Augustinians, like William of Auvergne, Roger Bacon and Roger Marston, all of the xiii century, interpreting Ibn Sinâ in the light of Augustine and declaring that God is himself the one agent intellect of all men.

On the other hand, Ibn Roshd (Averroes) understands Aristotle to mean that the whole intellect, possible and agent, is a single separate substance, active in man and responsible for his intellections but different from him. It alone is immortal, not man who is totally perishable. This doctrine invades the Christian universities during the xiii century and raises in Paris an important controversy between its chief defender, Siger of Brabant, and the opposed party of Aristotelians represented by St. Bonaventure, St. Albert the Great and St. Thomas Aquinas. It is a sign of the sincerity of these great men that Siger lets himself be convinced, on the chief points of this dispute, of the rightness of his adversaries' position.

As in India, we have therefore in Europe an enquiry pursued century after century concerning the ultimate nature of the intellectual subject. Here also it turns around the interpretation of some authoritative statements which philosophers consider in the light of their overall convictions and personal experience. And here also the positions taken oscillate between what we may call theocentrism and humanocentrism. Let us now for the sake of a better comparison between the two developments consider for a while the positions of St. Bonaventure and St. Thomas before passing on to Śaṅkara and Madhva.

3. The Solutions of St Bonaventure and St Thomas

For Bonaventure, the diverse aspects of our intellectual knowledge are explained by the existence of a double order of complementary activities, namely, the lower abstractive ones, and the higher intuitive ones.

The order of abstraction concerns the knowledge of contingent beings. In acquiring this knowledge our passive or possible intellect is aided by our agent intellect which is by nature such a light that it can reveal the intelligible signification of the sense-data and representations provided by the inner sense and thus actuate the passive intellect. Agent and passive intellects are twin functions of our single rational soul.

But the truths we acquire in this fashion are seen by us to possess characters of necessity, immutability and eternity (already recognised by Aristotle and emphasised later on by St Augustine) which cannot be explained by the contingency of their origin. This intuition of truths in their "eternal reasons" or in their absoluteness is to be acknow-

ledged as a human participation in divine knowledge and, therefore, as the effect of a *divine illumination*. According to Bonaventure, this illumination is an "immediate contact" which makes God present to our intellect as the living Truth regulating our judgments and as the sovereign Intelligence moving our intellects: "regulans et movens." It is not clear how this is not equivalent to an intuition of the divine essence, since for Bonaventure as for the large majority of Christian teachers God's simplicity excludes any real distinction between his essence and his activity whether internal or causal. But the term he uses "*contuitio*" indicates his mind: it means the indirect apprehension of the reality conjoined with the intuited object. In this case, of God as in illumining "contact" with our intellect and as the cause signified by the divine mark of necessity upon the truths we perceive as such.

Due to this intuitive aspect of our knowledge we apprehend directly the first principles of intellection and the most general rules of moral activity, our soul as a spiritual ego, and at least *contuitively* God as the inner energizer of our soul, "Light more interior to the soul than the soul itself" (*Lux proxima animae, etiam plus quam ipsa sibi.*) Thus, owing to the very nature of intellection, we are in possession of a basic mysticism which will spontaneously tend to perfect itself through faith in divine revelation and the welcoming of grace-induced supernatural mysticism.

In this doctrine, the subject of human intellection is neither exclusively man or his soul, nor God, but man's soul interiorly influenced by God. It is so not because the soul would be bereft of its necessary instruments — on the contrary, indeed, it is endowed with its own functions called in due Aristotelian idiom possible or passive intellect and agent intellect — but because it is impossible for a creature to act apart from the actual influence of God who, as Creator, is not only the author of its origin but its total cause.

He is therefore the source of our moral life too. Here, he moves and regulates our will, indirectly by illumining it *via* the intellect, directly by "informing" it. Indeed, the necessity which marks the basic principles of moral action reflects here also something immutable, namely, the absolute goodness of God. "How could our will incline directly towards any moral good without attaining in some way the supreme goodness?" (*Impossibile est quod affectus noster directe feratur in bonum quin aliquo modo attingat summam bonitatem.*) The divine influence, besides illumining our action, internally shapes and "informs" our will in the only manner congenial to this power, which is the seat of freedom, namely, by inclining it constantly towards the various forms of moral virtue. In the exercise of moral freedom, intellect and will work in close collaboration, the first to make the practical judgment of the good, the second to take the autonomous option.

Bonaventure is a voluntarist rather than an intellectualist insofar as for him wisdom, apart from being conditioned by moral purification and self-discipline, demands to perfect itself in love. Indeed, in its ultimate stage of achievement it is not a mere integration of the subject in isolation but his total self-surrender to the goodness of the divinely personal Real discovered in perfect intuition.

St Thomas agrees largely with this teaching of his franciscan colleague. In his pamphlet against Siger, he establishes that each man knows through his own intellect. Siger, on the contrary, was teaching that all men know through a single separate intellect, namely, the lowest one in the hierarchy of subsistent intellects intermediary between man and God. Apart from marshalling the authority of three great commentators, Themistius (unknown to Siger,) Al-Ghazzālī and Ibn Sīnā, St. Thomas argues mainly from the testimony of consciousness which assures each man that, when he knows, it is he himself who knows and that this would be impossible if he did not possess an intellect, at least a possible intellect, of his own. In his *Summa Theologica*, I, 79, 3-5, he argues in similar fashion to the possession by each man of an agent intellect of his own without which his immediate awareness that he is the active knower of his own knowledge would be stultified.

However, in the same place, he first establishes that man's intellectual soul cannot be the absolutely primary source of its own knowing for it is too imperfect. It must, therefore, receive its power, direction and movement of intellection from the Intellect ever in act and absolute, and this can only be God himself. In this sense, we must agree that a single transcendent Agent-Intellect presides over all the intellections of creatures. But this is quite consistent with the existence of a dependent creaturely agent-intellect in each man, for the transcendent Cause of all never substitutes for the secondary causes but rather assures their dependent sufficiency. Hence, the human knower is really the author of his intellection but he is not its ultimate source. Similarly, in the order of free activity, his personal autonomy and responsibility are warranted by direct awareness, yet he is moved even in his free options (but not pre-determined) by the prime Mover, God. In his notion of the prime Mover, St Thomas marks his distance from Ibn Rushd and his closeness to St Augustine for whom the creative impelling maintains the proper activity of each human agent and safeguards especially the liberty of his will.

Thus the parallel teachings of St Bonaventure and St Thomas assure us that we are true agents but only because we are energized interiorly by God, the absolute Knower in every knowing and the transcendent Agent in every action. We shall now pass on to the teachings of Śaṅkara and Madhva.

4. The Solutions of Śaṅkara and Madhva

Śaṅkara puts the whole of his emphasis on divine illumination. Commenting on *Br. Ār. Up.*, IV, iv, 18: "They who know the Life of life, the Eye of the eye, the Ear of the ear and the Mind of the mind, have realised the ancient primordial *Brahman*," he writes, "It is only as inhabited by the energy of Brahman that the eye and other *indriyas* have the power of seeing, etc.; by themselves, divested of other light of the *Ātman* which is pure Intelligence, they are like wood or clods of earth." He insists, indeed, that "their aggregate differing in character neither from sound, etc. nor from any object of cognition cannot have the nature of a perceiver...but man discerns only through the *Ātman*, which is of the nature of consciousness and is altogether distinct from that aggregate. Just as that is fire by which the metal burns" (*Kaṭha Up. Bhāṣya*, IV, 3.)

This transcendent illuminer "is not known through a distinctive function of its own..., but from the activity of all the senses combined" (*Kena Up. Bh.*, 1, 2.) "In the case of all sentient beings, such as *Brahmā*, etc., which are other [than the *Ātman*], actual awareness (*cetayitṛtva*) is due to the Consciousness of the *Ātman*" (*Kaṭha Up. Bh.*, V, 13.) "It is by its varied light reaching the effects that the effulgence of this *Brahman* is self-established" (*Ib.*, V, 15.)

"Has this Seer, then, two kinds of sight, the one eternal and invisible, and the other transitory and visible? — Yes. The second is proved through experience: some people are blind and others are not... The first is proved by such *Śruti*-texts as, 'There is no intermission of the sight of the Seer,' and also through inference for even a blind man sees jars, etc. in dreams; this shows that the sight of the Seer is not lost with the loss of the other kind of sight. Through that unfailing eternal sight, which is his essence and is called the self-effulgent light (*svayam-jyotiḥ*), the Seer of sight always sees the other, transitory, sight whether in dream as impression (*vāsanā*) or in the waking state as idea (*pratyayā-rūpam*). Such being the case, sight itself is his essence, as heat is the essence of fire, and there exists no other conscious seer (*cetano draṣṭā*), such as Kaṇāda maintains, over and above the sight" (*Br. Ār. Up. Bh.*, I, iv, 10.)

How does the unique Seer illumine the mind? Simply by his innermost presence as spiritual light within the mind itself: "The light of consciousness is the illuminer (*avabhāsaka*) of *manas* ... because it is its controller (*niyantrtvāt*), being the source of its light. The inner *Ātman* being innermost to all objects, *manas* cannot move towards it. *Manas* itself is able to think only when it is illumined by the light of consciousness residing inside" *Kena Up. Bh.*, I, 6.)

We may conclude with Śaṅkara that "whatever is perceived is perceived by the light of the *Brahman* only whereas the *Brahman* as self-luminous is not perceived by means of any other light. *Brahman*

manifests everything else but is not manifested by some other thing" (*Brahma-Sūtra Bhāṣya*, I, iii, 22.)

In the Upaniṣads, the fact of divine illumination is inculcated clearly and the *Brahman-Ātman* is often called the Seer or by some similar appellation. The equivalent term *Sākṣin*, Witness, is used only rarely and this rarity is reflected in the writings of Śaṅkara, their commentator. On the contrary, in the writings of Madhva, *sākṣin* becomes a key-term. Here, however, it no longer designates the Lord but the *jīva* or *jīvātman*, i.e., the individual as a conscious centre. Madhva expatiates on this *sākṣin*'s experience of truth, his power to reflect upon his evidences, his innate grasp of "pure" objects, his functioning as the very "essential organ" of man.

Madhva as a thorough realist starts from ordinary experience, common to all whether profane (*laukika*) or religious (*vaidika*). He focuses on the experiencing of this experience and, hence, on its conscious subject. The latter is the witness of his own history, of his actual experiences as well as of his memories. His *anusandhāna* is his awareness of whatever is his (*svīyatayā-nubhava*). It is, therefore, synthetic (as to the present) and retrospective (as to the remembered past.) It has a direct evidence which no argument can take away. As the immediate witness of his own development, the experiencer realises himself as a concrete being, enjoying conscious continuity, and part of a real world from which it receives objective data through his *manas* or inner sense (*antaḥkaraṇa*).

All those data and all the *vṛttis* or modifications of *manas* are, like *manas* itself, material and unconscious (*jaḍa*). Only through the luminosity of the spirit (*cetana*) can they become objects (never subject) of knowledge. The knowledge of these *vṛttis* (*vṛtti-jñāna*) implies immediately the essential knowledge (*svarūpa-jñāna*) proper to the spirit. This knowledge is *sva-prakāśa*, self-luminous, luminous to itself and by itself. It is, therefore, the very characteristic of a personal subject; otherwise, the reflective *sva* would make no sense. "Since this subject sees immediately, he is called *sākṣin*, witness" (*sākṣād-ikṣata-iti sākṣī*: *Gitā Bhāṣya*, IX, 18.)

Madhva like the other Indian thinkers believes that seeing is produced by a light which emanates from the eyes towards the objects. In the same way, he conceives the *sākṣin*'s immediate knowledge (*aparokṣa-jñāna*) as due to the illumining power of this *sākṣin*. This is why besides the sense organs, which he calls material organs (*prākṛte-ndriya*), he designates the *sākṣin* as the spiritual organ pertaining to the very essence of the knower of truth (*pramāṇa-svarūpe-ndriya*); cf. *Pramāṇa-paddhati*, Dharwar ed., I, para. 24. As such it is very much like the Aristotelian agent-intellect which is also a power reaching and illumining the data presented by the material senses. As such it is also essentially functional and relative to a world of real objects. Thus it

deserves its name of *sākṣin* in a more proper way than the paradoxical *sākṣin* of many Advaitins whose function is to reveal the world of objects as illusory and to grasp ignorance in the form of something real (*bhāva-rūpeṇa*) in order to deny it reality.

Madhva's *sākṣin*, although thus called *indriya*, is not an intentional function possessed by the subject but it is the *jīva* himself considered as knowing and directly aware of his very knowing. His self-knowledge is not the result of an inference, as is taught by the Bhāṭṭas, but an immediate evidence. However, though immediate, this evidence is not simple self-awareness but reflective consciousness. The subject knows himself in the very act of knowing an object, i.e., when it performs as *sākṣin*. The similarity with St Thomas is here so close that it must be mentioned. One of his main theses is that the human soul's self-knowledge is not an intuition in the strictest sense of the term but only a quasi-intuition, namely, a reflective consciousness: "it is when I perceive a stone, etc., that I perceive myself perceiving that stone and am simultaneously aware of the nature of this knowing and of my existence and of my nature" (composite statement from distinct passages.) It is in this way also that for Madhva "the witness always sees his own truth with the greatest certainty" (*svapramāṇyaṁ sadā sākṣī paśyaty-eva suniścayāt: Anuvyākhyāna*, II, 4, 159.) The *sākṣin* knows also some pure objects, distinct from himself but innate to him, such as the *manas*, space and time, which are grasped in his self-apperception. On the level of this apperception no error is possible but only on the level of the *prākṛte-ndriyas* where the conditions of knowledge can be perturbed by disease, darkness, etc.

Besides error, there are also on the level of concrete existence variations, declines and even partial eclipses of the light of the *sākṣin*, in particular in dream and deep sleep. Madhva takes care to explain how the essential awareness of the *sākṣin* is maintained even in these *avasthās*. But he also acknowledges the kind of enslavement of our spirit to matter of which they are obvious signs. They manifest the reality of this bond (*bandha*), and the powerlessness even of the *sākṣin* to attain by himself to liberation. They help the *sākṣin* to discover beyond his relative sovereignty a larger dependence upon the Lord who produces those diverse states and can also free him totally.

Madhva examines also the relative sovereignty of the subject in the domain of volition and action. Though a certain kind of desires are formed in the *manas*, they cannot simply impose themselves to the *sākṣin*. Rather the latter is the source of a superior kind of desire by which he can overrule the lower desires of psychic origin. This reveals his essential freedom. But this freedom is in many regards limited. Again, the experience of these limitations reveals to the subject that "his condition is to have a sovereignty given to him (*datta-svāmya*) by the Lord" (*jīvas-tu tad-datta-svāmyo'vatiṣṭhate*) ... "Hence, to the Lord

alone belong sovereignty and agency in the primary sense of those terms, to the *jīva* on the contrary in a secondary sense only" (*tasmād-īśvarasyai-'va mukhyaṁ svāmyaṁ kartṛtvaṁ ca jīvasya tv-amukhyam-eve-'ti: Nyāya Sudhā*, II, 2, 27.)

This remarkable formula must, no doubt, apply with due modifications to the question of the parts played by the Lord and the *sākṣin* in intellection itself. But I have not yet been able to find this said clearly in Madhva's writings.¹

Conclusion

We find both in the Western (Greek, Muslim and Christian) and in the Indian tradition a strong tendency to refer to the divine plenitude the radical origin of every display of intellectual light and of active power even of free-will. We find also a counter-tendency to assert that man is the origin and centre of his own knowing and willing. Between these two extreme positions are found those who, like Madhva, Bonaventure or Thomas, endeavour to maintain a relative sovereignty of man's intellectual soul under the absolute sovereignty of God. Though apparently a solution of compromise, their position deserves to be studied carefully without losing sight of the arguments of the more exclusive doctrines. It seems to me that in the difficult problem of knowing what we are and what is our centre, it offers signposts which will not lead us astray.

1. In my exposition of Madhva's theory of the *sākṣin*, I have made ample and grateful use of the following: Suzanne Siauve, *La Doctrine de Madhva*, Publications de l'Institut Français d'Indologie, No. 38, Pondicherry, 1968, 397 pages.

Comments —

Nikunja Vihari Banerjee

In this paper Dr. De Smet deals with the problem concerning the "difference and contrast" between thought and action and, correspondingly, between theory and practice. As regards this problem, one method and, as far as I can judge, the only plausible method of dealing with it would consist in considering the nature of thought and action and thereby trying to ascertain whether the two are opposites of each other; two different aspects of one and the same thing, two separate species belonging to the same genus or essentially different but mutually compatible, instead of being opposed to each other. But it may be suggested that another method is available to the same end, which would consist not in considering thought and action in themselves, but in enquiring about their *origin* and thereby ascertaining whether they originate from the same source or not. Be it noted, however, that this method may assume either of two different forms according as the enquiry in question is made *independently* or *historically* and *comparatively*, that is, with reference to the views of philosophers who, on the one hand, have proved historically important and, on the other, belong to different cultural traditions. It needs to be mentioned here that if as a result of the enquiry in either of these two ways, it is discovered that thought and action owe their origin to some common source or other, then it is presumable that the problem under discussion is resolved.

Now as far as Dr. De Smet is concerned, he has adopted the historical and comparative method in dealing with the problem under discussion. This has not only provided him with the opportunity of producing a scholarly and informative paper, but also of conforming to the wishes of the organizers of this Seminar who, as I believe, are particularly interested in the comparative study of problems relating to philosophy, religion and culture.

In the first Section of his paper entitled The Problem of the Central Seer in India, Dr. De Smet tries to show, with reference to several relevant texts in Sanskrit literature, how "the problem of finding the true centre of man arises again and again". But I am not quite sure whether the problem as he has stated it here is the same as the problem of the origin of thought and action. My difficulty here is especially due to Dr. De Smet's observation that "The antonymic expressions *jñāna* — *ajñāna*, *Vidyā* — *avidyā*, etc. in which non-knowledge really means action, and *karma-akarma*, etc. in which non-

action means knowledge, testify to the feeling of contrast.....". In this connection I wish to mention further that Dr. De Smet's observation does not seem to me to be justifiable. After having quoted Rāmānuja's comment on a text from the Gītā, in which Rāmānuja expresses his approval of action performed in conformity with wisdom as well as of wisdom conforming to action, Dr. De Smet observes: "A solution of this type has generally been accepted by *all* Vedāntins though with variations dependent upon their different affiliations". As regards this, my contention is that from the standpoint of 'Sāṃkhya's Advaita Vedānta, wisdom (*vidyā*) as such is not bound up with action (*karma*) but, on the contrary, is free from the shackles of *karma*. This, as far as my knowledge goes, constitutes the essence of the of the Advaita doctrine of *naiṣkarmya*, *karma-sannyāsa* or actionlessness. It should be borne in mind, however, that it is far from this doctrine to regard *karma* as useless. On the contrary, it treats the performance of *karma* (prescribed duties) as obligatory until the dawn of wisdom, but it does hold that once wisdom comes to prevail, the obligatoriness of *karma* automatically lapses.

At this point I wish to refer to Dr. De Smet's most creditable discovery that the Indian views regarding the centre of man are chiefly three according as it is regarded as the ego-principle (*ahaṃkāra*), the individual *ātman* under various names or the absolute Atman-Brahman. As the 'centre of man' according to Dr. De Smet, is the same as the witness (*Sākṣin*), Indian philosophy, in his view, offers three alternative conceptions of witness and, consequently, of an equal number of alternative views of the sources of thought and action. That being so, the question arises whether thought and action may, in all the three cases, have the same meaning or retain the meanings which these words are usually taken to have, despite the fact that their source is open to radical variation from one case to another. As the answer, as far as I can see, is more likely than not to be in the negative, it seems to me that the enquiry about the source or sources of thought and action is of little avail with respect to the treatment of the problem concerning the 'difference and contrast' between thought and action.

Nevertheless, I am thoroughly convinced that Dr. De Smet's penetrating insight into the Indian views of witness has proved to be of use in so far as it has led him to undertake a comparative study of great importance. He has taken into special consideration two of the Indian conceptions of the witness, instead of all the three he has previously distinguished. One of these two is the Upaniṣadic-Advaita conception of the witness as the *Ātman-Brahman* and the other is the Madhva conception of it as the 'knowing ego' in man. And still retaining his conception of the witness as the source of thought and action, he characterizes the witness as agent-intellect. He then tells us that the twofold Indian conception of the agent-intellect, that is,

the Upanādic-Advaita and the Madhva conceptions of it, is the Indian counter-part of the twofold conception "of the agent-intellect in the history of European philosophy".

Dr. De Smet, it is hardly necessary for me to mention, feels perfectly at home in his treatment of "The problem of the Agent-Intellect in the West" which constitutes the second section of his paper. Here he begins with, and dwells at length upon, Aristotle's position with regard to the conception of the agent-intellect. From a review of Aristotle's own writings as well as of the commentaries upon Aristotle's work made by his followers from one generation to another, Dr. De Smet arrives at the following conclusion: "As in India, we have therefore in Europe an enquiry pursued century after century concerning the ultimate nature of the intellectual subject. And here also the positions taken oscillate between what we may call theocentrism and humancentrism (anthropocentrism)". But Dr. De Smet is not thoroughly satisfied with the outcome of his review of the works of Aristotle and his commentators. He therefore proceeds next to the consideration of two outstanding philosophers of the Middle Ages, namely, St. Bonaventure and St. Thomas. And after a fairly detailed discussion of the views of these two medieval philosophers, he arrives at his conclusion regarding their views of what he has called the agent-intellect. The conclusion is as follows: "The parallel teachings of St. Bonaventure and St. Thomas assure us that we are true agents but only because we are energized interiorly by God, the absolute Knower in every knowing and the transcendent agent in every action".

After having told us that both St. Bonaventure and St. Thomas hold the theocentric view of human thought and action, Dr. De Smet comes back to the consideration of the positions of Śaṅkara and Madhva with a view to ascertaining how the views of these two philosophers regarding the agent-intellect compare with those of the two medieval philosophers. He first undertakes an enquiry into Śaṅkara's position. In this he proceeds on the basis of textual evidence and finally comes to attach special importance to a statement made by Śaṅkara in his Commentary on Brahma-Sūtra, which runs as follows: "Whatever is perceived is perceived by the light of the Brahman, whereas the Brahman as self-luminous is not perceived by means of any other light. Brahman manifests everything else, but is not manifested by some other thing". But then, observes Dr. De Smet, the term *Sākṣin* (witness) is very rarely used in the Upaniṣads and this rarity is reflected in Śaṅkara's writings as well.

But very different in this respect is the case with Madhva. Dr. De Smet, points out that *Sākṣin* has become a key-term in the writings of Madhva. Nevertheless, it is important to note—*Sākṣin* is not in this context taken by Madhva to mean the Lord but the *Jīva* or *Jīvātman*. This position of Madhva is the outcome of his analysis of

the perceptual process which, as Dr. De Smet's account of it goes to show, is of great interest and may be of use to those who are concerned with researches on perception and the phenomena of error. One of the points of special interest in Madhva's analysis of knowledge, however, relates to self-knowledge. According to him, self-knowledge, that is, the subject's knowledge of itself is not inferential, but direct and immediate: the subject knows itself in the very act of knowing the object or, in other words, in its functioning as the *Sākṣin*. In this respect Madhva's view, according to Dr. De Smet, is in agreement with that of St. Thomas. But I wonder how that can be so in view of the fact that the *Sākṣin*, according to St. Thomas, as we have previously seen, is ultimately divine whereas in view of Madhva it is the individual itself. But then, it may be asked whether Madhva has till the end succeeded in maintaining his view that that individual self is self-sufficient in the various aspects of his experience. This is one of the questions which Dr. De Smet has considered with great care. As regards the volitional or active aspects of experience, they, in the view of Madhva, reveal the limitation of the autonomy or sovereignty of the individual agent. And he goes further to construe this situation by holding that the autonomy which the agent seems to have in his volitions is not his own, but is a gift of the Lord. That being so, the question naturally arises whether the knowing ego, as distinguished from the active ego, is, like the latter, subject to a similar limitation, so that it could be said that when somebody knows, it is not he that knows but it is the Lord who knoweth through him. As regards this, Dr. De Smet expresses his inability to say anything either for or against it, because, as he himself says, he has not yet found anything in the writings of Madhva which can offer any conclusive evidence to lead to a decision in either way.

Dr. De Smet concludes his paper with a very brief summary of his findings and a commendatory observation which is as follows: "Though apparently a solution of compromise, their (Madhva's, St. Bonaventure's and St. Thomas's) position deserves to be studied carefully without losing sight of the arguments of more exclusive doctrines. It seems to me that in the difficult problem of knowing what we are and what is our centre, it offers signposts which will not lead us astray". It is now left for me to conclude my review, and I wish to do that equally briefly by asking the question whether the signposts have led or will lead us on the right path instead of leading us astray.