Olivier Lacombe

Traditionally, the word Wisdom evokes both ideas of perfect knowledge (a knowledge illuminated by the most sublime reasons, the summit of theoretical knowing) and of judgement as the directing principle of right action. And philosophy is the search after Wisdom.

Certain modern philosophers, however, seem to take no interest in this traditional notion of Wisdom.

Ever since the empirico-mathematical sciences established themselves in the commanding position they hold to-day, a number of philosophers consider that their rôle is no longer to claim a knowledge of Reality which would be qualitatively different from scientific knowledge, but simply to reflect critically on those mental activities which are constitutive of science.

As for the so-called " existentialist " thinkers, they maintain that philosophical lucidity should place itself at the service of the authenticity of the individual human subject in the existential situation which is irreducibly his own. For these thinkers, universal " reasons " run the risk of being nothing but masks for inauthenticity.

But, in the East as well as in the West, there are still some philosophers for whom the subject of Wisdom retains its full value, both in the theoretical and practical spheres. This does not, however, mean that they disregard their duty of critical lucidity. They respect the extreme importance of scientific knowing. They are interested in its efficacious grasp of natural and human objects. Nor do they lose sight of the rights of the individual subjective " existence " at the heart of universal values.

Moreover, traditional philosophies have never failed to base their universalist vision upon the pre-philosophical human experience of each thinker; but Wisdom cannot blossom if it is not freed from the empirical matrix formed by even the most refined human experiences.

As regards the first metaphysical intuition, which is new for the great discoverer and a rediscovery for his best disciples, it must be both meta-empirical and founded on experience.

Finally, what of the mystical experience and its relationship to Wisdom ?

It is important to note first of all that the concept of mystical experience is not univocal; for *natural* mysticism (in Sanskrit *sahaja*), or the experience of the depths of the Self, of its radical unity, must be distinguished from supernatural mysticism, or the experience of intimate contact with the divine by grace and love.

It is, moreover, a fact that a great many masters have held that Wisdom reaches its fullest accomplishment in mystical experience, an experience which is at once unique but absolutely purified. On this point the Vedānta, Plotinus and Christian Wisdom are at one.

Our intention then is briefly to outline the main features of Wisdom as we find them depicted on the one hand in the Vedānta and on the other in the teaching derived from St. Thomas Aquinas, not indeed as systems of the past, but as still alive to-day.

The Sanskrit terms by which Wisdom is traditionally designated in India are nearly all related to two roots, furnished or not with different prefixes :

1. *vid* (Indo-European *weid-) leads from the idea of seeing to that of knowing, and then to the highest knowing; whence *vidyā* science, wisdom, and *veda*, sacred Word, source of Wisdom.

2. *jñā* (related to the Greek or Latin radical *gnō*) signifies knowledge *jñāna*, then the supreme knowledge : *jñāna* or *vi-jñāna* (in this preeminent sense Buddhism prefers : *pra-jnā*).

The great teachings of India do attain the rank of Wisdom only in so far as they open up a " vista "[1] of " liberation "[2]. They are Wisdoms of salvation, not purely speculative philosophies.

All other authentic forms of knowing, regardless of their importance and value, occupy an inferior position. This is because they do not rise to the point of showing explicitly a way by which enslaved beings can free themselves from the chains of this world, of *re*-births and *re*-deaths infinitely repeated, of the experience forever rebegun of metaphysical deception and sorrow.

Wisdom on the contrary leads to a liberating and supra-worldly experience.

If we are to believe certain authorities,[3] two main categories may be distinguished among Indian philosophies : in the first place those which are fundamentally interpretations[4] of the Vedas. The primary interpretation is concerned with examining the meaning of the section which deals with ritual " works ". The final interpretation called also Vedānta elucidates the meaning of the Upanishads and related Vedic texts, which make up the section concerning the "knowledge " which liberates.

The other philosophies are thought of rather as *investigations*[5] into the nature of physical and spiritual realities, into the correct functioning of thought, into ethical values, into the psycho-somatic method of *yoga*, a discipline which aims at re-centring the energies at work in the human being, but which are naturally inclined to anarchy and dispersion.

This is not the place to examine how, in imitation of the Vedānta (which is first and foremost directed towards liberation), the first

exegesis on the one hand and at least four schools of *investigation* on the other formed themselves into disciplines of salvation.[6] But the fact remains that orthodox brahminical tradition granted to *six* philosophical doctrines, by way of privilege, the rank of Wisdom, in so far as they recognise the authority of the Vedas and propose an opening towards liberation.

Brahminical Wisdom, then, is ultimately founded upon the Vedas, the Upanishads of course included. The Vedas have no Author who promulgated them at a privileged moment of time and history. They are eternal word, source of their own unconditional authority and validity. Their content is *dharma*, the highest Law by which things, thoughts and actions are governed. And *dharma* is twofold according to whether it assures the universal Order or directs the progression towards liberation.

Other Indian teachings which either honour the Vedas, or, like Buddhism, refuse their authority, will make their central feature the importance of the originating experience and the teaching of a historical founder. The Vedānta seeks to be nothing but the interpretation of the primordial and impersonal Vedas, foundation of all foundations and of all founders.

The preceding considerations have a number of implications, in the first place of an epistemological order and in the second concerning the degrees and means of Wisdom.

Our exposé will be limited henceforth almost exclusively to Vedāntic teaching, because of its exceptionally representative character, and more particularly to the advaita-vedānta, illustrated by the great Śaṅkara.

Epistemological implications.

Indian epistemology recognises several forms of valid knowledge[7], of which the principal are: direct experience or intuition[8], the authorised word[9] and inference.[10]

For the advaita-vedānta, the Vedas, which are authorised word par excellence, play the leading rôle with regard to the knowledge of dharma and the first steps towards liberation. Direct intuition of the Absolute, the liberating experience, is none other than Wisdom itself in its accomplishment. In this way, sense experience, the witness of the human word and inference find their place in the building up of total knowing, but at a lower level, with a lesser authority.

More radically, one may distinguish, in Śaṅkara's eyes, between absolute knowledge, intuitive and experimental, free of all mental fabrication[11]—images, schemes, concepts — which may be superimposed[12] upon it, and knowledge affected by limiting determination[13], adventitious[14] conditionings, products of the empirical spirit, or,

if one prefers, of the transcendental imagination[15], knowledge debased by mental fabrications[16].

The informed reader will have easily recognised, beneath this technical formulation, the well-known idea of *māyā*, whose scope is both cosmic and individual, with its double power of projection[17] of added forms and of occultation[18] of the absolute state of the Self and of Being.

It is not then sufficient to oppose knowledge and ignorance[19], true knowledge and erroneous knowledge[20]. Between the absolutely true knowledge of absolute Reality and the furthest limits of error one must also recognise an area of "practical"[21] or relative truth which can still entail ignorance or error with regard to the Absolute.

There is no Wisdom worthy of the name except in absolutely true knowledge, or at least in knowledge which is already journeying on the road which leads there.

Implications for the stages and means of Wisdom.

The first stage is marked by the hearing[22] of the Vedic Word, together with faith[23] in its sovereign authority.

At the second stage, the meaning of this word is the object of methodical reflexion, of rational elaboration.[24]

The third stage: discourse, even sapiential discourse, even founded on the Vedas, is not enough. Intense composure of thought[25], concentration on the principal teachings[26] of the Upanishads is indispensable. In time, all the resources of pan-Indian Yoga will place themselves at the disposal of Vedantic meditation to facilitate its final transformation into direct experience of the highest Reality, which lies beyond concepts and beyond speech, the Reality which is Brahman-Atman and which is immanent in all the steps which have prepared for the recognition by the Self of its absolute and eternal condition.

In its final fulfilment Wisdom is autonomous, in so far as it is the experience of identity with the source of dharma, of the Law. The provisional dependence of the first steps of the one who aspires to Wisdom is finally resolved in the autonomy of the perfect Sage, of the one who is liberated in this life[27].

Thus, to adopt a slightly different formulation, advaita Wisdom expresses itself in the first place by a positive discourse, which unites all those dispersed and fugitive allusions to true Being which are provided by the appearances of this world. From this point of view, Brahman appears as Sovereign Lord[28] and Universal Master, the bearer of august and worshipful attributes[29].

This affirmative discourse eventually gives place to a negative discourse, to a drastic apophasis[30], which drives our all adventitious qualifications which would claim to signify the Absolute. *Neti, neti*: Brahman is not thus, not thus...It is without attributes.[31] The rela-

tionship that the world maintains with It appears to the Sage as no longer worthy of his notice: it is now no longer a question of giving an account of the values and of so called realities, which are included in the world, but of transcending them, of underlining their insignificance. As a modern disciple of Śaṅkara[32] has well remarked at this stage: "We do not explain the world, we explain it away."

But these two discourses — affirmative and negative — would make no sense if they did not ultimately refer to intuitive, supra-discursive, supra-notional[33], silent, supra-mundane[34] knowledge, by which the infinite and eternal Self experiences its Reality and its blessedness, without its perfect simplicity being broken[35] by any form of differentiation, or its shining solitude [36] being obliged to take into account an other than itself.

Such, in a few words and most imperfectly described, is the fulness of Wisdom according to the advaita-vedānta.

From the Thomist point of view, Wisdom is held to be both one and yet complex at the same time. In so far as it is metaphysics it represents the summit of human reason. By theological faith, which is a gift of grace, the believer is placed at the very heart of the Godhead; and faith becomes Wisdom either by flowering into a meaningful discourse upon the divine mystery which is made known by revelation, or by raising itself to the level of a supernatural mystical experience.

Metaphysics, theology, the sapiential experience of christ-like holiness, share in different but harmonious degrees in the divine Wisdom itself. They are distinct but in no way dissociated.

The profound unity of humano-christian wisdom, as St. Thomas understands it, is thus assured. The imagined conflict between Faith and Reason only arises if the unique and transcendant source from which they both flow has been lost sight of in the first place.

But let us consider more closely each of the three successive stages of sapiential knowing.

In spite of the sceptics in every age and in spite of the Kantian critique, we do not consider that the days of metaphysics are over.

The philosopher should not let himself be disconcerted or discouraged by the discordant diversity of historical philosophies—a discordance which breeds scepticism — nor by the success of the empirico-mathematical sciences — a success of the highest quality, but one which in no way condemns philosophy to content itself simply with a secondary reflexion on the conditions for the possibility of scientific knowledge. Philosophy must be recognised as a true rational knowing, but also as one whose epistemological status is not the rival of that of science.

To make a distinction between science and wisdom is not the same as placing them in a sterile and endless opposition. Philosophy

should, indeed, reflect critically on the structures, the evolution, the validity and the meaning of scientific knowing, and there will always be room for a philosophy of the sciences.

On the other hand, philosophy claims the right to a direct and original approach to nature and man: the philosophy of nature and philosophical anthropology remain authentic disciplines. One cannot argue against them on the basis of the outmoded nature of primitive cosmology. That which, in these hypotheses of yesterday, has been unable to stand up to criticism, was nothing but an adventurous anticipation of the progress of science. The philosopher to-day has the two-fold obligation to be attentive to the discoveries of science and to safeguard the freshness and vigilance of his own unique vision of the world. He can neither ignore the work of the scientist nor dictate laws to him. But for all that, he cannot give up seeing and thinking everything by himself and in his own proper light.

But the philosophy of nature and philosophical anthropology are not sufficient to assure the fulfilment of philosophy whose highest court of appeal — in the theoretical field — is metaphysics.

Metaphysical wisdom is contemplative: its first step is to establish itself in the intuition of being, which is grasped at the heart of the judgement of existence. This intuition, which is so fragile and delicate that a mere nothing can smother it, blossoms in its assent to the real. Then created existence appears as existence which is given and, by a ready movement of reasoning, the intelligence raises itself from the being which is given to Him who gives it and offers Himself for contemplative adoration.

Natural mystical experience and poetic experience are the twin sisters of Metaphysics. But while the metaphysician develops his critical assent, his fundamental "yes" to being, by a coherent and harmonious discourse, natural mysticism which in its purest form is centred on the experience of the Self, can only exist by means of a heroic apophasis, a "no" to discourse, and by that very act it denies and drives out all concepts.

As for poetic experience, its way of welcoming the echo of objects in the Self is that which essentially creates the poem, or more generally, the work of art, man's privileged instrument for tasting the flavour of beauty.

Finally the contemplative wisdom of the metaphysician supports the practical reason by which moral action is directed towards the free accomplishment of the good. And this regulatory function is itself a function of wisdom.

Bathed in the light of Faith, theological wisdom advances in step with reason, and in revealed doctrine it resolves the questionings of human experience. Metaphysics once marked the summit of the rising

movement of our thought towards our transcendental Principle. Intellectual intuition and the rational process which orders experience, were for the philosopher autonomous and followed no law other than that of faithfulness to being, in so far they could reach it. Now, reason is at the service of Faith : to help in explaining the divine Mystery, which graciously communicates itself by the downward movement of the revealing Word. Theological Wisdom is understanding of the Faith, theological Faith.

By the Faith God declares himself in the heart of the believer who thus finds himself introduced into the close intimacy of the divine life and the divine truth.

Faith is essentially personal, a communion of light, knowledge and love between two subjects, the Divine and the human, under the seal of absolute Truth. Faith does not only believe *that* God is, that he is Spirit and infinite, ineffable perfection; it believes *in* God as he who speaks true, the first and personal Truth who reveals the mystery of Being, of the heart of God and of his plan for the human person, as the Love which loved us first, as He who is forever faithful. Faith and Revelation have no sense, from the Christian point of view, except in the perspective of the Word of truth, eternal Wisdom, divine Person — in the theological sense of Person.

Christian Wisdom claims that it harmonises, that it balances the universal demands of Truth and the interpersonal character of Faith as it is actually lived.

Christian holiness, which is the perfection of the Love of God in the truth of the Faith blossoms into sapiential knowledge by the light of the gift of Wisdom, which is a gift of the Holy Spirit.

Saint Paul, however, is not afraid to present it as "folly" and "scandal". The folly and scandal of the cross of Christ which are accepted by the unreasoning love of God for his creature and by the unreasoning love for God of the creature who has attained holiness. What is to become of the note of measure, harmony and balance commonly, and correctly, associated with the idea of wisdom? Does the Pauline paradox make them lose their value? The answer is, doubtless, "no", but by this paradox human wisdom is forced to transcend itself infinitely without denying itself.

Moreover christian holiness admits different styles. The author of the "Treatise of the Love of God", Saint Francois de Sales, leads religious humanism to the highest degree of holiness, to the perfect liberty of the children of God. True, the style is not that of the pauline paradox, but the substance is the same.

The wisdom of the saints transcends the other forms and degrees of complete wisdom, without, however, annulling them. Seen from a point of view less elevated than its own, it can disconcert human

reason, but its "folly" answers to the deepest and most mysterious reasons.

Born from the chiaroscuro of the Faith, the wisdom of the saints is not yet the Beatific Vision, the longing for which is not fulfilled for man until he has passed the threshold of death. But for the saints, for the "fools" of the cross, whose folly is wisdom, that is to say a knowledge of the depths of the Divinity which is at once experimental, mystical and full of savour[37], the heart to heart with God begins here below.

Conclusion

This brief study of wisdom is a tentative study in comparative philosophy. The history of philosophy and comparative philosophy aim to help the judgement of the philosopher by pointing out origins, likenesses and differences. It is for the philosopher to draw the conclusions, alone, face to face with Truth.

We are fully aware of the differences in the contents of wisdom as understood by Śri Śaṅkarācārya and by Saint Thomas Aquinas.

What we wanted to show was simply that wisdom in the śaṅkarite sense should not so much be compared as a whole with any western system of philosophy, in the restricted meaning of the word philosophy, but rather with some other integral structure of wisdom.

(Translated by Christopher Lash)

1. darśana
2. mokṣa
3. For example, the Arthaśāstra of Kauṭilya
4. mīmāṃsā.
5. ānvīksikī
6. These are the six well-known darśana: both mīmāṃsā, sāṅkhya, yoga, nyāya, vaiśeṣika
7. pramāṇa
8. pratyakṣa
9. śabda
10. anumāna
11. nirvikalpaka
12. superimposition: adhyāsa or adhyāropa
13. upādhi
14. āgantuka
15. kalpanā
16. savikalpaka
17. vikṣepa-śakti
18. āvaraṇa-śakti
19. avidyā
20. bhrānti
21. vyavahāra

22. śravaṇa
23. śraddhā
24. manana
25. nididhyāsana
26. mahāvākya
27. jīvan-mukta
28. Īśvara
29. saguṇa
30. apavāda
31. nirguṇa
32. K. C. Bhaṭṭacharyya
33. nirvikalpaka
34. lokottara
35. bheda
36. kaivalya
37. The Latin for wisdom, *sapientia*, suggests, analogously, the idea of savour, like the Sanskrit *rasa*

The Meaning of life

N. K. Devaraja

Philosophy, said Platonic Socrates to Theaetetus, begins in wonder, Wittgenstein substitutes the word 'puzzlement' for wonder, and believes that philosophical puzzles are generated by language. But this delimitation of philosophical puzzles or problems seems to be arbitrary unless the term language is conceived in a way — as it is actually done on occasions by Wittgenstein — that makes it identical with life (or experience). Almost anything in life or experience may cause puzzlement or arouse the sense of wonder. We are using the terms wonder and puzzlement, but it is hardly necessary to believe that all instances of wonder can be assigned to one type or kind. The quality of the particular feeling of wonder that I have on a particular occasion is probably determined by the type of situation that evokes the feeling in question: And yet there may be a family resemblance among the feelings of wonder and/or puzzlement that infect the philosophers.

The puzzling question, 'what is the meaning of life?' is evoked by the total spectacle of life viewed against the background of the universe of time and space. To all appearances it is a question without definite meaning, and hence without the possibility of a definite answer. In a sense it is not an intelligible question at all for only a definite question whose possible answers can be imagined is an intelligible question. The first business of philosophy is to reduce such vague questions to intelligible dimensions.

A definite question is one that can be answered in terms of a definite state of affairs, actual or possible, and a definable attitude towards that state of affairs. If a question relates to the prevalence of an actual state of affairs, i.e., if the form of the question is: 'What is the case'? or 'Is it the case'? then its answer should ultimately be testable with reference to perceptual experience reached through a definite course of action. On the other hand if a question relates to future possibilities then the degree of validity attributable to an answer can be a matter of inference only. Such inferences are drawn on the basis of known dispositions of objects, persons or institutions. The greater the certainty of our knowledge relating to these dispositions and their possible interactions, the more reliable is our inference. The reason why the physical sciences are able to make reliable predictions is that the dispositions of things and the ways in which those things react upon one another are known with a fair degree of certainty. This degree of certainty is not enjoyed either by psychologists or by social scientists including the historians, which makes the predictions in

regard to human behaviour both individual and collective, more or less uncertain.

But questions may relate not only to states of affairs, actual and possible, but also to dispositions of objects and forces. Such questions should be answered in terms of generalizations about the objects (things or persons) and forces (heat, electricity, market-trends, etc.). To the extent to which a question relates to states of affairs, objects and forces accessible to man's normal experience, the question may be taken to be definite and intelligible; when the reference of the question is to things (objects, forces or situations) lying beyond normal human experience, then the question concerned tends to become vague and uncertain.

As regards philosophical questions the situation is complicated by the fact that those questions relate neither to tangible objects and forces nor to states of affairs given in normal experience. As Wittgenstein maintained in the *Tractatus* philosophical statements (and hence philosophical questions) are not about the world of facts at all. For this reason he suspected that the statements made by philosophers were nonsensical. Wittgenstein also asserted that the function of philosophy was the clearing of confusions or the resolution of puzzles engendered by language used out of context or without regard to its proper functions. The question as to what philosophy is about is too large and complicated to be dealt with here with any degree of adequacy. However, it may be observed that educated and cultured human beings tend to be interested not only in the world of objects and facts revealed by the five senses, but also in the modes and expressions of their subjective lives. These modes and expressions include both scientific statements and scientific theory, moral attitudes and judgments as well as moral philosophy, poetry and art and music as also the discussions about these, etc. etc. A more remarkable fact is that the so-called intellectual workers in different fields attach as much, sometimes greater, importance to the modes and expressions of the subjective life of the spirit than to the life they live as biological organisms and even as citizens of this or that state.

It happens that man is able to embody the modes of his spiritual life in linguistic or other kinds of symbols. This circumstance leads to two interesting results. Being incarnated in symbolic expression that which till now formed part of a particular mind or psyche, acquires a being of its own capable of being contemplated by a number of minds. Secondly, the expressed mode of subjectivity now begins to evoke wonder and stimulate questioning as an independent entity.

A yet another source of philosophical questions may be indicated. The biologists have made us familiar with the fruitful concept of adaptation to environment. But man endowed as he is with a powerful imagination that can go beyond both actual needs and familiar

experience, desires to adapt himself to the totality of things, i. e. the total universe as pictured by his scientific and poetic imagination. It is in this capacity, as visualizing or contemplating the universe as a whole and his life in relation to it, that man raises the vague and disturbing question: what is the meaning of life?

Every statement, and almost any question, presupposes a context of ontological beliefs or assumptions. This is patently true of statements and questions relating to states of affairs and dispositions of objects and persons. When I make a query about the logical properties of a proposition or a relation, or about characteristic features of a poem or painting, I at least assume that these entities can become objects of common attention. To declare that a logical object does not reside in space or time is to make out a contrast which is intelligible only with reference to ontological categories. In any case the question, what is the meaning of life? rests on an assumption which is plainly ontological. The question is analogous to a query in regard to the meaning or significance of an action or object associated with a human agent. In the question under reference the term meaning clearly signifies purpose. The question is equivalent to the query: What is the place or purpose of man's life in the economy of the universe? The question can be repeated with respect to any object or occurrence to be met with in the world, including what are commonly referred to as accidents or chance happenings. When, in a film-show, an accident saves an innocent person from the tyrannous act contemplated by a villain, we are inclined to see in it the hand of a just and benevolent providence. A devout believer may argue: apart from a providential design why should that accident have occurred exactly at that moment? Those who ask the question, 'what is the purpose of life?' are presupposing, after he manner of the theist or the idealist, that there is a design or purpose running through the happenings in the universe, which latter are somehow subservient to the will of an omnipotent God or an all-regulating Spiritual Principle. Granted that presupposition or assumption, the query under reference, evoked by the mixed lot of men and their undertakings, relates to the details as to the place of human life and endeavour in the larger design of the universe or cosmos.

Viewed in this light the question obviously does not admit of any human answer. It does not admit of a legitimate philosophical answer either. The presupposition that there is an all-wise and all-powerful providence determining or looking after the destinies of living creatures might have been suggested by the philosophical imagination during ancient or medieval times, but it can hardly be justified by philosophical methods of reasoning acceptable to the modern man. True, there is an element of speculation present in the imaginative constructions of the physical sciences, such as physics and chemistry,

as well; nevertheless an important difference remains between scientific hypotheses on the one hand and philosophical presuppositions and theories on the other. An acceptable scientific hypothesis should submit itself to two important checks, one logical and the other empirical. Logically, a scientific hypothesis should be capable of being expressed in the language of mathematics as it exists at the time. (This means that the possibilities of framing hypotheses in science are partially limited and determined by the development and growth of mathematical disciplines.) Secondly, a valid scientific hypothesis should be able to connect itself, through mathematically controlled deductive procedures, with empirical observations. It may be noted that philosophical theories and hypotheses compare unfavourably with those of science on both these counts. There are no known deductive procedures applicable to philosophical theories bearing on matters of fact that are fool-proof and so acceptable to all parties; nor do speculative metaphysical theories commit themselves unambiguously to observable facts. Under the circumstance a valid or acceptable answer to the question as to the meaning of life cannot be elicited from an ultimate metaphysical principle or presupposition. Even in ancient and medieval times the principles or presuppositions underlying formulations of the ultimate meaning or purpose of life were initially advanced by religious teachers, prophets and scriptures; they were philosophically elaborated only afterwards. In ancient India, e.g., the ideal of *mokṣa* and the underlying presuppositions concerning the nature of the soul were first given by the Upanishads. The philosophers accepted them and attempted to make the concept of *mokṣa* and the connected presuppositions more precise and acceptable. If the modern man finds himself in a state of radical uncertainty and oppressive perplexity in regard to the meaning and purpose of life, it is due largely to the break-down of religious faith in our science-oriented positivistically inclined age.

II

What we have been saying so far amounts to this: that the question as to what constitutes the meaning or purpose of life, in so far as it is based on the presupposition that the cosmic process as a whole has a goal or purpose, is philosophically inadmissible, at least for the modern man. The question, we have further stated, can be answered only by religion. Obviously, a religious answer to this or other similar questions can be acceptable only to men of faith. Does it mean that philosophers as such should abdicate their claim both to reflect over such questions and to scrutinize the answers proffered by religion in the name of a supposedly omniscient teacher or infallible scripture? In replying to this we shall make some observations which are partly historical and partly methodological and reflective.

Both in the Indian tradition during the ancient and medieval times and in medieval Europe philosophers busied themselves with the explication and elaboration of religious concepts such as God and salvation. Owing to the predominance of the religious world-view in those days some of the metaphysical and even scientific concepts tended to be either identical or closely associated with religious concepts and teachings. It is only during the last few centuries that both science and philosophy have tended to dissociate themselves more or less completely from religion, and philosophy itself has tried to discredit speculative metaphysics. But the question remains: have philosophy and religion anything to gain at all by continuing to associate with each other? In our view answer to this question should be based on actual historical evidence. So far as the present writer is concerned he firmly believes that the subject-matter of philosophy is constituted, specifically and exclusively, by different kinds of values. Values, in all their variety, make up the domain of philosophy even as facts in their variety constitute the domain of scientific disciplines. It may be contended by some that there is an intermediate domain of problems belonging to logic and methodology which is commonly shared by philosophy and science. However, in so far as these problems relate to foundations of valid reasoning and meaningful theorizing, they belong rather to philosophy than to any other discipline. A physicist may reflect on the underlying assumptions of a method or theory in his discipline, but in the moments of such reflection he is behaving more or less as a philosopher and not as a scientist. In fact, it was when the more important scientists began to feel the need of reflecting over the problems under reference, that the new discipline called philosophy of science came into being. Considerations analogus to those that justify the existence of philosophy of science may be advanced in support of that branch of philosophy called philosophy of religion whose special concern is to reflect over divergent claims regarding spiritual life and truths made by different religions.

It seems clear to me that philosophy of religion cannot accept the claim of any religious scripture to be regarded as being a divine revelation, nor can it consider any such scripture to be an exclusive repository of spiritual truths. Significant moral and spiritual teachings of important religions may at best be looked upon as intimations of the attitudes and perspectives of holy lives received by outstanding geniuses in that line. Proceeding on the basis of this understanding or assumption philosophical reflection on religion can render the same service to the latter as aesthetics or philosophy of art does to the arts of creation and criticism in that field. There are artists and litterateurs who are suspicious of critical analysis of their methods and productions, even as there are teachers and practitioners of religion who are suspicious and afraid of philosophy. But the history of arts and of criticism bears out

the fact that the discipline called aesthetics has contributed a good deal to the self-awareness of both the creators and the critics of art. Both aesthetics or philosophy of art, which deals with the phenomenon of artistic creation in a general way and criticism, which is directed on a particular work of art, alike draw our attention to the factors that contribute to excellence or greatness in artistic creation, thereby helping the artist and the connoisseur of art to carry on their respective functions of creation and enjoyment with greater self-awareness. Here it may be noted that the analysis and definition of the constituents of excellence and greatness in art, accomplished by philosophy of art on the one hand and criticism on the other, is neither complete nor final at any stage in their history. For one thing the creative geniuses in art continue to produce works possessing new kinds of excellence and different types of greatness, thus necessitating fresh analysis and explanation of factors responsible for those qualities; for second thing the interactions and interrelations of different constituents and aspects of an art work, as disposed by the artist, always call for new analysis, thereby offering us new insights into the factors contributing to the merit and distinction of a given work of art. So far as artistic creation is concerned uncanny and weird combinations of colours and forms, sounds and words, meanings and suggestions of different levels and dimensions of perception and experience are quite usual. This is responsible for the fact that both philosophy of art and criticism ever remain unfinished enterprizes or ongoing concerns.

God, it has been said, fulfils himself in many ways. So does the artistic impulse, as also the religious impulse. Every saint has his own distinctive personality and a distinctive mode of living and expressing religious life and the religious values. Like artists and poets saints belonging even to the same tradition have different types of life, and so each a biography of his own. What is the source of these differences ? The saints, like other human beings, differ in their tastes and temperaments due to which the courses of their lives move in different directions. Those saints, who belong to the same cultural tradition, may share the same beliefs ; still, owing to the varying strength of different dispositions in them, they tend to behave differently and to lay different degrees of emphasis on different motives and goals of action. Undoubtedly our beliefs play a part in shaping our attitudes and motives, but they are by no means the only factor determining the direction of our lives. Our innate inclinations and propensities are at least as important as our beliefs in shaping our lives. In this connection it is significant to recall that Hinduism recognizes a plurality of paths leading to the single goal called *mukti* or liberation. The paths of knowledge and action, devotion and mystic contemplation are obviously intended for persons of differing temperaments. Hinduism aceepts the principle of *adhikāri-bheda* which is commendable both on psychological and intel-

lectual grounds. Men and women differ in their intellectual ability no less than they do in respect of inherited dispositions and acquired tastes. Even in the domain of knowledge Hinduism envisages the possibility of there being different truths for men with varying intellectual powers.

The point of stressing these differences is that, even in terms of religious fulfilment, the question 'what is the aim or purpose of life?' does not admit of a single answer. The world in which we live has a number of religious traditions and a variety of religious doctrine and teaching. Different religions have held divergent opinions not only in regard to the nature of God and the universe and their interrelation, but also concerning the character of worthy and perfect life here and hereafter. In a religion like Hinduism one finds a plurality of conceptions of *ātman* or Self, Godhead and the state of *mokṣa*. This plurality of conceptions within Hinduism, all claiming to be equally orthodox and ultimate, was due directly to the influence of philosophy. Some diversity of opinion with respect to both dogma and practice is to be met with in almost all the important religions, but the diversities are more radical and far-reaching in Indian culture as a whole and in the Hindu cultural tradition in particular. In no small measure the diversity was due to the fact that both religious teachers and philosophers here tended to be more individualistic and independent in matters concerning the soul's salvation. The existence of rival including the heretic schools and their keen-witted spokesmen also contributed to make the Hindu philosophers more self-conscious and careful.

The more important consequence of the philosophers' intercession for religion was that protagonists of different religions had unconsciously to search for and fall upon a common authority that could arbitrate between the conflicting claims of the rival religio-philosophical systems. This common authority came finally to be identified with actual, lived religious experience as expressed in visible life here on earth. According to the present writer the most important concept created and developed by Indian religious thought is that of *jivan-mukti*. This concept is to be found in several philosophical schools of Hinduism and also, in some form or other, in Jainism and Buddhism. According to the major idealistic systems of India and even according to the classical realistic schools of Hindu philosophy, perfection or fulfilment of life consists not in the attainment of something external to us, but in the realization of a nature or attitude that is potentially present in all of us. This, presumably, is the import of the well-known statement attributed to Jesus Christ : the kingdom of heaven is within you. I am inclined to interpret utterances of that type humanistically. The religious attainments of a person should show themselves forth in his actual life, in his style of living and his dealings with his fellow-

beings.

To return to the question of the meaning or purpose of life. It is impossible for the modern man, with his scientific outlook and questioning attitude, to share the ontological assumptions of the older religio-philosophical systems and the answers given by them to the aforesaid question on the basis of those assumptions. I suggest that any answer or answers to the query under reference have to proceed today on the basis of observable, historical course of human life. There has been a good deal of talk, particularly in the western world, about the transcendent and our relationship to it, during the recent decades. Maybe, the term transcendent is more sophisticated than the concept of a God or Creator, but it is difficult to draw any useful distinction between the two. I am not sure if the subterfuge of substituting a more vague and equivocal term for one with a more definite connotation is going to have enduring success with the modern man. To my mind the transcendent, like the concept of infinite magnitude or infinity, is a projection of the human imagination. Like many a weird combination of images and meanings in poetry the word transcendent tends to evoke in us uncanny feelings of mystery, enigmatic excellence, majesty etc. But these feelings have no more objective reference and validity than those aroused by great compositions in music, art and literature. The transcendent, I am trying to suggest, is a phenomenon that belongs to the human world no less than do our experiences relating to the infinite magnitudes of space, time and number. The transcendent of the modern religious thinkers has affinities with the sublime as conceived by the philosophers of art; it is not materially different from the numinous and the holy as described by Rudolf Otto. All such descriptions presuppose a dualism that is repugnant to great religious traditions of Mahāyāna Buddhism and Advaita-Vedānta. The creature feeling and the feeling of dependence as conceived by Otto are by no means universal; they may be more prevalent in some cultures and in some ages than in others. Leuba has noted that 'fear and awe have almost completely disappeared from the modern man's religion'.[1]

The highest excellence in thought and conduct, in artistic creation and holiness, that is achieved by man in his life and works here on earth becomes the foundation for his so called transcendent imaginings. It is unnecessary to trace these imaginings to a transcendent source, even as it is unreasonable to hold a demon or spirit responsible for the masterly compositions of a Plato, Beethoven, or Shakespeare.

Philosophy today cannot at all accept and proceed on the basis of ontological assumptions made by religion, nor is it itself in the mood to cherish metaphysical assumptions of its own. And if it be granted that the problem of defining the meaning and purpose of life cannot be left to this or that religion, then philosophy cannot be permitted to

shirk the responsibility to discuss the issue under reference. Whether the questions of ultimate ends and values do or do not admit of proof it is certain that they cannot be handed over to any of the positive sciences. Philosophy is the only discipline that can deal systematically with questions relating to values. It has already been handling problems connected with moral and aesthetic values, there is no reason why it should forego the privilege of reflecting over religious values. Indeed, as a matter of history, philosophers in India bestowed their best attention to the values manifested in religious attitude and behaviour, nor does there seem to be any *a priori* reason why philosophy should confine itself only to logico-methodological issues, or to questions relating to language and meaning. Man is inherently inclined to seek significant and heroic life, and that sort of life certainly does not consist just in making statements that correspond to facts of *any* kind. Man considers some facts to be more important than others, and he is ever intent both to ascertain what is truly important and relate himself to it. It is silly to think that all facts or factual truths are equally significant. If that were so, then, as a well-known maxim frequently invoked by Indian philosophers states, ascertaining the number of teeth that a crow has would be as important as investigating the conditions of, say, spiritual salvation or—to vary the illus ration—the conditions of good government or greatness in art. Ultimately any piece of information or any type of knowledge has relevance only in relation to human interests, and human beings themselves are inclined to distinguish between higher and lower interests, goals and objects. Men and women are constantly engaged in making choices and in giving expression to their preferences. It is the function of philosophy to give direction and rational guidance with respect to these activities. This is not to say that philosophy should impose arbitrary norms and restrictions on men's choices and preferences. All norms and standards of judgement are implicit in man's behaviour itself. What philosophy does and can accomplish is to elicit those norms, criteria or standards through systematic reflection. It is through such process of reflection that the science or philosophy of logic arrives at principles of valid thought, and science or philosophy of morals at the norms or ideals of conduct.

The question as to the ultimate meaning or purpose of life is more complex than, say, that relating to the principles of valid reasoning or right conduct. For the question concerns the relative merits of different types of worthy lives, or the relative significance and weight to be attached to different values and ideals. In the final analysis this question pertaining to the relative superiority of different types of lives and ideals can be settled only with reference to judgments on these enshrined in human history. In any case the question cannot be decided only in the light of pronouncements made by

religious scriptures or religious teachers. History has applied the epithet great with rsepect to personages of divergent types and diverse achievements: poets and philosophers, statesmen and generals, emperors and saints. Maybe, humanity has extended greater respect or reverence to saints and prophets than to great personages in other fields, but even that does not entitle us to assert that the sole aim and purpose of life is to achieve sainthood, and that for two reasons. First, the varied needs of human life and culture call for different sorts of contributions to be made by different men and women. Secondly, since men and women differ considerably in their endowments, tastes and temperaments, everybody cannot be expected to grow and develop along a single line and in a single direction. It may be granted, as has often been pointed out, that moral norms and values have a claim to allegiance which is universal in scope, admitting of no exceptions and leaving no options relative to non-moral ideals or values, but even that does not imply that a person should not seek to achieve distinction in any other field. It is possible for a man to lead a meaningful life (as a poet or philosopher, as a scientist or statesman) without either aspiring to or achieving the greatness of of a moral or religious genius.

If we review the lives of great men carefully we shall find that the saints and prophets who have been accounted great were, in one way or the other, men of action as well. The greatest prophets and religious teachers, e.g. Moses and Confucius, Laotse and the Buddha, Jesus Christ, Mohammad and Gandhi were holy personages who at the same time exerted tremendous influence on the lives of their contemporaries. Detachment and selflessness, that have been commended by many a religious tradition, are certainly great virtues, but these virtues are not meant to be practised in the vacuity of retirement. We expect even the greatest saint to be active in some form or other. The Christian saint is supposed to live in service of humanity, even as the Bodhisattva is expected to work for the salvation of suffering creatures. According to Mahatma Gandhi highest religion consists in serving the poor and the downtrodden. The saints are the persons who, unmindful of their own comforts, are concerned to bring succour and relief from all-pervasive suffering that besets living beings from birth to death. By rendering unsolicited service to the weak and ignorant victims of *saṁsāra*, the saints contribute to the survival and continuance of life.

But that is not the only use and utility of the virtues under reference. The cultivation of selflessness and detachment tends as much to benefit the individual concerned as those coming in contact with him. These specifically religious virtues are more efficacious in the promotion of balance and tranquillity of mind than the best known drugs and psycho-analytical techniques; they also lead to greater

efficiency in action. The yoga, says the *Bhagavadgītā*, is skill in action. Few personages in our time have led more active lives than Mahatma Gandhi; the secret of his tremendous efficiency and success was his selfless disposition and his active love for mankind combined with complete detachment towards the fortunes of his individual life. Gandhiji was primarily a spiritual and saintly person who became a political leader in order to liberate his people from oppressive and unjust political power. But there are other uses of the virtues practised by the religious persons. I believe that a measure of selflessness and detachment are necessary qualities in a man who would achieve distinction in any field of action bearing on the growth of human civilization and culture. A man who is ever preoccupied with the prospects of personal gain in terms of either money or power or wealth, is not likely to make truly significant contributions in art or literature, science or philosophy, or even in the sphere of political action. For excessive preoccupation with one's own self invariably leads to clouding of vision and deterioration in the quality of effort and action. From these considerations it seems to follow that some measure of religiousness is as much a necessity of a truly happy and successful life as the sense of justice and fairplay. In this sense, too, religion and morality seem to have a more compelling claim on our allegiance than the different arts and sciences including philosophy taken severally. It is also clear from the foregoing discussion that, divorced from the context of active life indicative of involvment with our fellewbeings, religion and morality are not in themselves competent to fix up or define the purpose and goal of life.

1. Quoted by A. Rudolf Uren, *Recent Religious Psychology* (T. & T. Clark, Eddinburgh, 1928), p. 160.

— *Comments*

John Hick

There is so much in Dr. Devaraja's most interesting paper that could provide the basis of highly profitable discussion that I am forced to select only one topic amongst several. Since my own special interest is in the philosophy of religion I propose to fasten upon one of Dr. Devaraja's central thoughts in this field. This is what I would call his religious naturalism or naturalistic religion, — his preference for religion without transcendence. And what has struck me very much is the way in which he has, following his own independent path, moved on a course parallel to that of some contemporary Western philosophers. I am thinking of the position of John Wisdom, the Cambridge disciple of Wittgenstein, now at the University of Oregon, U. S. A., as expressed in his papers on 'Gods' and 'The Logic of God'; and again of the religious naturalism of John Herman Randall, Jr of Columbia University, New York, as expressed in his book *The Role of Knowledge in Western Religion*. Wisdom and Randall are two thinkers whose philosophical starting points and methods are about as far apart as they could be, and it is therefore interesting to find them coming to rather similar conclusions about religion. It can I know be disputed whether in Wisdom's case his position is finally a form of religion without transcendence. Wisdom's thought is characteristically indirect and elusive. He soldem draws explicit conclusions, but leaves the reader to draw them for himself; and it may be that I have not drawn the conclusions that Wisdom himself intends us to draw.

At any rate what these two distinguished Western thinkers seem to me to be saying is this: Religious language is understood by the common man as referring to transcendent realities — for example a personal God, in the Bhagavad - Gita and in the Bible; or an immortal entity of some kind presiding over a reincarnating karma in Vedantic thought. But all such transcendent reference is a mistake. There are no adequate grounds for believing that such concepts of the transcendent refer to anything in reality.

Negatively, then, this religious naturalism sides with the widespread modern scepticism concerning the traditional claims of the religions; and it does so either on philosophical grounds, centering on the question of the intelligibility or the factual meaningfulness of the key religious concepts; or alternatively on what can be broadly (or vaguely) described as scientific grounds. I take Dr. Devaraja to be sharing in this point of view when he says that "The presupposition that there is an all-wise and all-powerful providence determining or looking after the destinies of living creatures might have been suggested by the philosophical imagination during ancient or medieval times, but it can hardly be justified by philosophical methods of reasoning acceptable to the modern man."

But having adopted this negative position regarding religion as making cognitive claims, religious naturalism does not proceed to reject the entire realm of religious language and life. On the contrary, it regards the religious way of seeing the world, the religious 'slant' on life, or (in Hare's term) *blik*, as extremely valuable — as something to be encouraged rather than extirpated. This too is said in his own terms by Dr Devaraja when he says that "some measure of religiousness is as much a necessity of a truly happy and successful life as the sense of justice and fairplay". For religious language helps us to grasp important aspects of our experience which elude the language of the sciences. Randall developes at this point an interesting aesthetic analogy: "The work of the painter, the musician, the poet, teaches us how to use our eyes, our ears, our minds, and our feelings with greater power and skill.... It shows us how to discern unsuspected qualities in the world encountered, latent powers and possibilities there resident. Still more, it makes us see the new qualities with which the world, in co-operation with the spirit of man, can clothe itself.... Is it otherwise with the prophet and the saint? They too can do something to us. they too can effect changes in us and in our world.... They teach us how to see what man's life in the world is, and what it might be. They teach us how to discern what human nature can make out of its natural conditions and materials.... They make us receptive to qualities of the world encountered; and they open our hearts to the new qualities with which that world, in co-operation with the spirit of man, can clothe itself. They enable us to see and feel the religious dimension of our world better, the 'order of splendor' and of man's experience in and with it" (*Op. cit.*, pp. 128—9).

In other words, religious experience is a special way of seeing and appreciating the world. It is our awareness of the dimension of depth and mystery and glory in our human experience — a dimension which religious language both evokes and expresses. But this special way of seeing the world terminates in the world. It does not point beyond it to realities or facts or structures of being transcending the world. Dr. Devaraja seems to be thinking along essentially similar lines when he says, "To my mind the transcendent, like the concept of infinite magnitude or infinity, is a projection of the human imagination.

In commenting upon this position the point I want to stress is the way in which it leaves religious language without anchorage in reality outside the mind and brain of man. I am—as you would expect—going to put this point in a typically Western way. Man came into existence,

within the evolution of the forms of organic life, something like three quarters of a million years ago. This period is only a minute fraction of the history of the world. It has been calculated that if you equate the period of the earth's history with a film lasting for two hours, man appears on the scene only within the last two seconds of the film. And of course the earth itself has only existed for a brief moment in the history of the physical universe. Now is God only a thought in the mind, or an agitation in the brain, of an animal living for a brief moment on the surface of a planet of a minor star out near the edge of a medium-sized galaxy within the infinite immensity of space and time? If God does not transcend the existence of the human animal, if, in other words, religious language refers only to the world and does not point beyond it, then God is a very temporary phenomenon, dependent upon the existence of man and upon man's thinking in a certain way.

I find it hard to believe that such a view is adequate to sustain the professions which accompany it of valuing religion as an essential aspect of human life. Can the cherishing of illusions be essential to man's welfare? Or may it not rather be that our basic religious beliefs are true, and have practical value precisely because they are true?

The Challenge of Gandhi to The Classical Philosophical Tradition

James Norton

Mohandas K. Gandhi, the Mahatma and the Father of India's independence, was not a philosopher in any but the most popular sense of the term. For he stands in contemporary India not as one who articulated a comprehensive and consistent philosophical analysis of experience, as thoughtful and prolific a writer as he was. His philosophical statement — to paraphrase the evaluation of Louis Fischer : " He did not preach about God or religion; he was a living sermon " — was rather his life, a life committed to social action and political change. Such a life, by the very clarity of its commitment, makes a profound ethical statement. For it is by his actions that he most significantly unfolds the relation between the uncertainties of concrete human activity and an ultimate criterion of truth. By nothing else is it so decisively stated, by nothing else is it so positively affirmed.

The concern of this paper is not an attempt, therefore, to determine whether Gandhi's actions were consistent or philosophically definable. It is rather to explore in what ways his actions call into question the traditional assertions of the Mīmāmsā and Vedānta schools of thought concerning the relation of action to ultimate truth. It is an attempt to see in what sense these philosphies are appropriate to such a life.

The ethical issue raised by the way Gandhi performed *satyāgraha*, (doing his business), is a persistent one. The question of how one recognizes the truth or any such ultimate value in a concerete situation in which one must act is certainly the problem with which Arjuna is confronted when, in the *Bhagavad Gītā*, he seeks from Krishna some justification for entering into battle. How could he, faced with the ambiguous and conflicting demands of that situation, affirm the most righteous course of action? Professor Zaehner suggests the extension of this question in identifying Gandhi with the heroic figure Yudhishṭhira, the *dharma rāja*, the King of Righteousness, of the *Mahābhārata*. In Professor Zachner's words : " Gandhi's dilemma was the same as Yudhishṭhira's : what and where was the *sanātana dharma* he claimed to follow?" In yet another form, and basic to the development of some recent western theology, is Dietrich Bonhoeffer's insistent question to Karl Barth : "Can the Church proclaim concretely the command of God?" Given the ambiguity and uncertainty of human activity, can one determine how one ought to act with enough

certainty and conviction to be able to act ?

The classical tradition formulated two basic perspectives on the problem of the relation of action to truth, both of them based upon the acceptance of the verbal authority of Vedas which, by definition, included them in the *āstika* fold of orthodoxy. The Mīmāmsaka darśana worked out through on elaborate method of Vedic exegesis a decisive system of ritual action, in which a clear and sacred course of action is set forward. The truth of such a course of action was based ultimately upon the absolute authority of the Vedas with respect to action. There sacred texts have as their content the eternal *Dharma*, the impersonal, cosmic law of being, in relation to which all actions approximate their appropriate truth. Mīmāmsa Sūtra 1.1.2: "Dharma is that which is indicated by means of the Vedas conducive to the highest good." Thus each passage of the Vedas reveals to man the truth of action, but only to the extent that he recognizes it as enjoining him to act in a certain way. He must recognize in the passages themselves the command to act, which, because the basis of this action is in the Vedic prescription, *vidhi*, can only be consistent with the eternal Dharma which it reveals. Activity itself is then the indicator of its truth, which is true for that person who understands that something is to be done (*kārya*) by him. The Mīmāmsa Sūtra records in sūtra 1.2.1 : "The purpose of the Veda is in actions ; those portions which do not serve that purpose are useless." [a passage which is stating that portion of an objection which is acceptable to Jaimini, the Sūtrakāra.] To this Śabara, in his commentary on 1.1.1. adds : "the purpose of the Veda is to enjoin ;" to impell a person to ethical action; to realize his dharma, his highest good.

The Vedānta traditions stand together with the Mīmāmsaka in affirming the validity (self-verifying—*svayamprakāśaḥ*) of the sacred pronouncements of the Vedas with respect to the highest aims of man. But they reject the assertion that what the Vedas reveal is the universal cosmic order, Dharma, and that such can be attained through performing the acts which are set forward Śankara and Rāmānuja in particular in their commentaries on the 4th Sūtra of the 1st pāda of the Brahma Sūtra both explore in some detail this difference, as they also identify their own distinctive positions. This sūtra (*tattu samanvayāt*) is constructed so as to identify an objection raised against the previous sūtra, by the use of the word *tu* : "that (which has been previously stated is true) in spite of (the objection) because of its purport."

The two have interpreted the previous sūtra (1.1.3.), *śāstra-yonitvāt*, differently. Śankarau nderstands it to be an adjectival (*bahuvrīhi*) compound : "(Brahman is known to be that from which creation, etc., proceeds) because it is the source of the scripture." Rāmānuja takes it as a dependent (*tatpurusha*) compound : "because scripture is the source

(of the knowledge of Brahman)." Both, however, recognize the objection to which sūtra 4 replies as one belonging to the Mīmāmsaka, that scripture is not the source of knowledge of Brahman because scripture has only the impelling of action toward the fulfilment of Dharma as its purport.

In the pūrvapakṣa in Śankara's commentary, the Mīmāmsaka accepts that knowledge of Brahman is affirmed in the Vedas, but only as a supplement to the injunction, to give definition to its object. That Brahman is described is there, but that such description is a unique self authenticating proof of the existence of Brahman is not. Only its connection with the injunction is known to be true. And such knowledge does not create a new being, uninvolved in the activities which characterize human experience.

For Śankara, the unique and absolute authority of the Vedas cannot be sustained in any reality less than the transcendent reality of Brahman. To affirm ultimate truth in the universal, cosmic orders of things, or in anything else which can be attained by human action is to negate the possibility of its ultimacy. There is simply nothing of the Absolute Brahman which is not totally real, which has still to be attained. The truth of the Vedas is thus not to be realized in the actions which they enjoin, in the Vedic commands (*vidhi*), but rather in a total understanding of the eternal reality which Brahman is.

Śankara agrees with the Mīmāmsaka that meditation can have as its object any known object, and that the validity of such knowledge does not affirm its existence. But such does not affect the purpose of scripture. The Vedas are rather to reveal the ultimate ; one transcendent reality of Brahman directly as existing, as the witness separate from all agency, separate from all objects of self-consciousness, as immediately the Self of all. Such a self is eternally free, and only through ignorance is joined to anything, to a body, actions or any of the perishable manifestations of the created world. Once one has realized the eternal nature of one's Self, then all attachments to world fall away, as, in the words of Śankara, a rich householder who is puffed up with conceit over his wealth, no longer grieves over their loss once he has abandoned them. Such is to understand the ultimate truth of one self as it is expressed by the Vedas to be realized in one's experience. It is to become one self free and eternal.

The difference between these two schools is, on one level, one of interpretation of the Vedas : in what kind of verbal statement is the authority of scripture revealed, in the imperatives to act or in those passages which indicate the transcendence of Brahman? More basically, however, it is a question of whether or not the conviction of truth can be applied to one's concrete human activity. For the Mīmāmsaka, such certainty can be affirmed for those actions which are enjoined by the Vedas. To the Vedānta of Śankara however, only relative truth

can be achieved by human action. Absolute truth can only be known absolutely, and as such can only be discovered, never affirmed by any kind of human effort.

Rāmānuja's argument in his commentary on this sūtra follows many of the same points as does Śankara, but his development is far more complex. There are no less than six different arguments put forward : two which attempt to find some way reconciling the Vedānta position with the Mīmāmsaka by affirming the truth of Brahman in terms of action enjoined by the Vedas (the *niṣprapañcakaraniyogavādin* and the *dhyānaniyogavādin*) ; one which attempts to reconcile the Mīmāmsaka position to Vedānta by making the transcendent reality of Brahman comprehensible in human experience (the *bhedābhedavādin*); as well as a representative of Śankara's Advaita and of Mīmāmsā.

Most of the argument is devoted to defending the position of the latter, presenting in the outer frame much the same objection as appeared in Śankara's commentary. The Mīmāmsaka rejects either of the assertions that the reality of Brahman might be affirmed by a Vedic injunction. In answer to the first, that Brahman is the object of a command to negate the reality of the created world (*niṣprapañcakaraniyoga*), he denies that any reality can be related to such a command. For it identifies no object. The Dhyānaniyogavādin's position is also refuted, but not before this proponent has had an opportunity to reject both the arguments of the Advaitin and the Bhedābhedavādin. That knowledge of Brahman as the one, transcendent reality is affirmed by scripture, as argued by the Advaitin, is challenged by the Dhyānaniyogavādin because this knowledge, which is conveyed as the object of meditation, is not able to overcome the perception of the created world, the perceived reality of things, as separate from Brahman. Only the act of meditating on this knowledge can make such knowledge real. And as for the Bhedābheda view, in affirming distinctions as conditions of the single reality of Brahman, it does not set forward the unconditioned reality of that Brahman which is to be mediated upon. In refuting in turn the arguments of the *Dhyānaniyogavādin,* the Mīmāmsaka repeats the contention presented in Śankara's commentary that a Vedic command does not either affirm or negate the reality of Brahman. All that is established is the authority of the command itself. If Brahman exists it must be established by some other means than scriptural authority.

Rāmānuja's reply to this argument is significantly different from that of Sankara. It is in the first place in this instance very brief, built upon an extended discussion in the first sūtra, repeated in the *Vedārthasaṁgraha,* on the nature of language and the validity of what is expressed by it. Here his argument issues forth, in effect, in two parables.

Earlier Rāmānuja rejected the Mīmāmsaka arguments that Vedic

statements had unique and incontroverted authority only in the form of an injunction when it communicated a *kārya,* an act to be done. For action occurs not as a result of the authority of a verbal command, but only when there is the desire on the part of the person being commanded to achieve the objective of the action. The authority of an injunction is not then in the imperative mood of its statement : "do this", but rather in the awareness on the part of the hearer : "I am the one who is called." This awareness, based upon his desire to achieve the object of the command, becomes an understanding of purpose which leads to action. [Śrībhāsya, par. 82; Vedārthasaṁgraha, par. 119] The authority of scripture is thus affirmed in whom one understands himself to be rather than in what actions he feels impelled to do.

It is not then the necessity for action which the scriptures communicate, but rather their purport is to communicate that purpose which will stir man to act. And that purpose is expressed in identifying Brahman "whose essential nature is devoid of all evil and consists of unsurpassed bliss" as man's highest goal. It is, in Rāmānuja's words, as though one discovers that there is a treasure hidden in his house, and tries to find it; or as though a prince, who was lost in his childhood and raised by a Brahman in the forest, hears that his father is a great king who rules justly over all the lands, and, in discovering himself in this way, rushes to be united with him again. Such is the purpose which is revealed to man by the Vedic scripture.

Rāmānuja thus agrees with Śankara in affirming that Brahman is the ultimate reality, in knowledge of which man realizes his highest aim. But where for Śankara this knowledge is of one's ultimate identity in Brahman, and thus action becomes irrelevant (having nothing to affirm about either being good or bad), for Rāmānuja this knowledge is of one's ultimate relationship to Brahman, a relationship in which the character of one's action is now purposive and joyful. For Rāmānuja, the role of agency is never to be denied to one's understanding of oneself, and thus the potentiality for action which is both good and bad is always present; even to one who knows Brahman. The quest for both is, however, the same; to comprehend the transcendence of Brahman, in which knowing the appropriate place of action is revealed.

Gandhi's life of action stands in vivid contrast to these two Vedāntins in this respect. Although it would not be right to assume that the manifold depth and quality of his life is yet fully understood, certainly what we do understand of him, in particular through the substantial analysis of Joan Bondurant and, more recently, Erik Erickson, reveals a distinctive and important enough perspective to warrant comparison. For what is distinctive about Gandhi's life raises serious challenges as well as significant affirmations to these

more classical traditions.

It is first of all quite obvious that Gandhi assumes a less traditional stance toward the Vedic scriptures. His life was guided by them, and particularly by his renewed understanding of the *Bhagavad Gītā*, and its affirmation of the role of sacrifice (yajña) in its profoundest religious sense. But he never felt committed either to its unique authority, nor to any specific interpretation of it. As he wrote in *Young India* (September 29, 1920) :

> I do not believe in the exclusive divinity of the Vedas. I believe the Bible, the Quran, and the Zend Avesta to be as much divinely inspired as the Vedas..... I decline to be bound by any interpretation, however derived it may be, if it is repugnant to reason or moral sense. Bondurant [p. 121]

But more significantly, and in more striking contrast to the Vedāntins (for they in fact did not feel bound by interpretation either), he rejected any claim that an experience of truth, or of the ultimate reality of Brahman, God, was possible for him apart from his involvement in human activity. Truth is to be discovered only in the context of action, rather than being affirmed from it. Again, from *Young India* (November 17, 1921) :

> I am but a seeker after truth. I claim to have found the way to it. I claim to be making a ceaseless effort to find it. But I admit that I have not yet found it. Bondurant [p. 17]

The way which Gandhi claims is through the performance within historic situations, that is in those times which call for such decisive human involvement that they become for us unique events, of actions which are both effective and non-violent. Thus Joan Bondurant concludes her discussion of Gandhi's relation to the traditional concept of truth : "The effect of the satyagraha formulation was to transform the absolute truth of the philosophical *Sat* to the relative truth of ethic principle capable of being tested by a means combining non-violent action with self-suffering." Bondurant [p. 111]

The distinctiveness of Gandhi's call for historic action—his inner voice—lies in the way in which the avoidance of harm becomes itself the principle of truth. One aspect of truth is the awareness of the suffering of others, an awareness which leads to the observation of Renou and Erikson concerning the social dimension of Gandhi's action (Erickson, p. 397 : " I think the man was right who said that Gandhi, when he listened to his inner voice, heard the clamour of the people.") : that its truth would never be affirmed apart from the involvement of others, either in terms of their expectation for those who followed him, or of their confrontation for those whom he challenged. An action is true when not only it does not do physical

harm, to another—or more accurately balances the harm done to another with that done to oneself—but also, as Erickson perceives so precisely (Erickson p. 412) when it protects the essence of the other as a developing person.

In this respect, Gandhi stands in contrast with the Mīmāmsaka as well : for as he refuses to absolutize truth, to affirm its reality apart from action, he also refuses to absolutize action. Even the most sacred of acts cannot, as Rāmānuja so clearly agreed, be isolated from the one, or ones, who are acting. The imperative to act is not that in which its truth lies, but rather in its respect for the relationship between persons who are involved in it. For only in its respect for the humanity of those who act can action neither be nor generate violence.

The most decisive criterion for determining the truth of action is, both the most pragmatic and the most far reaching in its implications : that of self-suffering. It is, first of all, a built in limitation based upon nothing beyond one's own experience of how far one wants to push a non-violent action. [Joan Bondurant (p. 10) quotes Clarence Marsh Case : "True non-violent coercion is, and ought to be, a two-edged sword. In other wordes, it causes, and it is well that it should cause, inconvenience and suffering to those who wield it, as well as to those against whom it is invoked."] One will not go beyond that point which involves for him greater suffering than he is willing to bear. And yet its reference to one's own experience is equally significant. For the very experience of bearing the consequences of non-violent action is to lead one into previously undiscovered—unchallenged —recesses of one's own self. Dr. Erikson sees in this challenge of non--violent action the unfolding of the religious dimension of Gandhi's life of truth, what he calls his spiritual power. It is Gandhi's sensitivity to what Erickson calls the nothingness of human exerience that defines him best as a religious man :

> A man who looks through the historical parade of cultures and civilizations, styles, and isms which provide most of us with a glorious and yet miserably fragile sense of immortal identity, defined status, and collective grandeur faces the central truth of an nothingness — and *mirabile dictu*, gains power from it. Erickson [p. 397]

In terms of the action which Gandhi was himself involved in, this sense of the "conscious nothingness," was realized in a self awareness as a participant of his being able to bear all for the sake of achieving his action. Such action became then not self assertive, but self revealing by identifying that for which he was willing to die.

"Therefore I would interpret, and interpret with humility, the truth-force of the religious actualist thus : to be ready to die for what is true now means to grasp the only chance to have lived fully."

Erickson [p. 399]

To isolate this awareness from Gandhi's life of action would be to affirm the experience of transcendence as proposed by the Vedāntin. It is to distinguish between the permanent and the impermanent, and to identify oneself in terms of that reality which transcends oneself. But for Gandhi such a distinguishing and such an identification could not be separated from the actions in which he was involved. His spiritual awareness was spiritual strength, was real for him, only because it was actual, that it was "effectually true in action." Erickson [p. 396]

Gandhi thus stands in contrast to the traditions (and prehaps in this way reveals the greater truth of which the tradition spoke) by retaining the ambiguity between truth and action, in a way that did not destroy the transcendence of the truth which he affirmed but at the same time did not diminish the authority of the imperative which he felt in the call to act on behalf of the people of India. In refusing to absolutize either, but to act the truth, he gave priority to neither. The life which he lived so fully could not be contained by either.

Philosophy as Interpretation of Experience

A. S. Narayana Pillai

The philosophical activity, when it takes place, it can be safely assumed, is a mental activity aimed at the interpretation of life and experience.[1] We are not speaking of the discipline called Mataphysics but of the activity that is philosophising. "Experience is both its root and its theme." But many other human activities too can be said to be concerned with life and experience, art, for instance, drama and poetry. How does philosophy differ from these ?

Philosophy, I suggest, is strictly an *interpretation* of life and experience. Other activities — even mental activities — are concerned with contemplation, explanation, seeking generalisations, predicting and laying down laws.

What is meant by interpretation of life and experience ?

(1) First, life and experience should be taken to include all of life and experience, all the aspects, even those not describable in what are called physical terms. C. D. Broad says, ".....my range of experience, both practical and emotional, is rather exceptionally narrow even for a don.....Moreover, I find it difficult to excite myself very much over right and wrong in practice. I have e. g., no clear idea of what people have in mind when they say that they labour under a sense of sin; yet I do not doubt that in some cases, this is a genuine experience, which seems vitally important to those who have it, and may really be of profound ethical and metaphysical significance. I realise that these practical and emotional limitations may make me blind to certain important aspects of moral experience."[2]

Any serious attempt at philosophical interpretation will have to consider these and other data. The emphasis is on (a) complete open-mindedness, (b) freeing our minds from inherited prejudices in thinking and (c) willingness to contemplate startling possibilities. The rule is, all is grist to the philosopher's mill. There can be no exception to this.

(2) Secondly, interpretation is not just explanation. The word, 'just' is used not in any disparaging sense. Explanation is necessary and immensely useful. In fact, science and practical life depend on explanation to bring order into our lives and make prediction possible. But, philosophical interpretation is not this explanation for the following reasons.

2. (i) Explanation in science and common life means causal explanation only. It is by making use of the principle of causation that explanation is given whatever be the matter under consideration.

The classical definition of causal relation between an event or fact C (the cause) and another event or fact E (the effect) may be summarised in the sentence, " whenever the cause C occurs, then the effect E follows " or briefly " whenever C, then E." The word *whenever* implies that causal chains are *deterministic.*

It can happen that this concept of deterministic casual relation itself is called into question in philosophical interpretation. In fact, science itself has to some extent modified considerably this concept in view of certain new findings.[3]

2. (ii) Explanation in causal terms is based on observed regularities. These relations are then codified into " laws of nature ". Through knowledge of these laws prediction becomes possible. The prediction of future events from our knowledge of past events is, perhaps, the chief, if not the only, function of this explanation. Philosophical interpretation is not concerned with any prediction of future events.

2. (iii) Explanation in science and common life depends on several of what C. D. Broad, in another context, calls " basic limiting principles", one of which is regarding ways of aquiring knowledge. It is " that it is impossible for a person to perceive a physical event or a material thing except by means of sensations which that event or thing provokes in his mind." It will be interesting to go into these limiting principles involved in our scientific and practical explanations but the one just given will suffice as an example.

Philosophical interpretation need recognise no such restrictive principles except the one which serves as its framework i. e., that life and experience are understandable and are intelligible to a human being. To deny this is to deny the possibility of philosophy.

2. (iv) Explanation works in " closed systems ". What is meant is, that a set of concepts, say in Physics, will be used to explain and event falling within the physical aspect of experience. There is no going out in search of chemical or biological concepts for the explanation of this event. Interpretation, on the other hand, *deliberately* goes out to view together aspects of human experience which may be kept apart by the common man and even by the professional scientist, to find out how these various aspects may be inter-related.

The categories of interpretation should be sought and perfected as each problem is handled. The temptation is to search a universally applicable method which will eliminate confusion and error. But this will have to be given up. After all, we know how the Cartesian, the Humean, the Kantian, the verification principle have all showed up their limitations. Perhaps, as Stuart Hampshire suggests,[4] instead of trying to make anything or everything absolutely clear we should make several distinctions *clearer.* This may look difficult to accept and sustain, but, there is everything to be said for "the experimental and

unmethodical procedure, depending only on the insight of individual philosophers."[5] That would mean that philosophy must always be experimental and without predetermined limits or anticipated problems.

1. Even when " all philosophy is a critique of language " *Tractus Logico-Philosophicus*, 4.0031, Wittgenstein) or " a logic of science " (*Logical Syntax of Language*, 279, 281, Carnap)
2. *Five Types of Ethical Theory*, Introduction
3. " It has been found necesary to abandon the idea of rigidly doterministie causal relations, and substitute in its stead relations that are only determined with a certain degree of probability ". " Causality, Determinism and Probability ". J.E. Moyal, *Philosophy*, Vol. XXIV, No. 91. October, 1949, P.310.
4. " Changing Methods in Philosophy ", *Philosophy*, Vol.XXIV, No 97, April, 1951, P. 144.
5. *Ibid*

Theory and Practice in Confucianism

Chung-ying Cheng

Introduction :

There are several basic methodological problems in a study of the relation between theory and practice in Confucianism. First, there is the problem of defining and identifying "theory" or "practice" in Confucianism. The intuitive concept of theory and practice can correspond to a wide range of ideas in Confucian philosophy. A clocse look at Confucian writings will suggest the following correspondence : thinking (*ssu*), language (*yen*), principle (*li*), knowledge (*chih*) correspond generally to the intuitive concept of theory; while learning (*hsueh*), practice or action (*hsing*), establishing (*li*), extending (*tui*), applying (*ssu*) correspond generally to the intutive concept of practice. As these terms indicate different aspec s of practice and theoretical activity, the problem of exact relation between theory and practice must be a highly complicated one. This leads to the second observation on the topic of this article.

The relation between theory and practice has been treated either as one of discrepancy or as one of unity in Chinese philosophy. A related problem is whether knowledge is difficult or easy to obtain and whether practice is difficult or easy to carry out. An answer to these questions has been given as early as the *Book of Documents* : Knowing is difficult; but practice is easy." Precisely how to understand this in the light of Confucianism is an interesting question.

In the following we shall first discuss the relation of theory to practice in Confucius and draw certain theoretical conclusions on the basis of our discussion. Then we shall relate Confucius's views to later Confucian works in the classical period, including the *Great Learning*, the *Doctrine of the Mean* and the *Mencius*. Finally, we shall reformulate the problem of the relation between theory and practice in the context of Wang Yang-ming's philosophy. An analysis of Wang's position will lead to certain important observations on the concepts of theory and practice and their relationships in Chinese philosophy.

Theory and Practice in Confucius

The central concept in Confucianism is *jen*, which is conceived as a paradigm of virtue (*te*) and a principle of humanity. The concept of knowledge (*chih*) is secondary in importance in comparision with the concept of *jen*. After clarifying the significance of knowledge (*chih*) in Confucius, we can raise the question as to how *jen* can be related to *chih*. *Chih* in the usage of Confucius seems to be basically ambivalent.

At least there is the concept of *chih* in the sense of knowing facts and there is concept of *chih* in the sense of knowing values and norms or knowing what one ought to do.

In the first sense of knowledge Confucius speaks of "To see much and know many things, this is knowing in a secondary sense." (*Shu-erh*). He also speaks of "It is possible to know things a hundred generation ago." (*Wei-cheng*) and speaks of "One can know things to come after being told in the past." (*Hsueh-erh*). It is clear that Confucius recognizes the importance of knowledge by experience and induction as important for a superior man. This importance is a practical one as we shall see a little later. Beside knowledge based on experience and induction, Confucius suggests knowledge by reflection and reasoning. He thus speaks of the unworthy case of "Knowing one corner of a thing without reflectively knowing the three corners of a thing." (Shu-erh).

We have no evidence to claim Confucius as holding a doctrine of innate knowledge. From what we can tell from the *Analects*, Confucius is inclined to take the view that knowledge in the sense of knowing facts are results of experience and induction whereas knowledge of generalities of facts must be the upshot of both experience and intelligence at stimulated by experience. Man certainly can not know everything, and according to Confucius, man should recognize the limitation of his knowledge and be honest with what he does know and what he does not know. It is therefore assumed that man can know that he does not know what he does not know and can know that he knows what he does know. This must be some kind of second order knowledge and thus a result of reflection and reasoning. To know that one does not know what one does not know and to know in the second order sense what one does not know is a kind of knowledge, for it is a kind of knowledge reached by means of reflective mind. This being a kind of knowledge means furthermore that one will not act on a proper basis without making a distinction between knowledge and ignorance if he is to act at all.

Confucius stresses the fact that reflective knowledge must be always supported by experience and must be complemented with a process of continuous learning from experience. The term "*hsueh*" (learning) precisely captures the idea of continuous learning from experience. It is fundamental in Confucius's doctrine of virtues. The reason is not difficult to locate. Learning from experience is the only way to reach knowledge corresponding to facts and is the only way to cultivate the desire for truth. It is assumed by Confucius that without learning from experience one will not be able to develop oneself in contact with reality and to apply oneself to reality of human needs and human feelings. Learning from experience is not knowledge itself nor is it virtue itself. But learning from experience can be considered source of

wisdom of life and basis for developing one's potentiality in both knowing and acting. Confucius says:

> "If one loves benevolence, but does not love learning from experience, the weakness is folly; if one loves knowledge, but does not love learning from experience, the weakness is looseness; if one loves integrity, but does not love learning from experience, the weakness is deceptiveness; if one loves uprightness, but does not love learning from experience, the weakness is narrowness; if one loves courage, but does not love learning from experience, the weakness is confusedness; if one loves strength, but does not love learning from experience, the weakness is arrogance."
>
> (Yung-ho)

From the above context one can see that learning from experience is for Confucius in general a process of rectification, cultivation and maturation. Without learning, no virtue and no accomplishment will last. Without learning, every form of good will degenerate and will become a deviation from the mean. In particular we can say that without learning no virtue and no knowledge can guarantee correct practice and action. On this ground, learning from experience can be said to be a mediate step for obtaining knowledge from practice as well as one for incorporating knowledge in practice.

For Confucius, knowledge in the factual sense or in the reflective sense has no meaning in separation from correct practice and action. But they are and can be related by a process of learning from experience. One can regard action and practice as a part of the learning process. One can also regard knowing and thinking as a part of the learning process. The goal of learning by experience is to develop oneself and realize one's potentiality of goodness, to be a true and actualized man who is characterized by having the ultimate virtue of *jen*. In this regard one may indeed regard *jen* as the motivating force for obtaining knowledge of any kind. One may also regard *jen* as a dynamic state of unity of oneself in transforming knowledge into acton and in assimilating action into knowledge. Learning from experience therefore can be regarded as an actual process of unfolding *jen* through interaction between knowing and action. Confucius accentuates this idea by claiming that "Thinking without learning is hazardous; learning without thinking is obscure." (Wei Chen)

From the above, it is clear that knowledge in both the descriptive factual and reflective sense and practice for Confucius are separated, yet can be related through a process of realization of learning from experience, and when thus related, will contribute to the attainment of

the ultimate virtue of *jen*. Now we must ask whether knowledge of values and norms forms a different problem for action in Confucius.

Knowledge of values and norms for Confucius consists of knowing meaning of life (*chih-sheng*), knowing oneself (*chih-chi*), knowing others (*chih-jen*), and knowing what is right thing to do (*chih-yi*). What is knowing the meaning of life? Confucius says: "Not yet being able to serve man, how could I serve spirits?" He further says: "Not yet knowing life, how do I know death?" (Yung-yeh). To know life is to know the potentiality of life for fulfilling values in life. It is to know what one ought to and yet naturally will do in connection with other men and in connection with the world. It is to know what a man can do for achieving harmony and well-being of man. It is to know what one really aspires to and what constitutes nature and destiny of things. It is finally to know how to attain freedom and discipline at the same time. In other words, to know the meaning of life is to know oneself, know others, and know the will of heaven. All these are intimately related and in fact form a dynamic process and an organic unity of knowing and acting. Knowing in this normative sense gives rise to knowledge of values of life and will motivate man toward attaining the values in question. To know in this sense is thus to know not only what to act towards but to know the determination to act toward a goal.

Knowledge of values and norms is directive, restrictive and evaluative and it involves a natural inclination of practicality. It is therefore not a pure and simple cognitive process. It involves an intellectual, a volitional, an emotional, and a pragmatical components. The intellectual component is a cognition of a goal to which the volitional tendency for action can incline oneself. The volitional component is a determination of will toward the goal recognized by the intellect. The emotional component is a sense of urgency and sentiment of existential relevance for action toward the recognized value. It is that strength which supports, sustains, and preserves the determination of will. Finally, the pragmatic component of knowledge of values is nothing other than the performance or fulfilment of knowing which creates a readiness for action. It is the element by virtue of existence of which man can be said to be a doer, an agent.

Given the above analysis of various components of knowledge of values and norms and the process of knowing in the normative sense, we must keep in mind that for Confucius knowing in the normative sense (*chih-sheng*, *chih-chi*, *chih-jen* and *chih-yi*) is a natural, rational and creative process. Several things can be said about this process of knowing in the normative sense. First, knowing in the normative sense is considered by Confucius the most fundamental knowing. It incorporates knowledge in the descriptive sense but it is more than just knowledge in the descriptive sense. Because it involves a knowledge which moti-

vates and a motivation which generates intellectual cognition. It is an interaction of mind with world in the direction of actualizing a value recognized by mind. It is an activity of nature (*hsing*), not just an impression of mind (*hsin*). As knowledge of values presents a natural tendency toward action, there is no doubt about the directiveness and purposiveness of this tendency toward action. It therefore involves a state of mentality in freedom from hesitancy and arbitrariness. Thus Confucius says : "The one who knows has no doubts (*huo*)." (*Yen-yuan*). The implication of this proposition is that a person without knowledge of values will not be able to act with a clear goal in view nor with a determination of will. He will be simply unmotivated and can not be said to be able to act at all. This means that having knowledge of values is having a readiness to act and having a consistency and coherence in acting.

Second, knowledge of values is to be understood against a background of action and can not be accomplished unless actions are actually involved. This means that the very concept of knowledge of values (in the case of knowing oneself, others, life and righteousness) logically involves the concept of action as a presupposition, not only as a consequence. It is in this sense knowledge of values is considered a virtue in conjunction with the other two virtues : benevolence and courage. Like the virtue of benevolence, we must not simply know what the values are or that values are values but know how to act on knowledge of values. In other words, one must have acted in accordance with knowledge of values. For a disposition to act can only be identified on the basis of accomplished action. This can be easily understood in the case of benevolence: a man is benevolence not simply because he knows what benevolence is by definition, but that he can identify it is action and that he can and indeed have performed the action of benevolence so that his identification can be said to be reliable.

All virtues involves an initial transformation of the person who knows virtues. Because he can not know until he already participated in the formation of virtues. This is true of knowledge of values. That knowledge of values presupposes accomplished practice in accordance with knowledge of values can be understood as simply the following: Knowledge of values presupposes a process of learning from experience. It is essentially a natural product of human experience. Third, knowledge of values involves a practical flexibility in realizing values as recognized by a person. This practical flexibility consists in being able to apply a principle to variety of particular cases without doing injustice to both the principle and the particular cases. This is the so-called knowing righteousness or "concentrating on righteousness of people". (*wu-min-chih-yi*). Righteousness is a value which is unique relative to every unique situation. To have knowledge of values is to be able to see a

fitting action for a situation and act accordingly. It involves a practical perceptiveness and a flexible management. It is thus highly creative and represents the primodial insights for ideal and good action.

Finally, Confucius's doctrine of knowledge of values simply indicates the important fact that virtues as forms of good are good relative to a set of conditions and is not ready made as a mode of intuition. In fact, the imporant fact is that good practice or good action can not be said to be good without a rational element of knowing. Consciousness of good in knowledge of values is however merely a necessary condition for knowledge of values. It is necessary for any form of goodness that an element of perception of good must be present. Good can not even be defined without involving knowledge or consciousness of good or of what good is. Good action thus by its very nature involves an element of consciousness of good. This answers to the Socratic dictum: Knowledge is virtue. But we must keep in mind that this knowledge in question is primarily knowledge of values and thus already forms an unity of theory and practice. Good is partially theoretical and partially practical. Good obtains when there is an element of self-effort.

Theory and Practice in the Great Learning, the Doctrine of the Mean, and the Mencius

As we have seen, Confucius has presented two fundamental concepts of knowledge in the *Analects*. In later Confucian writing such as the *Great learning*, the *Doctrine of the Mean* and the *Mencius*, the main concern is apparently knowledge of values and norms or knowledge in the normative sense. The practical, the volitional and the emotional elements of this knowledge are in particular explicitly given a focus. Thus in the *Great Learning*, it is initially stated the following:

> "The way of the Great Learning consists in illuminating the illustrious virtue, in loving people and in resting in supreme goodness. When one *knows* where to rest, one will then have concentration; when one has concentration, one will then have tranquility; when one has tranquility, one will then be composed; when one is composed, one will be able to deliberate; when one deliberates, one will then gain something. Things have its fundamentals and its non-fundamentals. Affairs have ending and beginning. If one *knows* which comes before and which comes after, one will be close to the way. (Italics mine)

The illuminating and knowing in this quotation clearly are not simply knowing what to do and how to do a certain thing, but knowing what is right to do and knowing what one is capable of doing and thus

knowing the readiness and actual performance of action worthy of knowing. They indicate therefore a practical attitude and a state of mind the accomplishment of which already presupposes and symbolizes attainment of a disposition and capability for practice.

The *Great Learning* goes further to specify steps of developments of knowing in this normative sense. These steps involve many commitments of action and many achievements of practical attitudes, and thus presents a coherent sequence of cultivation in both a mental and a behavioral sense. It is said in the *Great Learning*:

> " In the ancient time, when one wishes to illuminate the illustrious virtue in the world, one will first of all govern well his state; when one wishes to govern well one's state, one will first of all regulate one's family; when one wishes to regulate one's family, one will first of all cultivate one's person; when one wishes to cultivate one's person, one will first of all rectify one's mind; when one wishes to rectify one's mind, one will first of all make sincere one's intentions; when one wishes to make sincere one's intentions, one will first of all extend one's knowledge. Extending of knowledge consists in investigating things."

Like the concept of illumination, the concepts of governing well, regulating, cultivating, rectifying, and making sincere, can be said to be both a practical disposition and an actual performance, aside from being an intellectual recognition and affirmation of values and goals. Thus they are knowledge of values and norms in our sense. What is significant in this connection is that all these terms combine to indicate an organic interrelatedness among practical dispositions and actual performances involved.

No disposition toward an action and no performance of an action is an isolated matter, but instead will lead to other actions and other dispositions in an order of development and presupposition. The sequence of steps in the above presents an order of presupposition. But in the same context the order of development is also explicitly stated:

> " When one has investigated things, one will have extended one's knowledge; when one has extended one's knowledge, one will have made his intentions sincere; when one has made his intentions sincere, one will have rectified one's mind; when one has rectified one's mind, one will have cultivated one's person; when one has cultivated one's person, one will have regulated one's family; when one has regulated one's family, one will have governed well one's state; when one has governed well one's state, one will have pacified the whole world."

If we look into the individual explanations in the *Great Learning* of making sincere one's intentions, rectifying one's mind, cultivating one's person, regulating one's family, governing well one's state, and pacifying the world or illuminating the illustrious virtue in the world, it is clear that these steps all are explicitly and intimately related to certain modes of mental disposition and patterns of behaviour. Thus, for example, making sincere one's intentions involves a determination to be honest with one's likes and dislikes; rectifying one's mind involves a state of mind in freedom from undesirable emotions such as anger and fear; regulating one's family involves an attitude of love and a dislike toward those worthy of love and those deserving aversion: It therefore involves a tendency to act in accordance with the attitudes of love and dislike. Governing well a state involves practice of virtues such as brotherhood, filial peity and kindness. All these must be exhibited in actual relationships among men. Finally, to pacify the world one must follow the principle of reciprocity in every action and in every relationship. It is said in the *Great Learning*:

> " What one dislikes from the above, one will not apply to the below; what one dislikes from the below, one will not serve the above; what one dislikes from the front, one will not apply to the behind; what one dislikes from the behind one will not apply to the front; what one dislikes from the right, one will not apply to the left; what one dislikes from the left, one will not apply to the right."

Thus the ruler must make himself a paradigm of virtue in his dealing with people before his people can actually follow him.

We may conclude our discussions on the *Great Learning* with two remarks: First, it is clear that these steps in developing oneself are intimately related not only in a sequence of presupposition, but in an order of development. They are furthermore intimately related in an order of growing from within to without. The steps of making sincere one's intentions, rectifying one's mind, and cultivating one's person are more or less predominantly a dispositional trait with relatively little reference to overt behaviour. On the other hand, regulating a family, governing well a state, and pacifying the world are predominantly dispositions based on performance of virtues and thus involve much more action in one's dealing with the world and other men. The relation between attainment within and achievement without forms a unity and a dynamical whole—the attainment within will lead to achievement without and achievement without will lead to a more solified attainment within. The growing process of one's practical personality is a result

of interaction between attainment within and achievement without.

Second, we have intentionally ignored the practical significance of the steps called "extending knowledge" and investigating things". The interpretation of these two steps constitutes a controversial point for later Confucianists and Neo-Confucianists in the Sung-Ming period. Apparently we can identify the knowledge in question with either descriptive knowledge or knowledge of values and norms. In Neo-Confucianism, Cheng Yi and Chu Hsi incline to interpret them in terms of descriptive knowledge, whereas Lu Hsiang-shan and Wang Yang-ming exclusively interpret them in terms of normative and evaluative knowledge. In the full context of the *Great Learning*, extending knowledge by way of investigating things certainly is not merely descriptive knowledge as such, nor simply normative and evaluative knowledge as such. It necessarily involves descriptive knowledge, because it refers to things outside one's mind and because in the tradition of Confucian teaching, knowing things descriptively can bear upon one's action by making correct judgment possible. But it is more than merely descriptive knowledge, for it must entail cultivation of one's intentions and rectification of mind, both being practical achievements. Thus it must involve a practical dimension of commitment to values and goals and thus forms a normative knowledge. To be fair to the rich ambiguity of the concept of knowledge in this context, our suggestion is that it represents a kind of synthesis of descriptive knowledge and normative knowledge so that the former will serve to solidify and support the latter. It is thus a kind of achievement of fundamental nature of man — an intellectual-practical complex or self-conscious dispositions in balance with affairs of the world. Even when Cheng Yi and Chu Hsi come to interpret this knowledge in terms of understanding *li* (principles), they are not exempted from a practical concern. That this is clear is evidenced by their conceiving understanding *li* as a foundation of one's cultivation of oneself into a better person.

In the *Doctrine of the Mean* knowledge of values and norms still is the only concern. Man is clearly conceived as forming a unity with the ultimate reality called heaven (*tien*), and is furthermore conceived as being able to actualize potentiality of goodness in concrete situations which bear on things in the world and on other men. To follow nature so that man will naturally realize his potential goodness is so-called the way. To consciously and conscientiously cultivate the natural process of realization of potential goodness is called teaching and education. These fundamental ideas no doubt point to a natural and inborn ability of man to pursue good toward perfection. Perhaps by making clear the meaning of good in man, we shall be in a better position to determine the significance of normative knowledge in the *Doctrine of the Mean.*

In an ontological sense good is nothing other than the heavenly-endowed nature and the naturally pursued way of realization of the heavenly-endowed nature. More specifically, the *Doctrine of the Mean* conceives goodness as a state of equilibrium as well as a state of harmonization. It says:

> "When joy, anger, sorrow, and mirth are not released (from mind), (the nature) is called a state of equilibrium; when these are released and respond correctly to their targets, (the nature) is called a state of harmony. Equilibrium is the great root of the world; harmonization is the attained way of the world. In being able to fulfil equilibrium and harmonization, heaven and earth will be well-positioned and ten thousand things well-nourished."

The state of equilibrium is a state of relative rest in which all emotions are unaroused. If there is any knowledge related to this state of equilibrium, it must be a natural sense of equilibrium given by nature. The state of harmonization is a state of relative motion in which emotions are aroused and yet fulfilled in the sense that the aroused emotions satisfy certain purposes of the growth of life. The arousing of emotions can be simply regarded as a necessary step in developing oneself in relation wilh others. The satisfaction of these emotions can be regarded as achievement of values in concrete situations of life. These values are all characterized by attainment of harmony in actuality. The attainment of harmony in question is indicated by a well-ordered relationship among things and by a natural tendency to act and grow among all things. Thus harmonization is a higher form of goodness than that of equilibrium and indeed is the goal for a state of equilibrium to attain. From this point of view, potential goodness in man begins with equilibrium and aims at harmonization as the goal of its actualization. In fact the relative relationship between equilibrium and harmonization can be further explained as a constant interchange.

Equilibrium is equilibrium relative to a state of motion and response: it can be regarded as a form of achieved harmonization as well, simply because harmonization is harmonization only relative to a state of rest and tranquility. It can be regarded as a form of settling equilibrium and therefore a beginning state for a higher form harmonization. Thus potential good in man can be conceived as the dimension of consistency of equilibrium with the dimension of harmonization in a dynamic continuous process of development, reorganization, reordering, growth, and creation. The ultimate good of this development is well indicated by the *Doctrine of the Mean.*

> "Only the most sincere in the world can fulfil one's nature. Having fulfilled one's nature, he is capable

> of doing all things. He is capable of participating in the creative and nourishing activities of heaven and earth and forms a unity with heaven and earth."

The most sincere in the world is one who can hold his equilibrium as a starting point for harmonization among all things. The ideas of fulfilment of one's nature, nature of others, and all things in the world, can be understood as a gradual achievement of equilibrium and harmonization within oneself, of equilibrium and harmonization between oneself and others and, finally, of equilibrium and harmonization among all things. The ultimate goal is a reasserted unity of oneself with the total reality in a conscious creative activity of perfection and realization.

Now if we regard the above depicted process as a process of knowing in the normative sense, we can immediately see that in this sense of normative knowing, action and consciousness of action not only form two dimensions of the man of the normative knowing, but form a process of interaction between the two, which leads the knower to a greater state of being and achievement. In knowing values and norms one is engaged in becoming them and in creating them. Knowing in this sense has great ontological and cosmological significance. This is clearly stated in the *Doctrine of the Mean* in following terms : " Being sincere, one becomes enlightened in understanding; being enlightened in understanding, one becomes sincere." Being sincere is the root of creative action of a man, which is bound to lead to an understanding of truth. But a genuine understanding of truth will naturally reinforce the inclination to embody truth, to seek truth and even to create truth. The process of knowing in the normative sense, in other words, has the power of transforming oneself, others and the world in accordance with values envisioned by mind. Furthermore, it has the power of generating values in natural unison with reality of the world. This is the very secret of knowing in the normative sense as revealed by the *Doctrine of the Mean.* It says :

> " To accomplish oneself is a matter of *jen* (benevolence) ; to accomplish all things is a matter of knowledge (*chih*). These are virtues of the nature. These represent the unification of the way within and the way without. These preserve the propriety of time and situation. "

The knowledge in quotation is precisely knowing in the normative sense, which we have discussed in the light of intercharge between preserving the potential (equilibrium) and fulfilling the potential (harmonization) in a unity of understanding and existential performance.

As we come to Mencius, the problem of relationship between

knowledge and action assumes a new aspect. It becomes the problem of how one should preserve the natural and inborn sense of right and good and extend it to cover every phase of one's living and activity. For the knowledge in question is again no more than knowledge in the normative sense, and the action in question is no more than the action in fulfilling the potentiality of a man. Though Mencius does recognize the relevance of knowledge of facts for making correct judgments, he has laid exclusive emphasis on knowledge of norms and values as a matter of inborn nature of man. He explicitly formulates the foundation of normative and evaluative knowledge in terms of inborn nature of man. He does this in two steps : First, he argues that human nature is inherently good. The inherent goodness of man consists in man's potentiality for achieving harmony within oneself and a unity of consciousness with things in the world. We shall explain this a little later.

The goodness of the nature of man is evidenced by natural feelings and sentiments of various virtues. There are four such fundamental feelings and sentiments : They are feelings and sentiments of compassion, shame, modesty or reverence, and the distinction between right and wrong. These feelings and sentiments are natural and can be immediately experienced under proper circumstances. In fact, according to Mencius, these feelings and sentiments are so natural and universal that nobody can as a matter of fact escape from them. They are beginnings of virtues such as benevolence, righteousness, propriety and wisdom. These virtues are contents of human goodness, the fulfilment of which ensures a state of harmonization and a state of well-being of all things in the world, including men. In experiencing these fundamental feelings and sentiments, one will naturally come to know what values and norms of action are and will naturally feel inclined to act accordingly. This shows that knowledge of values and norms are rooted in the pre-existence (or endowment) of values and norms in the nature of man and that the practicality of such knowledge is derived from the fact that by nature man desires to fulfil his feelings and sentiments in a process of interacting with other men.

The second important point in Mencius in regard to the foundation and nature of normative and evaluative knowledge is that man not only naturally comes to exhibit basic feelings and sentiments of virtue, they also come naturally to know what is good and bad and hold to the good through this knowing. Mencius calls this knowledge inborn knowledge of goodness *(liangchih)*. It is the natural reflection on what one could correctly do, which carries with it a power and inclination to determine the goal of development. The difference between this inborn ability of knowing and that of exhibiting basic feelings and sentiments is that the latter is an existential state involving behaviour which leads to achievement of a certain understanding,

knowledge and perception. On the other hand, the former is considered by Mencius ontological foundation of virtues in that it gives unity to feelings and sentiments of virtue and in that it makes all feelings and sentiments possible. Furthermore, it entails proper action and preserves proper practice.

Mencius speaks of *liang-chi* as that knowing or knowledge free from deliberations. This of course shows the intuitive character of *liang-chih*. This seems to correspond to the concept of enlightenment in understanding (*ming*) in the *Doctrine of the Mean*. But it is more than *ming* in the *Doctrine of the Mean*, for it incorporates all virtuous responses in life situation and reveals an effort to hold to these responses so that they can extend into firm virtues. This is the true source of practicality of knowledge in values and norms.

In concluding, for Mencius the ultimate goal of life is to hold one's mind or *liang-chih* for the development of the whole man and whole mankind in accordance with *liang-chih*. He speaks of acquiring "the great flood of breath" *(hao-jan-chih-chi)* in a person as an ideal of perfection. It can be seen that knowledge in Mencius has all practical power because it is based on the practical power of life.

Wang Yang-ming and Unity of Theory and Action:

In the tradition of Confucianism, Wang Yang-ming, the Neo-Confucianist in the Ming dynasty, has concentrated on the issue of the relationship between knowledge and action. He is opposed to Cheng Yi and Chu Hsi in their assumed separating knowledge from moral practice. This opposition in fact goes deeper than the apparent separation of intellectual knowledge from moral practice. It is an opposition to their assumed separating the objective perspective of understanding from the subjective perspective of commitment to value and action. We shall not have space to deal with this topic on the Neo-Confucianist controversy on the relationship between knowledge and action with regard to Cheng Yi, Chu Hsi and Wang Yang-ming. We shall only investigate how Wang Yang-ming contributes to an understanding of the relationship between knowledge and action in the Confucian philosophy.

In the first place, Wang holds the thesis of unity between knowledge and practice. There are two meanings of this thesis. The first meaning of this thesis is that knowledge without action can not lead to real understanding of principles of things and can not be considered an achievement of the mind. In this interpretation the so-called knowledge is taken in the general sense, which therefore includes both descriptive knowledge and evaluative knowledge. Knowledge in general is closely related to action, because, knowledge must be based on a process of learning (*hsueh*) and no process of

learning is separated from action. This clearly is a classical point from Confucius, which Wang simply elaborates. Wang gives the example of learning filial piety and the example of learning archery. In learning filial piety, the learner must actually serve parents in order to know what filial piety means. In learning archery, one must learn how to pull the bow and aim at the target in order to learn how to do archery. In both cases practice is involved before even knowledge can be claimed. Wang then generalizes to every case of knowledge learning and advances his thesis of unity of knowing and acting by coordinating both in a process of learning. Clearly Wang is correct in doing this if he can prove that all cases of knowing are knowing how. But he did not make a distinction between knowing that, knowing what and knowing how. It may be assumed that in general he conceives knowing that and knowing what as initially and eventually involving knowing how. His point is a strong one in light of the fact that we have to learn to know that and know what. The key word "learning" provides a context for relating knowing that and knowing what to knowing how and therefore to acting and practicing of some kind. Learning in his use specifically consists of steps of inquiring, thinking, and distinguishing and confirming in reality. All these are bound to bear upon action of one kind or the other. (see his *Chuan Hsi Lu, Letter to Ku Tung-chaou*).

The deeper sense of unity between knowledge and action for Wang Yang-ming consists in identifying act of knowing with act of practice and in identifying act of practice with act of knowing. He says: "Where one knows in most authentic and real sense, there is acting; where one acts in most perceptive and discerning way, there is knowing. The cultivation of knowing and acting can not originally be separated." (*ibid*) From this statement Wang seems to believe that knowing and acting are mutually inclusive in an ontological sense and each will immediately involve the other. The question is how to understand this. Several things perhaps can be said: First, for Wang the very concept of acting depends on the concept of knowing for correct understanding. One can not be said to act if there is no knowledge involved in the actor and if the actor does not know the significance or value of his acting. On the other hand, one will not understand knowing without having the disposition to act and without in fact acting. For Wang conceives knowing as a matter of deep experience and commitment and not as a simple matter of conceptualization. Instead, he conceives knowing as a matter of orientation of life. From this point of view, knowledge clearly presupposes act of some kind and will give rise to action and indeed will not be vividly realized apart from a process of practice. Thus leads to a second observation.

In the intimate sense of commitment to value and action, know-

ledge in Wang's use is clearly knowledge of values and norms and can not be simply knowledge of facts. Knowledge of values and norms is more explicitly and powerfully presented in Wang than in any earlier writers. In fact, Confucianists, including Confucius, merely implicitly assume a distinction between knowledge of facts and knowledge of values. It is Wang who first insists on the primary and exclusive importance of knowledge of values and norms apart from that of facts. It is also Wang who first takes unity with action as a dominating characteristic of knowledge. Thus, on this basis, as our third observation, Wang formulates his doctrine of fulfilment of inborn knowledge of goodness. (*chih-liang-chih*). Wang inherits Mencius's view on the natural and necessary realization of knowledge of good and right and expounds it to give substance to his doctrine of unity of knowledge and action.

As knowledge of values and norms must have an origin and a potential for development, Wang identifies this origin with the inborn sense of distinction between good and bad, right and wrong in Mencius's sense. But he goes a step further than Mencius in holding that this inborn sense of distinction between good and bad, right and wrong is the substance of mind in which all principles and truths are virtually presented. Thus to develop and actualize this inborn sense of good and right is to fulfil the natural potentiality of mind. This means that mind is by nature practically directed toward values which its natural perception discerns. The perception can be strengthened by action which again will strengthen the perception of values and commitment to them. Unity of knowledge and action thus becomes ultimately a matter of unity between the objective world and the subjective discerning mind.

Finally, Wang's thesis on unity between knowledge and action involves the *Chung Yung* thesis on equilibrium and harmonization of mind as two dimensions of the mean. Wang holds in general that there is no alienation and no separation between equilibrium and harmonization of the mind as there is no separation between knowledge and action. Equilibrium represents the initial perception and potential commitment to good, whereas harmonization represents the consequential realization and actual fulfilment of good in the interaction between the tendency toward equilibrium and the tendency toward harmonization in mind. The unity of knowledge and action therefore becomes a natural phase of the activity of nature of man.

We must point out that Wang fails to stress or perhaps to see the dialectical relation between knowing and acting as he fails to stress and see the dialectical relationship between equilibrium and harmonization of nature. Our suggestion is as follows: State of equilibrium naturally leads a state of harmonization, which again can be considered a state of harmonization of a higher form of fulfilment and

thus a beginning stage for further harmonization and fulfilment of values. Similarly, knowing in the very beginning involves practicality which can be regarded as giving rise a higher form of knowing with larger scope of practicality, and will continue into a higher form of practical knowing again. This dynamic and dialectical process of growth will constitute the creative process of self-fulfilment and self-cultivation into sageliness as conceived by classical Confucian philosophers.

Concluding Remarks:

In the above we have discussed various views in Confucianism on the relationship between knowledge and action. We have specifically distinguished between two senses of knowledge in the *Analects*: knowledge in the descriptive sense and knowledge in the normative and evaluative sense. We have seen that for Confucius knowledge in both senses are related to action, but knowledge in the normative and evaluative sense, i.e. knowledge of values and norms, is most fundamental in developing and fulfilling the potential nature of man. Furthermore, even in Confucius knowledge in the normative and evaluative sense has to be understood in a context of action and actual doings of man in relation to or in regard to other men. It naturally leads to a moral practice which in turn enriches knowledge of values and norms. In later developments of Confucianism, we have seen that this normative and evaluative knowledge has been greatly elaborated and has been considered the ultimate end of life to attain.

We have pointed out that knowledge itself is conceived as a dynamic process of self-realization and self-fulfilment of one's nature. It combines a perception of life, an ideal of reality, a determination of will, and an actual efficiency to concentrate on sharpening the perception, fulfilling the ideal and preserving the determination. In the terminology of the *Chung Yung*, the dialectical relationship between enlightenment and being sincere, and that between equilibrium and harmonization, have been discussed by us and have been used to elucidate the dynamic and dialectical relationship between moral knowing and moral doing. It is on this basis we have further examined Wang Yang-ming's doctrine of unity between knowledge and action. We have found that even though basically inadequate, the doctrine is useful and meaningful for explaining relationship between knowing and doing in terms of personal experience.

To sum up, there are four important contributions of Confucianism to the understanding of the relation between knowledge and action. First, practical knowledge or knowledge in the normative and evaluative sense is knowledge because it involves an understanding of one's own nature and nature of things in general. It is practical because it is prompted by certain natural realization of potentiality of

life in action and is directed toward attaining a goal of perfection as recognized by mind in its self-understanding. Practical knowledge therefore is both ontological and practical, both a perception of value and a rule of action. It must be understood in a background theory of human nature and its relation to ultimate reality.

Second, practical knowledge is naturally obtained in the realization of human nature. It can be refined and cultivated by self-reflection, realization and understanding of reality and an effort to achieve equilibrium and harmonization both within and without. Confucianists hold the primary importance of developing the natural need for practical knowledge and the ultimate importance for its full consummation, which consists in a state of freedom and creativity. Confucianists further claim that it is in this development and accomplishment of practical knowledge that man will be happy and well preserved, while everything else will be secondarily important in relation to the attainment of practical knowledge: i.e., attainment of other things can be justified with reference to the attainment and perfection of practical knowledge, and practical knowledge alone is capable of transforming a man from a lesser state to a greater state of perfection. Thus descriptive knowledge on the basis of which scientific and theoretical knowledge can develop is always held secondary and subject to the consideration of its uses for practical knowledge. In other words, descriptive knowledge must be reaffirmed in a system of values and norms and therefore given a normative and evaluative content. In this fashion, descriptive knowledge can be related to moral and practical action in life against a background of achieved and projected values and rules of action.

Third, descriptive knowledge in Confucius and perhaps in some Neo-Confucianists however still can be interpreted as of practical concern: it can be related to action in a process of learning. Learning means empirical inquiry involving various performances such as actual observation, checking and correcting, and applying to concrete cases etc. Thus even descriptive knowledge has its neutral pragmatic significance.

Finally, the Confucianist position on primacy and ultimacy of practical knowledge brings up the difficult problem of how to relate practical knowledge to theoretical knowledge in modern science. While Confucianists may not necessarily despense with theoretical knowledge in science in favour of practical knowledge, they will naturally regard the latter as most worthy of our attention and the former as only an outgrowth of intellectual interest which has no natural relevance for attaining the goal of total life. Confucianists will not accept the Kantian position by dividing the former and the latter into two different domains of activity, which are unrelated to each other. They will nevertheless agree with Kant in regarding

practical knowledge as ontological and pertaining to the noumenon of man, but they will not regard intellectual understanding as a self-sufficient activity. On the contrary, the latter must be always subservient to the practical interests of man through affirmation of primacy and ultimacy of natural practicality of man as a whole.

We might therefore suggest that the modern problem of relating knowledge to action in the light of our study of Confucianism entails three fundamental considerations. First, it entails consideration as to how to coordinate and relate knowledge to action in a given system or process of action or in a given system of knowledge or a process of knowing. Second, it entails consideration as to how to define, describe and justify the best system of knowledge and action in which knowledge in different senses can be related to action in different senses. Finally and specifically, it entails consideration as to how to relate morality to developed science and activity in art in the best system of knowledge and action.

Karman

[An Indian Concept for the Spiritual Understanding of Action and its possible Implications for Western Thinking.]

M. Vereno

In the longest, possibly the oldest and also the most highly esteemed of all Upaniṣads, the *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, we read in the 3rd chapter how Janaka, king of Videha, arranged for a contest among his Brahmins who of them would prove to be the wisest. The great sage Yājñavalkya is questioned by one after the other. His dialogue with Ārtabhāga, of the line of Jāratkāru culminates in a surprising way with a verse which seems well to deserve to initiate our reflections on the concept of *karman*.

> 'Yājñavalkya', said he, 'when the speech of this dead person enters into fire, the breath into air, the eye into the sun, the mind into the moon, hearing into the quarters, the self into the other, the hairs of the body into the herbs, the hairs of the head into the trees and the blood and the semen are deposited in water, what then becomes of this person?' 'Ārtabhāga, my dear, take my hand. We two alone shall know of this, this is not for us two (to speak of) in public.' The two went away and deliberated. What they said was *karman* and what they praised was *karman*. Verily one becomes good by good *karman*, bad by bad *karman*. Therefore, Ārtabhāga Jāratkārava kept silent.[1]

This answer stands out against all the others by which Yājñavalkya silences his challengers. Here he does not triumphantly proclaim his superiority in sacred knowledge, rather he invites his opponent to share with him the intimacy of mystery. And the sense of awe and secrecy that we experience in these lines is intensified by the fact that they do not provide us with any understandable explanation, any rational answer. The theme of their secret conversation was "Karman"—but this is a word of everyday language: In what sense is it meant here? The question was: *kvāyaṁ tadā puruṣo bhavatīti* (*kva ayam tadā puruṣaḥ bhavati iti*) —where, verily, will then this person be? or: where will he become? And instead of an answer regarding the place—or the spaceless sphere of being—we hear: *puṇyo vai puṇyena karmaṇā bhavati*—good, indeed, one becomes by good karman—*pāpaḥ pāpeneti*—bad by bad (namely, karman).

And yet, this cryptic answer — which does not seem to be an answer at all — leads us right into the centre of a deeper and fuller understanding of life, handing to us, as it were, a secret key in form of one of the key terms which the metaphysical genius of India has coined: karman — *work*, in the double meaning of the English word i.e. *action* as well as *effect*, but with broader and deeper significance and with far more variegated shades of signification. The English word means *piece* of work as well as *act* of working, but it certainly could not be used concretely in such a multivalent and synthetic way as the Sanskrit term.

This, then, is the first instruction we receive from our Upanishadic passage — instruction regarding the character of the word as well as regarding the structure of the reality to which it refers: *The action and its effect are inseparable.* There is no effect as a separate entity whereat the act might aim or which it might strive to attain. Rather, the effect is inevitably *in* the act, constituting its very nature, or being constituted by it — however one may wish to put it.

This, the inner structure of "work" or "action", will in the following be considered: first, on the philosophical level; then on the religious level, in a more general way; and finally with reference to specific religious conceptions, i.e. Indian (Hindu — Buddhist) on the one side, Biblical (Judaeo — Christian) on the other. Making this tri-partition, we shall remain conscious of the fact that there cannot be a rigid separation between these three spheres, and that exactly our central theme, karman, requires us to acknowledge their indissoluble interrelation. Nevertheless, this structure will allow us to proceed in a more methodical way.

I. *Subjective and objective aspect of Karman.*

(1)

Our metaphysical understanding, in so far as it implies reflex processes presupposes the distinction and polarization of subject and object. By "doing" both are related, i.e. *karaṇa* unites the "doer", *kartṛ*, with the "deed", *kārya* — and this very unity is stressed in the more general and comprehensive term *karman*. It indicates that the deed involves the doer not only as a cause, but also as an effect: for we are "affected" by whatever we do.

"By good work one becomes good": There is, strictly speaking, no repetition of works possible. Seemingly the same deed, performed a second time, cannot be the same any more; for doing it, at the first occasion, has changed the doer — and thus, being performed by a changed subject, the objective deed at the second instance could not really be equal to the first.

Habitually, we are somewhat unprecise in using the word "the

same" — it correctly should be used in case of "numerical identity" only, otherwise two phenomena would be "equal". But this brings us to the point: As "equal" one can consider two actions only if one leaves the actor out of consideration. For the subject is never the same, even if it be the same personality: Concretely, it will be different on account of different conditions. And then the actions will not be "equal" but *analogous*. The subject, in turn, is conditioned not just by so many circumstances but, above all, by his own previous actions. There is a circle or, rather, a bi-focal ellipse of causation: *In creating karman, the subject is by karman created.*

The Upanishadic quotation with which we started does not speak just of any karman, but of *puṇya* and *pāpa*, good and bad, or evil. And thus it introduces the *moral* distinction and, with this, the idea of *reward* — which Westerners generally think of first when speaking about karman. They think of an inexorable law of retribution: He who did something good, receives something good, or the reverse. But, actually, there cannot be such a "thing" (some-thing, a good thing) separate from the doer, the doing and the done. And this holds true not only for the black-and-white sketch of moral opposites, but rather of *any* quality, value or spritual significance. As any action inevitably bears the imprint of the acting person, so the person receives upon himself and within himself the exact correspondence of his acts.

And precisely because no action ever is absolute — i.e. unrelated to the actor —, so this its effect cannot be derived from outward, objective criteria: It is the *person's* deed that falls back on the person. The character of the action is essentially conditioned by the actor's inner disposition, his intention or his "desire": *kāma* is the intrinsically conditioning factor in karman. This insight is stressed in another verse of the same Upanishad:

> According as one acts, according as one behaves, so does he become... Others, however, say that a person consists of desires. As is his desire so is his will; as is his will, so is the deed he does, whatever deed he does, that he attains.[2]

(2)

Before pursuing this line any further, we now turn our attention to the very opposite, seemingly contradicting fact that any deed is, essentially and in a very real sense, *objectification*: In being done by the subject, it passes over from potentiality to actuality and thus acquires existence of its own, independent of its author. And this applies not only to so-called "external" deeds, that are done with the hand (*kara*, wherefrom the word karman is derived, as the German *Handlung* from *Hand*), but also, if in a lesser degree, to words and

even mere thoughts: They too are, once articulated, objective entities (regardless whether other people know them or not). They share the characteristic of all deeds: *Once done, nothing in the world can undo them.* Karman, understood in this sense, cannot be recalled. It leaves the womb of potentiality and enters the web of universal connections and configurations, causing it somehow to change, upsetting — if only to an infinitesimal degree — its ever precarious balance. Saṅkara uses the image of an arrow shot from the bow[3]: It pursues its course regardless of whether the shooter afterwords may have changed his mind. Nay, even if the archer may regret it — the arrow will hit the aim at which it was directed when it sprang from the bow string.

Here, again, the action and its effect are not to be separated, both are one. And also in this respect — no less than with regard to the subject, as considered in the preceding paragraph — the effects are inevitable. If the good act improves the acting person, it also improves the field of action, i.e, the world as a whole. And if the person is conditioned in manifold ways by the circumstances of outer nature — and is, for that reason, a *historical* being —, so, conversely, this nature is pervaded by spiritual impulses, i.e. personal intentions and significations,

We know that Sāṅkhya philosophy and in its wake the Yoga system have described this enigmatic polarity in terms of two ontological principles that were, theoretically, considered as separate: *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*. The *Bhagavadgītā* takes up this distinction in its chapter on "The field and the knower of the field" where we read the interesting verse

> kārya karaṇa kartṛtve
> hetuḥ prakṛtir ucyate
> puruṣah sukhaduḥkhānāṁ
> bhoktṛtve hetur ucyate

Prakṛti is said to be the cause in regard to effect, instrument and agent (ness); puruṣa is said to be the cause in regard to the experience of pleasure and pain.[4]

We shall return to the Bhagavadgītā later on. Here we are interested only to note the fact that all action (kārya, karaṇa and kartṛ, being, as it were, the three "modes" of karman) is assigned to the sphere of prakṛti, i.e. external or objective nature, the web or net of conditionings — in line with that dualistic philosophy which asserts total and essential inactivity of the spritual puruṣa as the principle of interiority and awareness. Yet, by defining puruṣa not as kartṛ but as bhoktṛ, "enjoyer", i.e. experiencing pleasure and pain, this puruṣa is nonetheless held to be enmeshed in the cosmic web, communicating the *impulses* for action to prakṛti — impulses arising out of his objective experiences no less than of his subjective inclinations (inclinations to

attain pleasure and to avoid pain), in other words: his *desires*. This brings us back to *kāma*, which we discovered already at the end of the preceding considerations as the inner reality or the essence of karman.

And, while we saw before that the personality is ever changing because of his own deeds, karman — so now we see that nature, as experienced by human senses as well as mind, is in its turn somehow already an exteriorization and objectification of that very human mentality, cristallization of its dynamic urges, echo to its experience of pleasure and pain, and, at the same time, occasion for ever new such experiences. This is another bi-focal ellipse: *Nature, evoking kāma, is by kāma evoked* — linking up with the first ellipse of causation mentioned above: the subject, creating karman, is by karman created. Both are intertwined and enmeshed — though it would be difficult to articulate a single formula that would give sufficiently rational expression to this unending and multidimensional interaction (having called both formulas "elliptic", I would be inclained to think of their combination as aptly symbolized under the mathematical sign for in finiteness, ∞).

(3)

Thus, we seem to have two movements of diverse nature and opposite direction: the first "vertical", as it were, and the second "horizontal". According to the first, the effects of the deeds staying with, rather remaining in the author; according to the second, the effects definitely and irrevocably leaving him, moving farther and farther away from him. According to the first, they re-affect the author, transforming him in the ideal case of a purely good deed the result would be a pure increase in spiritaulity, a straight uplifting; according to the second, they enter the cosmic interplay of cause and effect, action and reaction, casting off the imprint of their orginator, as an anonymous force — and as such they will affect, although in the most indirect way, an incalculable number of other personal "doers".

It is precisely this antithesis which the ageold Indian theory of transmigration or reincarnation is meant to synthesize. This theory can be understood in our context — there are many contexts in which it might be considered — as a rationalization and systematic exposition of the above mentioned loop of infinity. According to this teaching, it is not only the effects of having done one's deeds that remain with the author of the deeds — nay, also the outer effects as objective cosmic conditions inevitably revert to him; i.e. not only the intrinsic effects, but also the *consequences* of his thoughts, words, and deeds affect truly himself, if not sooner so later. The concept of reincarnation not only does assume an immensely prolonged lifetime of the individual, so as to allow the person really to re-encounter all the consequences of his deeds, but, even more: it establishes an inner connection between both

factors, making the duration of incarnated, i.e. inner-cosmic life dependent on this very re-encountering — and by re-encounter effacing — of these consequences.

And, conversely, the concept of reincarnation makes any given condition of the subject — that, as we saw earlier, influences so much character and significance of his actions — dependent on this self-same subject's previous deeds. The new incarnation not only will encounter consequences of the deeds of former lives — it is in itself summary and epitome of all these consequences.

The preceding observations have been formulated in such a way, as to evade as much as possible the doctrinal differences between various metaphysical schools, theistic, atheistic or absolutistic, between *ātma* and *anātma-vāda*. The discussion of these very important differences would lead us far beyond the limits — already rather far advanced as they are — of the topic of this paper. It might have been of particular interest to discuss in detail the twelve links of the Buddha's "chain of causation" (*pratītyasamutpāda*).

Only one aspect of the difference between Buddhism and Jainism on the one side, and the various Hindu groups on the other is to be mentioned here: the former's rejection of brahmanic sacrifice, their reduction of the importance granted to ritual acts — of devotion, veneration, or penitence — to a mere minimum. The Buddha's Anātma — doctrine must also be understood with reference to that classical equation of *ātman* and *brahman* that found its most celebrated expression in the formula of *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*: "*tat tvam asi* — that (=brahman) thou (=ātman) art"[5]. *Brahman* is not only a term denoting absolute being — at the summit of all, as it were — or the "Ground", underlying all; it is a word, derived from a very ancient root, a word that from earliest times was associated with the ritual action and never entirely lost these ritual overtones. The fullest reality is sacrifice, or rather: that which, acting in sacrifice, makes it real and effective. "And that art thou, Śvetaketu!" — such an idea was hardly admissible in non-ritualistic Buddhism (and, of course, in Jainism neither).

Here with we pass to the specifically religious aspect of karman.

II. Positive and negative quality of karman.

(1)

Ritual, no doubt, is intrinsically connected with the idea of religion. Still, even on the specific religious level the concept of karman seems to retain a universal validity which renders it helpful for a deeper understanding not only of brahmanic ritual, but of ritual action as such.

In the *Bhagavadgītā*'s chapter on "Karmayoga" we hear that sacrifice springs from work, while work originates in the Absolute:

yajñaḥ karmasamudbhavaḥ,
karma brahmodbhavaṁ viddhi.[6]

There is a surprisingly straight line of connection drawn between three equally crucial terms of ancient brahmanic thinking: *yajña*, *karman*, and *brahman* — a line the further exploration of which would promise most interesting results. In the given context, we have to limit ourselves to the following considerations.

If karman, by definition, is "work" in the double sense of action and effect, in indissoluble unity, then ritual appears to be "work" in the highest and fullest sense; and this, because *qua* ritual it is non-utilitarian, There is, indeed, a qualitative distinction (not merely a quantitative one) between any action that tends towards aims to be attained, results to be achieved and ultimately deriving its value therefrom, and an action deriving its value from no visible or rational result, but rather being valuable essentially on its own acount. It is precisely this the difference between "sacred" and "profane" — the latter being defined by the activity's relation to an outer result, the former by the intrinsic conneciion, if not identity, of the effect with the action itself. This, by the way, allows us a brief glance at the ageold problem of *magic*: Ritual performed with the purpose of achieving an external result, performed "in order to...", is most literally "profanization" of ritual; whenever and in so far as this takes place, ritual is perverted, the sacred is compromised, religion is turned into magic.

If ritual is work in the highest and fullest sense, so to speak "work 2", then sacrifice is the most concrete and the most central realization of ritual, "ritual[a]". Or, conversely: the very highest, the innermost reality of work expresses and manifests itself in ritual sacrifice —*yajñaḥ karmasamudbhavaḥ*, "sacrifice springs from work".

In the two introductory paragraphs we considered two dimensions of work, karman: on the one hand its intrinsic and indissoluble connection with the doer, the acting person — due to the essential identity of effect and action; on the other hand the deed's radical separation from its author, its "reification" as an independent cosmic entity — due to the very same identity of action and effect. This apparent contradiction is fundamental for any deeper understanding of the problems implied in the concept of karman. We briefly touched upon the theory of reincarnation in that it serves to synthesize these opposing aspects. But such a synthesis is no less the dominating theme of ritual action, deeper understood, and particularly of the Vedic idea of sacrifice.

There are manifold kinds of ritual actions conceivable, e.g.:

(a) such that are expected to bring about an external effect automatically, quasi mechanically;
(b) others which are perhaps even more "magical" than the first: such where the outer result is effected rather by the mental and psychic concentration of the actor than by the performance of the ritual as such — with a variety of possibilities to conceptualize the connnection between inner effort and outer performance;
(c) or, cause and effect may be disconnected by the intervention of transcendent personalities, anthropomorphic deities, and then the ritual may be intended to influence them, either by providing for their needs or by pleasing them in subtler ways — the manipulation of *quasi* mechanical laws being replaced by the practice of psychology;
(d) and here again the accent may be shifted to man's interiority, i.e. the inner disposition — the ritual, then, is sobordinated to religious devotion, either conditioning and stimulating such mood and attitute, or expressing it.

In all these cases there is still involved, to a greater or lesser degree, an "in order to...", i.e. the idea of an outer result of action by which that very action is conditioned.

Unconditioned or absolute action, on the other hand, is to be understood as one that does not admit of an "in order to..." whatsoever. This, then, means that the action must be completely identified with the subject; and, at the same time, that it must be totally separated and objectified. In this second respect, *total* separation does not allow for any "return" to the actor, while in the first respect, *no* separation *at all* does not allow for any "return" either. And this is the outstanding characteristic of truly sacred work, of karman as sacrifice. Certainly, it elevates and enriches its actor in the highest degree, for its actualization is actualization of the very self ("actualization" of sacrifice understood in its totality which comprises not only the outer performance according to rules, *ritē*, but also the corresponding inner attitudes and intentions); yet, simultaneously, the action separates from the actor—like the arrow from the bow string (Śaṅkara)—and, returning nothing to the "self", bestows everything upon the "other". In this sense, it is the only perfectly effective action, the action of which the entire inner impulse is transformed into objective reality. And this, indeed, is the criterion of *creative* action.

Here I may quote Walter F. *Otto*, who beyond his classical scholarship was capable of listening to the softer voice of ancient Hellas and of transmitting it to us. *Cultus*, he says,

> belongs to the monumental *creations* of the human spirit. To get a proper perspective of it, we must rank it with architecture, art, poetry, and music—all of which once served religion. It is one of the great languages with which mankind speaks to

the Almighty, speaking to Him for no other reason than that it must.....

> The most sacred of these great languages is the language of *cultus*... It testifies that the Almighty was so near that man had to offer his own being as the form in which His proximity could be expressed—an expression that the other languages were called upon to create, from a greater distance, through the media of stone, colour, tones, and words...[7]

Thus, according to Otto, cult is indeed *the* creative act, and much more so than any artistic creation. While this presupposes some external reality upon which man acts by way of changing its form or condition, the cultic act, ideally and essentially, does not need any such matter, it is creation pure and simple.[8] It requires nothing but man himself. And man, in turn, does not engage in this act partly, to a greater or lesser degree, but rather fully, with his very being. Nothing may be withheld or remain indifferent, totally he enters the act. And this, then, is the great paradox: By the radical selflessness of the act wherein no return of results is desired and which is completely transformed into new being other than the self—by this very selflessness, the self, entering the act and identifying with it, participates fully in its effect, i.e. the realization of being. "By good karman one becomes god." And conversely: by the complete identity, in the sacrificial act, of action and effect, the self, overcoming all externalizing tendencies and being "concentrated" (in the most literal sense), is by no means alienating or separating itself from outer reality but, on the contrary, mediating to everything participation in its very actualization of being, and thus realizing the "other" as the self.

The mystical dimensions of the ritual act—their knowledge seems to be the very core of the spiritual science of the Vedas. The continuity between ritual act and mystical realization—with which we began this paragraph, evoking yajña, karman, and brahman—this continuity is also exemplified in the close connection of the two systems of sacred reflection (*mīmāṁsā*), in that the first reflection (*pūrva-mīmāṁsā*, or Mīmāṁsā proper) is also called Karma mīmāṁsā, and the second reflection (*uttara-mīmāṁsā*, or Vedānta) is called Brahma-mīmāṁsā. And this same continuity is illustrated by the fact that the Upanishads which constitute the *jñāna-kāṇḍa* (part of knowledge) of the Vedic teaching, following its *karma-kāṇḍa* (namely, the Sāṁhitās and the Brāhmanas) begin with homologizing the universe—the intimate nature of which is going to be unveiled in this *jñāna-kāṇḍa*—to the sacrificial horse of the Aśvamedha, the most solemn of all Vedic sacrifices:

> Aum. uṣā vā aśvasya medhyasya śiraḥ...
> Aum, the dawn, verily, is the head of the sacrificial horse.....[9]

(2)

The ritual or the cultic act[10] always includes an element which we cannot but call negative. Something has to be overcome, something has to be either annihilated or warded off. Add in this, human action is essentially distinct from divine action in its highest and fullest sense, the creative action of Viśvakarman, the All-doer. There can be, on the lower plane, only a mirror-like reflection, a returning or ascending motion, answering the Godhead's descent.

There is, however, also another aspect of divine action which is plainly paralleled by the corresponding human activity: the battle against the demons, the Asuras, according to the later understanding of that name (for in early Aryan times the Asuras obviously were a family of supernatural beings without any negative overtones). The Devas represent cosmic order, the Asuras are the forces of chaos. The source of order is sacrifice. According to an ancient tradition, the gods won from demonic domination precisely that part of the universe that was in the shape of sacrifice (or in its size).[11] Thus, karman as the sacred act is equalled with the universal law (*ṛta*, later *dharma*): an action which is, at the same time, its own affirmation and the negation of its negation.

The sacrificial fire itself manifests both dimensions of that action:

(a) the "vertical" dimension of ascent to heaven, of transcending the human condition and being united with the divine grace and power;

(b) the "horizontal" dimension of demarcating the sacred realm and fend off demonic attacks.

Since these attacks are aimed at disturbing and hindering the first, the "vertical" movement, both dimensions are intrinsically connected: The second is the basis and root of the first, and the first but manifests gloriously the victory on the second plane.

Although both dimensions are included in the sacrificial fire as, in fact, in and ritual act, they are also envisioned as two separate though complementary functions. Thus, besides Agni, personification of the sacrificial fire, stands Indra, conqueror of the demons—the first prototype of the priestly Brahmin, and the second prototype of the royal Kshatriya caste.[12]

Thus, combat, war is but the outside view of the same sacred action, karman. Of the two great epics, the *Rāmāyana* clearly represents the analogy of the battle between gods and demons, since Rāma fights an actual demon (*rākṣasa*), Rāvaṇa and his host; while in the *Mahābhārata* the outstanding hero, Arjuna, is but an earthly double of the demon-slayer Indra. This second epos offers an additional view which reconnects still more intimately the karman of war with the karman of sacred ritual. On the eve of the battle of Kurukṣetra,

Karṇa, champion of the Kauravas, justifies his stand arguing with Kṛṣṇa trying to win him over to the "right" side in the forthcoming clash between the forces of good and evil, *dharma* and *adharma*[18]. This, he says, is no common battle, but rather a *sacrifice*, a most solemn ritual of cosmic purification. This is a truly deep insight for one who stands on the side which bears the demonic symbolism. For, indeed, the sacrificial cult as such does not admit the exteriorization of the negative principle in a demonic "other", in a fiend to be warded off and conquered. Rather, the worshipper identifies with the negative to undergo judgement, to accept annihilation in the most literal sense (fram Latin *nihil* = "nothing", hence, reduction to nothingness) in order to receive new life beyond death, to be reborn and transfigured.

There is also another significance in this understanding of Karṇa's: By accepting his *personal* karman that places him on the "wrong" side, he plays his part in the purifying ritual no less than his more fortunate opponents. Thus good and evil are reduced to relativity on the plane of human conflicts, in view of a more universal context which englobes the dark side no less than the light. Here is introduced a factor that we may call "personal emancipation"—in spite of the fact that any personal interest is set aside, even because of this fact: For accepting the personal destiny or karman is considered higher than being in a position of suprapersonal analogy to the Devas (instead of the Asuras).

This downgrading of cosmic symbolism together with a personal conception of karman we find even more clearly expressed in Karṇa's great opponent Arjuna. His scruples at the very beginning of the epic battle cause Lord Kṛṣṇa's instruction and give occasion for the eighteen chapters of the *Bhagavadgītā* which, in spite of its universality and complexity, can be understood as being essentially an instruction in *karma-mārga* (we shall return to it later).

War, combat becomes indeed *the* action *per excellentiam*. And this for two closely connected reasons. Ideally, it is the action that overcomes evil and realizes good, makes being prevail over non-being; empirically, it is the action which is conditioned and thus bears the imprint of its very opposite—how can purity be preserved when dharma is defended with adharma's weapons?—and hence engenders the most awesome and heartrending conflicts of conscience. Here we witness not only the heroic deed in the face of deadly danger; we witness as well the highly personal resolution which stakes the very life and salvation of the soul. Before the background of the outer conflict of arms rages the inner conflict of relative good and relative evil among which man has to choose priorities—never dispensed from the normative demand of absolute Good, and yet never able to make univocal clear-cut distinctions. Thus, the aristocratic dharma of warfare—and of administering internal justice as well—is the birthplace of the

personal, predominantly *ethical* karman, emancipating itself from the sacred ritual act.[14]

The most zealous effort to act morally cannot help to incur guilt. Action as such enmeshes in reaction. Punishment of evil as well as failure to punish evil provokes further punishment in return. There are, to be sure, rites of expiation and purification—but is not all such reconciling action conditioned by evil, tinged by precisely that demonic negation which it negates? The answer cannot be but discouraging—for once one has posed the problem in terms of personal autonomy, the answer necessarily mirrors the previous question.

If in the preceding paragraph we found karman to be essentially sacred, effective act—so now we have to recognize it as personal, no less real and effective, *guilt*.

The Kshatriya way of life is only the exemplary type or model of the ethical struggle in general which in many religious traditions has been described as a *militia spiritualis*.[15] From this point of view, it seems less surprising that two of the greatest ascetics that ever arose in India, Vardhamāna Mahāvīra and Gautama Buddha, were of Kshatriya origin: They did not wish to rely on the sacred karman of expiation and reconciliation, they ventured the ultimate fight to overcome altogether the negative conditions of being, to transcend karman as such.

(3)

But is this at all possible? Even the "Āstikas" who firmly believed in the Vedas and performed the Vedic rites have, at least since Upanishadic times, answered in the affirmative: There is a real possibility of the ultimate goal of *mokṣa*, i.e. liberation from all cosmic conditions.[16]

The concept of *mokṣa* or *mukti* is historically closely connected with the concept of reincarnation which was mentioned briefly at the end of the first part of this paper. *Saṁsāra* was a specific Indian answer to a more universal antithesis within the complex reality of "work". And mokṣa is similarly such an Indian answer to the universal antithesis, or polarity, of rite and ethic. For this absolute aspiration can be understood as both interiorization of ritual observance and spiritualization of ethical struggle—the Āstikas stressed the first, the Nāstikas stressed the second approach. And, in their turn, mokṣa and saṁsāra constitute another antithesis or paradoxical complementarity, both concepts mutually interpreting each other.

This aspect of Indian religious doctrine we do not wish to discuss any further. However, it is interesting to note that even the most general appreciation of the concept of karman presupposes some idea of mokṣa as kind of an ultimate reference, a limit or maximum value. Let us briefly consider our actions within the context of the tension

between liberty and necessity.

Every action, and also a mere thought, by being actuated becomes a *condition*. Human freedom, the freedom to act in history, is always conditioned; and by exercising this freedom, we bind ourselves. Now, we know from an experience that can be verified in psychological observation, that

(a) the actual scope of our freedom becomes the wider, the more distinctly we recognize its conditions as such;

(b) the consciousness of our freedom becomes the more intense, the more clearly we are aware of the fact that every decision (including the "decision" not to act, i.e. to postpone the decision), by actualizing one of many possibilities narrows down the scope of our future freedom.

If we draw out the lines of these two experiences, extending them, so to speak, to infinity, i.e. conceive of their ultimate and universal perfection, then we shall obtain the following result:

(a) if the *whole* net of innerworldly conditions in its indefinite variety and spatio-temporal boundlessness were perfectly to be known, then the freedom to act within this unlimited system would become *absolute*;

(b) if the *whole* weight of the decision implied in actuating our freedom were to be experienced—that is, the necessity with which freedom is transformed into a conditioning factor which, in turn, becomes subject to conditions—, then *every* impulse to action would die away.

The first result corresponds to the traditional Indian idea of absolute liberation (mokṣa), the second to the traditional idea of absolute non-action (akarman).

If this aim could be achieved, then the problem posed by the existential contradiction of the call, felt deeply within the soul, to transcend the human condition, and the sad experience of unescapable entanglement in guilt—then this problem would be solved. But at what price! A freedom is gained which excludes action. A logical problem is neatly solved, but the existential problem remains. It remains the question: Must perfect freedom forever stay enclosed in itself (*kevala*, "isolated" from everything and everybody)? Is it entirely impossible that freedom bring forth action which, by virtue of this origin, effects and creates freedom?

This question leads us to the last part of our considerations where we have to turn to specific religious answers. It is certainly unsatisfactory to touch upon a topic which one cannot deal with adequately. Yet, the present exposition—intentionally theoretical, operating with rather abstract generalizations—would be incomplete, if it were not to hint, at least, at the vast variety of concrete religious experience

and doctrine. Besides, that there *is* this variety, poses a theoretical problem as well. I shall limit myself to the two cultural spheres, India and the West, i.e. Europe. And, unable to unfold systematically any of their corresponding teachings, I shall only point out a few characteristic features which seem particularly relevant to our theme. Thus, the brief observations of the following final section are meant to be an opening for further deliberations, rather than a conclusion.

III. Action and Ultimate reality—Eastern and Western experience.

(1)

The spiritual genius of India has formulated two outstanding answers to the aporia of freedom and action. The one is laid down mainly in the *Bhagavadgītā*, the other in certain Mahāyāna Sūtras. The first may be summed up by the word *dharma*, the second by the word *karuṇā*. Their divergence corresponds to the respective fundamental positions, original approaches and attitudes of the two respective religious traditions.

(a) *dharma.*

By acting solely for duty's sake, without any arbitrary desire, man's action becomes essentially free and as such has a liberating effect. This teaching of Lord Kṛṣṇa reflects the older view for which karman in this positive sense is sacred ritual, sacrifice; but it transferes this view to include any so-called "profane" activity. This can be done without breach in the continuity of tradition since within the sacred structure of Hindu society (*varṇāśrama dharma*) any particular law of action (*svadharma*) may be considered as rite in a wider sense. Are not the Vaiśyas, the productive class, "twice-born" as well as the two higher orders? Have not even the Śūdras sprung from the cosmic sacrifice of Puruṣa?[17]

Nevertheless, to be recognized as karman in the full and positive sense, a distinct personal intention and attitude is required. Not any action is positively effective, rather that one only where the subjective spirit fully corresponds to the objective form,[18] where the doer becomes fully united with the deed, thus himself being "dharma". This is achieved when the deed is done for its own sake, disregarding "fruits" or results. And the discipline which leads toward the idenification of self and act, and by this identification renders the action real and sacred, is called *yoga.*

yogasthaḥ kuru karmāṇi
...
samatvam yoga ucyate

Fixed in yoga, do thy work ... for evenness of mind is called yoga.[19]

This exhortation, although stressing objectivity, is nevertheless a truly personal approach, and even the beginning of an ascending line of progressing personalization. For "evenness of mind" is not the highest goal. Man may feel himself to be the instrument of the divine will. The less he considers this will as "alien", the more he himself wills God's will—the less can he only suffer it to happen, the more must he be eager to perfom it. Thus man ascends towards union with the Divine. And the more this union is actualized, the more power to create and to bless the human action has—for it is not human indeed, but divine—, the less is it conditioned by outer circumstances. Thus, Kṛṣṇa finally proclaims with sovereign gesture the transcendence of all particular dharmas:

sarvadharmān parityajya
mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvā sarvapāpebhyo
mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ

Abandoning all duties, come to Me alone for shelter. I shall release thee from all evils, be not grieved. [20]

This, then, is *mokṣasaṁnyāsayoga*, the "Yoga of release by renunciation".

But to demonstrate that even in this the Vedic continuity is not broken, suffice to mention but one more minute detail. When Kṛṣṇa says that this world is in bondage of work, except that work which is done for the sake of sacrifice, thus uniting in one phrase both the negative and the positive aspect of karman,[21] Śaṅkara does not interpret this "sacrifice" in the ancient ritualistic sense, but equates it with Viṣṇu. Why can he do so without arbitrary play of intellect? Because he read this equation in *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*[22] where we are told that the Devas received from the Asuras a portion of the cosmos in the shape of Viṣṇu (who had assumed the form of a dwarf), ignoring that Viṣṇu was in the shape of sacrifice. Thus there does not seem to exist any fundamental difference between Śaṅkara's allegorical and Rāmānuja's literal interpretation:[23] The activity of the supreme Divine *is* the creative and redemptive action of sacrifice. And in achieving ultimate freedom through union with the Lord, man actually renders efficient the innermost essence of the most rigorous ritual act.

(b) *karuṇā*.

In Buddhism which separated from the observance of Vedic law —although not from the spiritual heritage of Indian mind—no such formulations were conceivable. Here, the whole problem had to be recast within another frame and on other preassumptions.

For Buddhism, the fundamental positive act is not sacrifice but *revelation*—revelation of the universal law which provides for the possibility

of liberation from cosmic bondage. The variety of dharmas is discussed not on the level of society, but rather as a factor of cosmology; while *the* Dharma is the proclamation of the way of release. And the Dharma is then, logically, the "Thus-gone" (*tathāgata*) himself. Whereas the private or single Buddha discovers the path of personal liberation—which, of course, presupposes an implicit knowledge of the Law—, identifies the universal Buddha with the Law in that perfect way which includes the intrinsic urge for the Law's promulgation. This periodic promulgation is part of the Law itself which thus is completely, without remainder, made concrete by the universal Buddha. Pity, therefore, is an *essential* characteristic of this holy, perfected One, of whom the Pāli Canon says:

> He appears in the world for the salvation of many people, for the joy of many people, out of pity with the world, for the bliss, the salvation, the joy of gods and men.[24]

Out of this nucleus enclosed in the earliest doctrine, later times have unfolded the ideal of the Bodhisattva who is, among the disciples of a Tathāgata, as superior to the Arhant, as is the universal Buddha himself to the private Buddha. The Bodhisattva not only follows the path discovered by the Buddha, he also imitates his merciful gesture of turning back to mankind in ignorance.

> As a lotus flower, though it grows in water, is not polluted by the water,
>
> So he, though born in the world, is not polluted by the worldly dharmas.[25]

Obviously, the Bodhisattva is not conditioned by karman, i.e. by previous deeds, and yet he acts effectively. The effect, though, is solely one: progress in liberation. And, since the Bodhisattva has no need any more for such progress, this must be a progress of *others*; that is, his actions render "fruits" that are enjoined exclusively by others. Of such selfless, disinterested action there are two kinds: The first is still aware of a distinction between "self" and "other", the second kind ignores any such distinction. Only this latter one is, in the Mahāyāna-Buddhist's view, the truly supramundane perfection.[26] Yet, this very ultimate, superhuman perfection allows also ordinary people who are themselves still subject to karmic conditions to follow the sublime ideal—for disregard of the self is more precious even than the self's perfection![27]

This would appear inconsistent, if the Bodhisattva's "altruistic" activity would consist merely in teaching—proclaiming the truth, showing the way; for this doubtlessly would presuppose his own having attained the goal. Nay, by the non-distinction between self and other he takes upon himself karman in the sense of condition. And precisely

this vicarious act is the essence of his benevolent and compassionate activity.

> A Bodhisattva resolves : I take upon myself the burden of all suffering.....
>
> Because it is surely better that I alone should be in pain than that all these beings should fall into the states of woe. There I must give myself away as a pawn through which the whole world is redeemed from the terrors of the hells, of animal birth, of the world of Yama, and with this my own body I must experience, for the sake of all beings, the whole mass of all painful feelings. And on behalf of all beings I give surety for all beings, and in doing so I speak truthfully, am truthworthy, and do not go back on my word. I must not abandon all beings.[28]

This appears to be the highest "work": In virtue of the own freedom take upon himself other beings' burden of cosmic and historic existence, and annihilate it in his own freedom; actualize his own freedom by transforming it into freedom for others. And, since any man may endeavour to imitate this sublime ideal, even though he be still conditioned himself, such action of *karuṇā*, of compassion, that is, of non-distinction in suffering between other and self, will effect relief, and finally release, for the one as well as for the other.

(2)

Now let us cast a glance at the West, at Europe, whose decisive religious imprint has been the Biblical revelation, that is, more concretely, Christianity. Here we encounter two concepts to establish significant connections between events, which connections in India are understood as some of the more mysterious aspects of karmic continuity: the concepts of *Pardon* and *Providence*.

Pardon, the act of forgiving, connects two apparently contradictory situations—the first of which would tend in quite another direction than that actualized by the situation succeeding it. The spiritual, creative act of human freedom opens a way that was not accessible before. This act of freedom certainly is *motivated*, but it is not "caused" in the usual sense of the word. Rather, this is the mystery of human freedom: *Man can forgive and can be forgiven.* There can be, within the very flux of time, a real "new beginning". And also the concept of Providence makes possible the recognition of continuity between apparently disconnected situations—where the mundane view sees nothing but chance, while the Hindu would always be able to fall back on the assumption of concealed karmic connections. Providence and pardon are complementary, in that both allow to perceive signification even in the strangest and most surprising events of human life—Providence providing an ultimate, all-encompassing continuity, pardon accounting for intelligible discontinuity.

There can be no doubt that these polar concepts are deeply rooted in the spiritual heritage of Israel—the people that experienced God's sovereignity in history, more than any other, under this double aspect. It is, however, interesting to observe that this polar concept also fits surprisingly well into the framework of pre-christian thought and experience of European men, answering the questions, doubts and queries, soothing and solving the agonies of their *Lebensgefühl*.

(*a*) *the North.*

In the great German epic, the *Nibelungenlied*, we encounter the problem of overwhelming, unexpiable guilt. Although the literary form was written down in the high Middle Ages, the Christian varnish is rather superficial, and the action reflects the tragic heroism of the pre-christian North. One of the most moving and dramatic confrontations is the following.

Kriemhilt has espoused Etzel, the mighty ruler of the Huns, only to provide herself with the means to avenge to death of her first husband, Sîvrit. She invites her kinsmen from the Rhine, and soon the battle ensues with the Burgundians enclosed in the guest hall, expecting their certain doom. And while Kriemhilt is standing in the courtyard surveying the preparations for the next assault, appears on top of the staircase leading into the hall Gîselher, her youngest brother. "Sister, what have we done to you? Why have we deserved to die?" And the queen answers: "I will not grant clemency, for I have not experienced clemency myself. But surrender the one Hagen von Tronege (that was the man who actually slew Sîvrit), and the rest of you will live." "Then we all are going to die, for we shall not betray a friend," says Gîselher, and sadly he returns to the warriors within, while Kriemhilt orders the hall to be set on fire and the final act of this truly apocalyptic fight begins.[29]

This, to my judgement, is the crucial encounter. If at this moment the queen were to say "I forgive", the impending utter tragedy would have been averted. And if anything possibly could have moved her heart, it would have been the sight of her cadet brother who at that time had opposed the plot to kill Sîvrit. But she *could* not forgive—no more than Prünhilt, before her, could forgive her humiliation by Sîvrit and rather had him murdered. The inexorable fate resulting from this crime is not limited to the one who actually executed the deed, but it engulfs all who only passively, more or less knowing and consenting, participated in it, yea, all who by bonds of kinship or of allegiance to the same king participate in the *being* of the doer. There is a feeling of collective responsibility on both sides, Kriemhilt as well as Gîselher.

This sense of collective solidarity is, of course, intrinsically connected with the sense of *guilt* and of the vengeance which it provokes. The ancient Teutonic idea of justice is dominated by the principle of retribution — presupposing though, precisely as retribution, the freedom of the original act which set in motion such a chain of consequences.

To what degree free action and guilt are equated in the ancient North, is illustrated also by the fact—almost unique in the mythology of the nations—that the gods themselves are believed to be subject to the same law of guilt and retribution, having committed an act of unrighteousness in primordial times, *in illo tempore*, and being doomed, thence, to final destruction, *ragnarök*, the "fall of the councelling ones", which will take place in ultimate times when Walhall is burnt down by the demonic hosts of "the Black One", Sutur, the fiery giant. This aspect of the eschatological battle is, as we saw, reproduced in the image of the burning hall in which the epic heroes are fighting until meeting death on the hands of the forces of vengeance.[30]

(*b*) *Hellas.*

Notwithstanding the close affinity between the various branches of Indo-European traditions, we observe distinctive differences of shade, among Europeans particularly between the Teutonic North and the Mediterranian world.

Classical Hellas has proceeded from the phase of epic recitation of myth to the phase of its dramatic representation. Greek tragedy poses the problem of unescapable fate in another perspective: It is the consequence not so much of free human action, i.e. guilt in our modern understanding, but rather of the inscrutable verdict of a superhuman power (*némesis, anágke, heimarméne*).

Consider the tragic lot of *King Oidipos* who committed tke most abominable crimes unknowingly and unwillingly, killing his father Laïos and marrying his mother Iokaste, thus begetting sons that were, at the same time, his brothers. The curse originating therefrom was transmitted to his offspring until the final extinction of the house—as it had been handed down to Oidipos himself from his forefathers. But in none of their transgressions do we find an ultimate human responsibility. Mythology knows of such causes as a quarrel among the divine immortals: The ancestor of the house, Kadmos, had married Harmonia, doughter of Ares' adulterous union with Aphrodite whose husband Hephaistos, exasperated, gave Harmonia a cursed necklace and cloak as weddnig gift.

The Greeks do not seem to have worried too much about the immorality of their gods; and certainly they did not pass judgement on them like the Norsemen who expected their doom as punishment for their unrighteousness. When in Hellas criticism arises, it is more

rational than moral, i.e. it is essentially scepticism—at first, regarding the power of the gods (in tragedy), later on, regarding their very existence (in philosophy). Thus, in Sophokles' tragedy it is an inscrutable fatality that knits the web of human actions and reactions. No doubt that crime is guilt in the sense that it is transgression of an objective norm; but it is not guilt in the sense of full subjective accountability. The basic—and within the context of Greek tragedy itself unsolvable—problem is, that man should not do certain deeds, and yet could not help doing them. Here, then, the problem is not so much that actual guilt is not being forgiven, but rather that there is no benign providence, leading and guiding man toward the goal of ultimate freedom.

To pose the question this way, no doubt, means to look at it against the background of Christian ideas. But it is meant to illustrate precisely this: that pre-christian European ideas on human action, freedom and responsibility were one-sided, tended to extremes, and were in need of a harmonizing complement that was actually provided by the Christian Message; or, conversely: that this same Christian Message in its actual elaboration and systematization was tinged by the ideas prevalent in those cultures to whom Christianity was introduced and with whose heritage it achieved a new synthesis.

To the assertion of man's freedom that makes him accountable for his deeds, i.e. guilty because responsible, and doomed because guilty—to this assertion the Christian answer is Pardon. Pardon restores again and again man's forfeited liberty, and this in a double sense: In so far as the bondage resulting from guilt is internal, attached to his own being and impeding its realization, the forgiveness received restores the being's capacity of free, i.e. effective action; in so far as the bondage is external, inherent in the circumstances that limit man's scope of action, he nevertheless always retains the power to forgive—a spiritual act, independent of its verbal expression and immediately and totally effective *ex opere operato* (which, on this level, coincides with the *ex opere operantis*). This second aspect is the one of exercisiug, the first aspect is the one of receiving freedom. For the Christian, the exercising is, ontically, always dependent on the receiving, since having been forgiven by God is the very root of our capacity to forgive other men. And thus, the concept of pardon as such can be understood as an organic complement to the concept of action.

Without forgiveness, freedom tends to be transformed into inevorable fate — and in this respect, the sense of tragedy of the Teutons on the one side and of the Hellenes on the other are quite similar. In the tragic experience of both there are two poles: guilt on the subjective, personal side, and on the objective, transpersonal side *indifference*. Now, the concept of Providence means precisely this: that *the ultimate force and power of the universe cares*. Indeed, one could not

conceive of divine forgiveness, neither as individual nor as universal act, without presupposing an overall plan of salutary action and benevolent guidance. Such a "plan" could not be understood as by force of necessity meterializing according to preordained times. Rather it would allow for responsible human acts to modify and even frustrate it. And in this it would be the precondition of the concept of guilt as well, understood in its true dimensions, i.e. excluding any identification of guilt and fate — identification which we observed in both, the tragic myth of the North and the mythic tragedy of Hellas.

If such an idea of Providence is assumed, its content as well as its shape must necessarily be beyond the comprehension of a limited human consciousness. This overall and suprapersonal benevolent intention is not seen as a whole, but experienced concretely in particular instances, mostly of a surprising kind, when the immanent causality which is accessible to human reason fails to establish a connection between events, and yet there is sensed a deep signification which forbids of such pseudo-explanations as "chance" or "accident". From such experiences, the Christian draws the general confidence that God is *always* watching and at work. It is this divine protection that assures man of his very being, beyond and before all actualizations. And if pardon is the complement to action as the corresponding receptive pole, then Providence is a complementary concept in another dimension: It is the absolute Act that has ontic priority over all relative activity, and it is all-encompassing potentiality, the fertile "ground" of all possible human acts.

(3)

We conclude with a few observations in the light of the great task, entrusted to this generation, to achieve concrete soildarity of mankind, spiritually as well as materially.

This paper being concerned with the concept of *karman*, it has not been possible to treat at the same length such ideas as "pardon" and "providence". Some aspects of karman may have been rediscovered, in another form, in the Western context; others have been left in the shade — for instance, we have not included in our discussion the Christian view of cultic or sacramental action. However, I hope that these scarce indications have sufficed to venture the following conclusions:

(a) there are certain parallels between Indian and European (prechristian and Christian) conceptualizations of responsible individual action and of supra-individual continuity of action;

(b) both conceptualizations reflect a "whole" that transcends by far any ordinary idea of activity: any concept of karman— "work" in the double sense of creation and bondage — is inseparable from the idea of mokṣa; and any concept of guilt ("sin" in the technical theological language) and forgiveness is inseparable from the idea of divine providence;

(c) these "whole" spiritual universes contain and synthetize contemplative and active, metaphysical and ethical, religious and philosophical elements;

(d) the elements constituting both "universes" or systems may be compared — for precondition of any true comparison is a sufficient degree of both similarity and dissimilarity—, but no elements may be simply exchanged, i.e. they can neither be equated nor transfered without change from one system to the other.

To this last point I would like to attach my final remarks.

Though we had to discuss rather extensively religious problems too, the main interest of the preceding considerations was focussed on the *philosophical* level. Now it seems that the intellectual system where karman plays a rôle has much closer ties with philosophy than the corresponding set of Christain ideas. The West, it seems, has not suceeded in elaborating an intellectual system that would reflect the continuity of human and cosmic action and interaction on the level of natural metaphysics as well as this has been done in the insights of faith and, derived therefrom, in mystical theology. I would not think that any one of the non-religious philosophies of the West has solved the problem, since all of them inevitably started from anti-christain (or, in rare cases, anti-jewish) positions. Thus they tried to outdo and to replace their religious heritage, making philosophy a substitute religion, rather than have it simply operate on its own level — an ideal which mediaeval scholasticism aspired to without fully succeeding, for there philosophy remained, more or less, in subservient dependence.

Here, it seems, the West could receive valuable impulses from Indian observation and speculation. I repeat, it could not be the aim to transfer the Indian concept of karman pure and simple as it stands, it is closely connected with the concepts of reincarnation and release that are more religious than strictly metaphysical.[31] But, to mention only an example: The Vedāntic distinction of three kinds of karman might prove to be a valuable structure easily assimilable in the context of non-Indian traditions. I mean the distinction of *sañcita-karman*: the seeds of destiny already stored as a result of former acts, but which have not yet begun to germinate, *āgāmi-karman*: the seeds that would normally collect and be stored in the future; *prārabdha-karman*: the seeds that have already begun to grow, bearing fruit in actual events.

If such a conceptual "grafting" or "inoculation" were to succeed, this certainly would *not* mean a mutual integration or a synthesis of religious traditions, say, Hindu (or Buddhist, Jain) on the one side, and Christian (or Jewish, Moslem) on the other. And this,

among other reasons, for the very fundamental reason that to establish the relation of religion and metaphysics cannot be the sole competence of only one of the two. Thus, even if we could achieve a maximum of mutual understanding on the level of metaphysics, still we would have difficulties to agree on the relation of this metaphysical level *as a whole* to our respective religious commitments. To put it more concretely : For the Hindu, pardon and providence, as all personal divine action, would remain encompassed by the universal Law (spiritual as well as material, ethical as well as physical, determining the conditions of both bondage and liberation). For the Christian, all connections and correspondences, the spiritual no less than the so-called " material ", would be immanent, i.e. belong to created nature, and as such would stand, so to speak, " in front of " the transcendent God, reflecting His qualities and participating in them, responding to His action and bearing witness to it.[32]

If we are trying to work out philosophical concepts that might facilitate mutual understanding between East and West on the metaphysical level, we should have no illusions as to the difference of our respective religious positions. On the contrary, by becoming more and more aware of the true signification of the words which we are using, we shall also become more clearly aware of those very differences.[33] Yet, conversely, only when we are truly conscious of these differences — having, then, achieved a high degree of common metaphysical conceptualization—, shall we be able to cooperate effectively in the great *human* tasks—that is, the cultural, social, scientific, etc. enterprises of mankind—in a spirit of brotherhood. These tasks cannot be taken in hand in a spirit (if " spirit " it is) of arrogance and anti-religious revolt, nor in a spirit of syncretism, indifference and scepticism, that is, neither against nor without religion. But precisely when we *are* religious, we recognize that this is that very central realm of our lives where we, as men, have to admit our limitations.

And thus I wish to conclude with the words of Martin *Buber*, the great Jewish thinker of our days :

> The aim cannot be that the religions of the world should come to a mutual consent regarding their articles of faith. This is not for them, nor would they succeed : It is solely God's concern. The aim can only be that the religions of the world jointly plan and undertake the rescue of man from destruction. For this is entrusted to them.[34]

1. Br. - ār. Up. III, 2, 13 — In the quotation of classical texts I follow mainly the translation of *S. Radhakrishnan.*
2. Br. - ār. Up. IV, 4, 5; *abhisampadyate* is rendered by Radhakrishnan with " he attains ", but one might as well translate " ... that he *becomes* ".
3. Vivekacūḍāmaṇi 451/452.
4. Bh.g. XIII, 20.
5. Ch. Up. VI, 8—16 (the concluding verses of each section).
6. Bh.g- III, 14/15.
7. *W. F. Otto* : *Dionysus—Myth and Cultus* (transl. from the German), Bloomington/London 1965, p.18/19.—It is interesting to note that the Latin word *opus* expresses, on its highest level, a threefold spiritual meaning : the liturgical sacrifice, the alchemic process of sublimation and elevation, and the creative production of art.
8. One would feel inclined to think of the Christian doctrine of divine creation " out of nothing " which, of course, refers to another ontological level.—For the relation creation—sacrifice cf *M. Vereno* : *Vom Mythos zum Christos*, Salzburg 1958, p. 422 sq. (§ 137, " Das Gottesopfer als Zentrum des Alls "), passim. Vide infra, p. 42
9. Br.-Uār Up. I, 1, 1.
10. Obviously, the meaning of the words " cult " and " ritual " is not identical. But since their respective spheres overlap, and for the sake of brevity, I use the words as denoting two dimensions of one single sacred action. This appears the more justified as the very core of such action : sacrifice, combines and integrates both dimensions completely.
11. Śatapatha Brāhmana I, 2, 5. Vide infra, p. 18
12. On the correlation and complementarity of these two aspects I have commented in various other publications to which I may be permitted to refer : *Vom Mythos zum Chiistos*, p. 240 sq. (§ 73, " Drachenkampf und Gewinnung des Kleinods "), passim ; " Einweihung und spirituelle Nachfolge ", in *Initiation*

    " La peine comme rite dans l'histoire des religions ", in *Il mito della pena*

    " Ritual und BewuBtseinswandlung als zwei Aspekte von Sühne und Versöhnung ", in *Kairos* ; " Die michaelischen Mysterien im Werk Leopold Zieglers ", ibidem
13. Mahābh. V, Udyoga Parvam
    This most gigantic fight of perhaps all epic literature has been homologized to the eschatological battle of archaic mythology. Cf. Stig Wikander
14. This ethos is being destroyed in a very concrete sense by the modern totalitarian ideologies. I remember a conference of the Jewish philosopher *Martin Buber* in the University of Tübingen, 1953. It was his first visit to Germany after the war, and he briefly hinted, in a very noble way, at the recent persecution of his people. He said that every truly human decision involved the clash of conflictfng values, obligations and interests, and the human soul wears the scars of its ethical conflicts; these scars are missing, where under the narcotic influence of totalitarian ideologies the inner struggle is evaded. He called the various totalitarianisms " the factories of good conscience ".
15. This is, in the Muslim tradition, the meaning of *al-jihād al—akbar* (" the great holy war ") as opposed to *al—jihād al—asghar* (" The small holy war ", namely against the infidels). There is a *hadit* (an originally oral tradition) according to which the Prophet himself after a victorious campaign admonished his bedouins : " You have returned from the small holy war to the great holy war. "
16. On the concept of the *jīvanmukta* cf. the studies of *Joachim F. Sprockhoff* : " Die Vorbereitung der Vorstellung von der Erlösung bei Lebzeiten in den Upaniṣads ", Die Idee der Jīvanmukti in den späteren Upaniṣads ", " Der

Weg zur Erlösung bei Lebzeiten, ihr Wesen und ihr Wert, nach dem Jīvanmuktiviveka des Vidyāraṇya" (part I and II) in *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd—und Ostasiens* VI, 1962, , VII, 1963, VIII, 1964, XIV, 1970, p. 131—159; "Zur Idee der Erlösung bei Lebzeiten im Buddhismus", in *Numen* IX, 1962, p. 201—227.

17. Ṛgveda X, 90.
18. In scholastic terminology, what here is called "spirit" might be called "form", and what here is called "form" might be called "matter".
19. Bh.g. II, 48. In the following verse this discipline is termed, more precisely, *buddhiyoga*.
20. Bh.g. XVIII, 66.
21. Bh.g. III, 9.
22. Ś. Br. I, 2, 5; vide supra, p. 12.
23.
24. Anguttara Nikāya I, 13, 1, passim.
25. Ratnagotravibhāga I, 72.—In Mahāyāna texts I follow Edward Conze's translation.
26. Cf., for instance, the very precise passage Pañcaviṁśatisāhasrikā 263/264.
27. It is understood that I do not wish to enter the dogmatic controversy between *ātma*— and *anātmavāda* (vide supra,) and that the terms "self" and "other" are used in a more empirical, psychological sense; this is why "self" throughout this paper is being written with the minuscule
28. Śikṣāsamuccaya 280/281 (Vajradhvaja Sūtra).
29. XXXVIth aventiure, verses 2101—2111. For the sake of brevity, I have given a free rather than a literal translation.
30. For the close connection between epic and mythic battle, cf. Supra n. 13.
31. Cf. supra, the sections I, 3, and II, 3.
32. *Helmuth von Glasenapp* is opposing two types of religion: "Die Religionen des ewigen Weltgesetzes" and "Die Religionen der geschichtlichen Gottesoffenbarung", in his work *Die fünf groBen Religionen*, 2 vol. s, Düsseldorf/Köln 1951/52. Similarly, *Arnold J. Toynbee* distinguishes the "judaic" and the "buddhaic" type of religion, in: *A Historian's Approach to Religion*, London 1953.
33. To this, I may quote *Mircea Eliade*, who writes: "Wenn die abendländische Kultur nicht verprovinzialisieren will, wird siedas Gespäch mit den anderen, nichteuropöischen Kulturen eröffnen müssen, wobei es vornehmlich darauf ankommt, sich nicht allzu sehr über den Sinn der Begriffe zu töuschen." (*Mythen, Träume und Mysterien*) (transl. from the French), Salzburg 1961, p. 67.
34. Message on occasion of the "Woche der Brüderlichkeit" (week of brotherliness) in Germany, march 1964.

Value Systems East and West and The Emerging World Order

Grace E. Cairns

It seems that we are being driven more and more towards the choice between a global world of intimate friendly relationships among our diverse nations and cultures or absolute annihilation. If we wish the former alternative to prevail how can it be brought about? This is the agonizing problem of our time, much too large to be handled by one short paper or even by one person. One aspect only of this problem can be touched upon here, the need for some commonly accepted system of values acceptable to the diverse cultures of the world. What might be the nature of such a value system? In answering this question, we shall attempt a brief examination of the value situation in three of the most significant world cultures of today—the Western (non-Communist and Communist), the Chinese (Japanese values implicitly included here also since Confucian and Buddhist thought came from China), and the Indian. First we shall outline the traditionally accepted value system, then twentieth century developments. Finally, we shall with the help of leaders of past and present thought comment on the values that are basic for a global value system.

The Value Situation in the Non-Communist Western World

The value system of Western culture, originating in the fusion of Greek and Judaeo-Christian traditions, reached systematic form in the thirteenth century in the philosophical works of St. Thomas Aquinas, and were given powerful literary, symbolic expression in Dante's masterpiece, the *Divine Comedy*. The cardinal values of both thinkers are Truth, Beauty and the Good. God was the epitome of these values and the goal of Western man was the Vision of God. Dante in his *Divine Comedy* writes the classic treatise of man's journey to this goal. After recognition of sin symbolized by Hell, and its purgation, symbolized by Purgatory-mountain, the pilgrim enters Paradise wherein he beholds God, the goal of everyman's journey. Dante describes the Vision of God thus:

> O grace abounding, wherein I presume to fix my look on the eternal light so long that I consumed my sight thereon!
>
> Within its depth I saw ingathered, bound by love in one volume, the scattered leaves of all the universe; substance

> and accidents and their relations, as though together fused, after such fashion that what I tell of it is one simple flame.[1]

Significantly the Good, as the Divine nature, is expressed as Love, the virtue that binds all things together; and Truth in Aristotelian language as "substance and accidents and their relations" all bound together as one whole in God. Beauty is the overwhelming Light that belongs to both attributes, inseparable from them, and radiating from the unfathomable depths of the Divine.

Truth, Beauty and the Good were, thus, the cardinal values of the traditional Western world to be emulated by man, but belonged in their purity, in their absolute forms, to God alone, the Perfect Being. The religious, contemplative life centered on God was thought to be the ideal life.

In the Renaissance, however, material values came to the fore; spiritual values declined. The Protestant Reformation reflected this change, but too many Protestants as well as too many Roman Catholics showed anything but a truly Christain spirituality, that is, a spiritual life dedicated to the Good as love for all men, to Truth, and to the divine kind of Beauty that these values radiate. Western culture now centered around material values more and more until today in the twentieth century little is left of the traditional ideal of the spiritual life, a predicament expressed in the "Death of God" movement.

Our concern for wealth, in other words our greed, our preoccupation with technology directed towards this materialist goal, has created all the social horrors rampant particularly in our big cities. Gandhi's criticism of Western culture as it is today points out the evils of our machine-age, impersonalistic, socially callous culture:

> This civilization is irreligion, and it has taken such a hold on the people in Europe that those who are in it appear to be half-mad. They lack real physical strength or courage. They keep up their energy by intoxication. They can hardly be happy in solitude. Women, who should be the queens of households, wander in the streets or they slave away in factories. For the sake of a mere pittance, half a million women in England alone are laboring under trying circumstances in factories or similar institutions. This awful fact is one of the causes of the daily growing suffragette movement.
>
> This civilization is such that one has only to be patient and it will be self-destroyed. According to the teaching of Mahomed this would be considered a Satanic Civilization. Hinduism calls it the Black Age.[2]

Gandhi goes on to deny that Western machine civilization in which material values are dominant is really civilization. His definition of civilization is:

> Civilization is that mode of conduct which points out to man the path of duty. Performance of duty and observance of morality are convertible terms. To observe morality is to attain mastery over our mind and our passions. So doing, we know ourselves. The Gujarati equivalent for civilization is "good conduct."[3]

Rabindranath Tagore, however, praises the search for the truths of nature in Western science and in much Western philosophy, but, like Gandhi, deplores the West's lack of spirituality. Hu Shih, the Chinese philosopher, also praises the scientific search for truth in Western culture, but associates this and the often accompanying non-theistic, humanist philosophies with what he considers a higher spirituality than the Eastern.

The unbiased search for truth in all areas, or Truth as a value belongs to traditional Western culture. Gandhi's criticism of its misuse in creation of an immoral society is more to the point and is gaining more and more adherents within Western culture itself. Our depersonalized machine civilization despite a minority who still maintain and attempt to fight for high ideals, is apparently disintegrating before our eyes. Internal and external violence, racial strife, student riots, growing juvenile delinquency and adult crime, and the appalling popularity of drug addiction among our young people are among the obvious signs of disintegration. The traditional spiritual value of the Good as Divine Love, the crucial value on which social cooperation depends, has almost disappeared; it is observed only by a very small minority. Truth in its total meaning and Beauty at the level of the sublime as values are also being deformed because of their divorce from the Good. Are these values doomed? If so what can replace them in a new stable, spiritually healthy social order?

One Western type of solution to the problem is offered by the Communist world on the basis of an explicit materialist philosophy of history. The other type of solution is based upon a religious and spiritual philosophy of history. It is this latter type as proposed by two of the most outstanding Western philosophers of history, Arnold J. Toynbee and Pitirim A. Sorokin that we shall consider immediately.

Toynbee sees our era as one of disintegration, but this is not a unique feature of our present Western culture. In his study of twenty-one civilizations of this planet, he concludes that each of these civilizations has followed a similar pattern of rise, growth, decline and fall. The features of the final or disintegration phase of the cycle of all these cultures is similar to what Western civilization is going through now. There is the Schism in the Body Social and Schism in the Soul. Our Schism in the Body Social is represented by our Internal Proletariat (e. g., the Negro and similar disadvantaged groups), and our External

Proletariat or "barbarians" (represented by the Nazis, Fascists, and bands of gangsters).

Because of the disintegration of society represented by these phenomena, people look with thankfulness to a Dominant Minority that seeks to establish enduring peace and order by the founding of a Universal State. Just as Rome performed this function for the Hellenic civilization, one or a group of nations acting in concert, may perform this function for our disintegrating Western world. Oswald Spengler, Toynbee's great predecessor in the field of philosophy of history, prophesied this kind of social order, which he called Caesarism, as the final phase of our declining culture. Toynbee hopes that this can be avoided in our present Western culture, despite the fact that in the civilizations of the past, this has been the last epoch of a disintegrating culture. His alternative solution is one that would skip Caesarism and inaugurate a new Western culture without destruction of much of the old. It must be the kind of new culture that will heal the Schism in the Soul.

The Schism in the Soul is apparent in manifestations of Alternative Ways of Behaviour, Feeling and Life. Included under Alternative Ways of Behaviour and Feeling are Abandon and Self-Control, Truancy and Martyrdom, Sense of Drift and Sense of Sin; Promiscuity manifested in vulgarity and barbarism in manners and in art, and by syncretism in religion; Sense of Unity, the opposite of Promiscuity, longed for in a disintegrating society. As Ways of Life both Archaism and Futurism have advocates, the one group wants to revive the past, the other to overthrow it entirely and begin a new society that will be the Ideal, a Heaven on earth. But the truer Futurism, Toynbee writes, is a self-transcendent one, "not in Time at all but is in a different dimension, and which, just by virtue of this difference of dimension, is able to penetrate our mundane life and to transfigure it."[4]

In other words, we must overshoot the goal, aim at the transcendent sphere, if we would attain the highest on the earthly plane. In aiming to transform the world, the leadership comes from the Divine Reality itself. In Christianity this descent of the Divine to the temporal plane is the God-incarnate-in-a-man, the Christ; in Buddhism it is the Buddha and Bodhisattvas; in Hinduism, the avatars. Also, God is omnipresent in the world and in "every living soul in it," a teaching of Hinduism and Buddhism as well as Christianity. The incarnate Divine as avatar, Christ, Buddha or Bodhisattva acts as the catalyst to wipe away the polluted excrescenses that prevent men from recognition of the Divine within them. The divine incarnations, these Saviours of mankind do not wield the Sword, nor are they Philosopher-Kings; they are Kings of the Kingdom of Divine Love. Only creative Love can heal the Schisms in the Soul and in the Body Social

that plague our decadent civilization.

This means that Western culture is doomed to come to an end in the final phase of Caesarism, unless it returns to true religion, the religion of its avatar, Christ, and the few saints who, like St. Francis of Assisi, modelled their lives upon his. Only leaders who can radiate a similar spirituality, a similar light of Divine Love, can renovate the Western world. Toynbee does not see Communism as an alternative because it is based upon a materialistic philosophy, and such philosophies are characteristic of the disintegration phase of culture-cycles. But history, Toynbee thinks, is not merely the story of the cyclical rise, maturity and decline of great civilizations. On the contrary history shows a spiral progress pattern, despite the rise and decline cycles of particular great cultures of the past (and perhaps of the future). The spiral progress is mainfested in the slow advancement of Religion to greater and greater maturity. The decline and disintegration of cultures has, in fact, contributed to the steady progress of Religion by showing man that devotion to secular, egoistic goals results only in the disintegration of his world. Only through a return at a higher level to Religion can he reconstruct a new creative social order.

Neither the Western nor any other of the great contemporary cultures need perish, if further progress in this sphere can be initiated. For Western culture this probably means new developments in the finest of Christian, God-oriented values, a new society of brotherhood in which Christian love as practised by saints like St. Francis of Assisi would become the model in human relationships. Technology would be used constructively in the light of the highest spiritual values. Man's ultimate goal would be the "supernatural" one, the Vision of God (or Ultimate Reality), the ultimate goal of all the great religions of the world.

Since highest Truth for such a coming world culture will have the Ultimate Reality as its source, the world of Heart and Head or Intuition and Intellect will also be one. This means, Toynbee writes, that although continuing progress will be made in areas of Thought and Art, Love will be the dominant value; scientific or intellectual "truths" will be used in the light of Love for all mankind. Toynbee points out repeatedly that the avatars and saints of the great religions have already set the example that must be followed. The Progress of Humanity lies in the religious sphere; all other aspects of man's progress, though significant and important, are secondary and depend upon the religious foundation. Truth (Thought) and Beauty (Art) are, thus, among the highest values as in the past Western tradition, but subservient to the Good (Love).

Toynbee's view of historical cycles and of spiral progress around the further actualization of religious values is one that many will accept. In contemporary Indian thought Professor T. M. P. Maha-

devan has a similar view. The challenge to create a new civilization is here, the appalling demoralization and general crumbling of our culture. The constructive response that can begin a new era must come, as Toynbee reiterates from a Creative Minority courageous enough to attempt to inaugurate a new social order integrated around the value of creative Love as the Law of God, of Ultimate Reality, if the human race is to survive.

Sorokin another of the most outstanding philosophers of history of our time has made interesting sociological studies of the possibilities of orienting a society around this value which he calls Creative Altruism. Like Aurobindo he thinks that this value belongs to the higher level of human consciousness, the Supraconscious. Few men have reached this level; the vast majority of mankind function at the Socioconscious level as the highest conscious kind of mental activity of which they seem capable. The Socioconscious level is that of the "conscious sociocultural energies, activities, egos and roles."[5] Each man possesses as many sociocultural egos and roles as the number of organizations of which he is a member, or of the activities in which he engages. Most men have a family ego, a state-citizenship ego, a nationality ego, a religious-affiliation ego, an occupational ego and many lesser ego roles. The difficulty lies in the incompatibility among these egos that is evident in our declining Sensate era. For example, the church-affiliation ego often conflicts with the occupational ego—business ethics is usually at variance with Sermon-on-the-Mount ethics; the ethics of nationalism often differs from the values of the Christian ethical ego. Since it is the totality of these egos that constitute almost the entire field of our conscious mental life, the conflict among them results in the present schizophrenic condition of man. The only constructive remedy is reintegration of individuals and societies at the supraconscious level where Creative Altruism is the cardinal value and principle. All the various egos of the Socioconscious level will there have been transcended, for the Supraconscious is egoless. Sorokin declares, "It transcends ego entirely and unconditionally."[6] Sorokin identifies the Supraconscious with the Atman-Brahman or the Purusha of the Upanishads, the Bhagavad-Gita, or the Yoga of Patanjali; with the satori experience of Zen or of the Tao of Taoism, and with the experience of God in Western religions as the mystics experience God.

As a sociologist Sorokin is interested in the ways in which the supraconscious level might be realized. He has done much research in the exploration of ways in which "altruistic transformation" has been brought about in individuals and groups. He discusses confession, purgation, reformation, yoga methods and techniques; monastic methods of "supraconscious meditation and creativity," and monastic methods of "competition in humility." He thinks that the evidence

he has gathered in his researches shows that it is possible for human beings to realize and live at the supraconscious level.

Sorokin's philosophy of history is similar to Toynbee's. He sees history as the rise, maturity and decline of great cultures, but there is an overall spiral progress of mankind. The cycle of a great civilization begins with an era of religious faith, an Ideational epoch; the next epoch, the Idealistic synthesizes Faith and Reason; the third phase of the cycle is oriented around the world of the sense-organs. It becomes increasingly dominated by secular, this-worldly and materialistic world-views. In its final stages egoistic greed, egoistic love for power result in social strife, hatred and war. Our Western culture is now in this final stage of its Sensate era. We must initiate a new epoch, either Ideational or Idealistic around the new central value of Creative Altruism; we must attain the Supraconscious level. This is our only salvation. Creative Altruism alone can abolish egoistic desires and thoughts at both the individual and national level and bring in the era of Supraconscious Man, a universal global society of true human brotherhood.

The Value Situation in the Communist World

Everyone is familiar with the value situation in the Communist world. It is based upon a materialist philosophy and advertises itself as "scientific sociology" and scientific philosophy of history. Value systems are part of entire idea systems and such systems are merely the superstructure that follows from and supports the foundation of every society; this is the economic structure, the mode of production of commodities by which men live. Religious and idealist philosophies are merely "opiates" whereby the oppressed classes are kept in submission and content with their lot. Social inequality in the class structure of previous societies in human history resulting from the means of production has resulted in class conflicts. The present era of capitalism as the mode of production has reduced these classes to two, the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The class conflict is now between these two. We shall omit, in this short paper all the refinements of the historical process that has resulted in these two classes whose interests are so diametrically opposed that the one must annihilate the other. The development of the means of production is such that the proletariat must triumph and liquidate the capitalists by *armed force*, for they will not voluntarily yield their privileged position. When the proletariat is led to do this by its leaders, the Vanguard of the Proletariat, this Vanguard, says Lenin, will establish the Dictatorship of the Proletariat, the first phase of Communism. This Dictatorship of the Proletariat as it has materialized in Russia, a feudal society (that has skipped the historical development of Capitalism which, according to Marx, should have preceded this Dictatorship of the

Proletariat), has resulted in a dictatorship of a minority group, the Communist Party, euphemistically called the Vanguard of the Proletariat by Lenin. Armed force rules and even satellite European countries feel this force, most recently Czecho-Slavakia. Nevertheless, these violent, coercive means used both at home and abroad, are, according to theory preparatory for bringing in the second and final phase of Communism, the Golden Age of human brotherhood when the State as a coercive power will "wither away". Even in the first phase there is supposed to be suppression only of a minority, the bourgeoisie ; society is now classless. However, there is not yet full social equality : "From each according to his ability, and to each according to his work," is the principle. Only in the second and final phase in there full equality ; the principle will be "From each according to his ability, and to each according to his need." Goods will be abundant because social cooperation will have become a habit as well as attitudes of brotherly feeling. The state, then, will wither away, now having served its purpose of bringing in this new social, voluntarily cooperative pattern of behaviour in relation to the means of life.

When we discuss the value situation in Indian culture, we shall notice that Gandhi and Bhave have some similar ideas in relation to the economic structure of society, but these Indian thinkers as well as many in the West, argue that violent and coercive means cannot bring in a Golden Age of peace, of brotherly love and cooperation. As the means, so the end, say these leaders. The values of a just social order that goes beyond strict justice in its second phase to the ideal of a superlative generosity based upon concern for the needs of all other fellow human beings are equivalent in the mundane sphere to the worldly expression of Divine Love advocated by the religion-oriented philosophers discussed in the previous section and to be discussed below. These religion-oriented philosophers believe that a materialist philosophy cannot stimulate man to the egolessness essential for a Golden Age, far less can the violent means advocated.

The Value Situation in Eastern Culture : China

Here we shall consider only the non-Communist value situation. The Communist world's values have already been reviewed ; Maoist Communism offers nothing new. In the non-Communist traditional culture of China Confucian philosophy, an objective one with an emphasis upon ethical values, has been the dominant influence in moulding Chinese character and culture. The other major school, the Taoist, in its philosophical form has contributed aesthetic values. Lin Yutang has said that the typical Chinese is a Confucian in times of success and a Taoist in times of failure. Also Taoism has contributed to Confucianism, especially to later Neo-Confucian thought.

Confucian thought and its pattern of values follows largely the teachings of Confucius, the founder. In his philosophy ethical values were central ; he was not interested in metaphysics. The cardinal virtue was Jên (translated variously "brotherly love," "human-hearted-ness," "humanity"). Second in importance was I (righteousness, justice), and third was Li (propriety or outward ceremonies and rituals expressive of one's feeling of respect, of reverence for one's parents, elders, teachers and rulers). The principle of the Rectification of Names must be mentioned here. For example a ruler is one who rules in the interest of his subjects, not his own ; if he rules to satisfy his own selfish interests, he cannot be given the name *ruler*, so does not deserve reverence. The same is true of the other fundamental human relationships—husband and wife, father and son, elder brother and younger brother, and elder friend and younger friend. Chinese society is characterized today by its respect for the aged, for parents except where Communism has encouraged young people to ignore and even to help arrest their parents, teachers and family members.

Jên, the chief virtue, has also a larger meaning in Confucius' thought. The man of Jên is the perfect man, one who observes the Golden Rule ; he is a man of conscientiousness and altruism. In Confucius' view of history (generally accepted by subsequent Confucianists until late in the nineteenth century) in the Golden Age of the past there were sage-emperors Yao, Shun and Yü (legendary emperors of the third millenium B.C.) who were men of Jên. If the princes of states would emulate them or place men of Jên in actual policy-making and governing positions, there would be peace, prosperity, and happiness in the entire realm for all the people, and no criminals.

Mencius (372-289 B.C.) the recognized successor of Confucius in this school of thought, accepted the same values. He went further in maintaining that the virtues of Jên, I, Li and Chih (wisdom) were innate in human nature. Jên as the "feeling of commiseration" and and as "the mind that cannot bear the suffering of others" is found in all men; it is part of their original nature. Mencius tries to demonstrate this by his classic example : if a child has fallen into a well everyone in the vicinity is concerned to rescue him, and without any selfish concern for his own profit ; the feeling of commiseration, the "beginning of Jên," is spontaneous ; it belongs to man's original nature. Obviously men differ in observing this virtue ; this is because many men allow their selfish desires to obscure Jên ; also men differ in their cultivation of their natural endowment.

Mencius social philosophy was much like that of Confucius. Mencius wished to establish a government of men of virtue, led by a virtuous king—a king who "could not bear the suffering of others." All political and economic institutions should exist only for the benefit of the people. Mencius advocated the democratic idea of the equality of

all men: men are born equal because all have the original endowment of the four virtues that distinguish men from the animals. Social distinctions, such as that between ruler and subject, exist only because a division of labour is necessary. (Gandhi's and Bhave's views given below are similar.)

In Han Dynasty Confucianism led by Tung Chung-shu (ca. 179-104 B.C.) the same values were accepted and now were given a metaphysical relationship to aspects of the cosmos in an organismic philosophical system. The next significant developments in Confucian philosophy of values occurred in the Sung Dynasty (960-1279) and were influenced somewhat by Taoist and Buddhist thought to which we now turn.

Taoist philosophical thought, unlike Confucian, is not concerned with ethical values as such as the basis for a good and happy life in the world. In the intuitive and romantic thought of the *Lao Tzu* and the *Chuang Tzu*, the good and happy life is one lived close to nature, to the Tao, the Universe. The goal of life is to experience oneness with the Tao which manifests itself in the myriad forms of nature. In this mystical experience ego-consciousness is lost. The sage who has realized his oneness with the Tao does not have to think of right and wrong in his conduct. Being one with the Tao and having lost egoism, he behaves spontaneously—he follows "nature"—but in a pattern that manifests Yin-ism, that is, gentleness, non-aggression and humility. These are the virtues in Taoism. Another significant value Taoism has given Chinese culture is aesthetic. This is the love for the beauty of nature. Chuang-tzu revels in the glory of the myriad forms of nature — trees, streams, mountains, flowers, animals, rocks. This has made him a major source of inspiration for Chinese poetry and painting, particularly landscape painting, China's main contribution to world art.

Although the ethical values of Yin-ism are similar to the Jên of Confucianism, the ideal Taoist sage does not try to participate in politics in an effort to reform the world. On the contrary he is an individualist who rebels against the constraints of conventional society, abandons the world and lives a life of freedom and meditation close to nature. In government, the least possible is recommended; small communities content with a simple, rustic village life are the ideal (a similarity to Gandhi's social philosophy).

No outstanding thinkers followed the Taoist thought of Lao Tzu and Chuang-tzu; Confucianists deplored their lack of concern for the social order in declining responsible positions, their do-nothing philosophy of life. Taoism, nevertheless, contributed to the creation of the later Neo-Confucian philosophies, and also to the development of the Ch'an (meditation) school of Buddhism (called Zen in Japan).

Mahāyāna Buddhism has been an influence on Chinese thought

from the third century A.D.; it was the dominant philosophy between 500—1000 A.D. In Japan Shinto and Mahāyāna Buddhism are still today the main religions. In the area of values Buddhism offered the appealing bodhisattva ideal, the divine compassion of the perfected saint for all souls bound up in the birth-death cycle. His compassion is so great that he refuses to enter Nirvana himself until all men can enter with him. This compassionate egolessness and detachment from the world were the great values that Buddhist thought emphasized. However in Mencius Jên as "the mind that cannot bear the suffering of others" paralleled the bodhisattva's compassion; and egolessness, Mencius said, was essential to have Jên function. But Mencius, unlike the Buddhists, recommended involvement in the world to reform it and did not think of life as suffering. Confucian thought has always been directed to this world and its improvement; this is man's major task.

Mahāyāna Buddhism had profound and sophisticated philosophies to offer that had been formulated in India such as the Idealist school of Asaṅga and Vasubandu and the Mādhyamika of Nāgārjuna. Both these schools were important in the Ch'an school of Buddhism, the only school, except for the more popular Pure Land School, that survived after the T'ang Dynasty. Mahāyāna Buddhist systematic metaphysics stimulated Confucianism in the Sung Dynasty to develop a systematic metaphysics for its own philosophy; the result was the creation of the two schools of Neo-Confucian thought, the Rationalist (Li Hsüeh) and the Idealist (Hsin Hsüeh).

Chu Hsi, systematizer of the Rationalist school, followed the Confucianist tradition in his major concern for moral values and gave them a metaphysical basis. Following Mencius he declared that man's nature contains the Li (principles) of all the virtues: Jen (love), I (righteousness), Li (propriety), Chih (wisdom), and added Hsin (sincerity). These Li (used here as "principle" in the sense of an Aristotelian abstract form, and not to be confused with Li meaning "propriety"—a different character in Chinese) of all things are contained in the infinite impersonal reality, the Supreme Ultimate (T'ai Chi). Matter (Ch'i) is the other metaphysical ultimate; this is matter, the body of things given form by Li. The Li of the virtues in man, when not obscured by Ch'i can lead to the "extension of knowledge in investigation of things," that is, to knowledge of their Li in a moment of sudden enlightenment when the Li of the myriad things in the universe become visible to us from our own nature. It is selfish desire that has its source in Ch'i (the body) that obstructs this enlightenment and Jên is the foremost virtue in eliminating this obstruction.

Chu Hsi, like all Confucianists was much interested in politics. He said that there is a right and eternal pattern or Li of government. This is government by the sage-king, the man of perfect virtue as

Confucius long ago had taught.

The Idealist school of Neo-Confucianism [also called the Lu-Wang school after its greatest founders, Lu Hsiang-shan (1139-83) and Wang Yang-ming (1472-1529)] affirmed Mind as the sole reality, a view similar to the Idealist school of Buddhist thought. These Neo-Confucians said that Mind is Li (Principle) and there is only one Mind. This one Mind pervades the universe, for it is the universe. In man it expresses itself as Jên (love) and I (righteousness); love and righteousness are man's original mind as Mencius declared. The reason why most men do not manifest these virtues said Lu is that selfish desires and dogmatic views cause them to lose this original mind. The great man or sage is one who knows intuitively his original mind; his responses in all situations are spontaneously virtuous. This view is similar to the Taoist teaching of the spontaneous behavior of one who has realized oneness with the Tao. Unlike the Taoists Lu is typically Confucian in his insistence upon the great man's participation in worldly affairs. In particular he condemns the Buddhists for their withdrawal from the world, a behaviour he calls selfish.

Wang Yang-ming shows the influence of Taoist thought in his description of the Great Man as one with Heaven, Earth and all things—all men, animals, plants, trees and even stones. His ethical values and their intuitive basis follow Lu's views. His most important and original contribution to Neo-Confucian idealist thought is the concept that in mind there is a "unity of knowledge and action." "Conduct is the completion of knowledge." To demonstrate this he uses Mencius' "child in the well" example. The Great Man who has commiseration for the child spontaneously, also spontaneously *acts* to rescue the child. The action (the Will aspect of mind) is one with the knowledge and intuitive feeling of commiseration (Jên). Wang's further description of the Great Man depicts him as manifesting the unity of Activity and Quiescence. By this is meant that he is detached, composed, serene in activity; and in quiescence he is always perceptive and ready to respond with action when the situation requires it. He reaches the state which Confucius says he reached only at the age of seventy years, the state of being able to follow what the mind desires without making any transgressions.

In twentieth century Chinese thought the Confucian tradition and its values are continued by China's leading philosopher, Fung Yu-lan. He calls his system the New Rationalist School of Confucian thought. His metaphysics and value system show the influences of Taoist and Ch'an Buddhist thought, but the main ideas and emphases are Confucian.

In his metaphysics he accepts the concepts of the T'ai Chi and Ch'i as formulated by Chu Hsi, but adds two others, the Evolution of Tao and the Great Whole. The Evolution of Tao is the process of

actualization of the multitude of Li of the T'ai Chi by means of Ch'i. However many of the Li are not actualized in the world. Existence is characterized by change and process; it is a dialectic process of development and dissolution, but shows an overall progress (a spiral progress?) in the direction of new and higher qualities. Fung is obviously influenced by Western evolutionary theories in this concept of progress. He no longer places the Golden Age in the past as previous Confucian philosophers had theorized. The Great Whole is the all-inclusive One; it includes the world of Li, of Ch'i, of all actualized concrete things and the Evolution of Tao which conceptually perceives the dynamics of all future realization of Li in Ch'i; includes also all the abstract Li that can never be actualized in existence; and finally it includes the thought that thinks it. However it is not a one of internal relations, not an organic unity. In this way it differs from the One of Taoism or Buddhism. Yet, like the One of these philosophies it is perceived only intuitively; the Great Whole cannot be thought because it includes the thought that thinks it, there is nothing outside it. It is known only in an experience like the Enlightenment experience the intuitive flash of insight, of Ch'an Buddhism.

Fung's values are integrated with his metaphysics. In his *New Treatise on the Nature of Man* he distinguishes four stages in the life of man in an ascending series. First and lowest he calls the Innocent sphere, the stage of unreflective action. A man at this stage simply follows his natural impulses, unselfconsciously, or follows the behavior pattern inculcated in him by society without reflecting about its meaning. The second stage is the Utilitarian. At this level a man is aware of himself as distinct from others, but this awareness is egoistic; he desires power and wealth for his own benefit. The third stage is the Moral. Here the person is concerned with righteousness and with his duty to society. He realizes that society is the whole of which he is only a part; he identifies his good with that of society as a whole. The fourth and highest sphere is the Transcendent. This is the highest goal for man. It is the realization that society is only a part of the Great Whole. Men who attain this sphere are sage men; they are Citizens of the Universe.

In his social philosophy Fung maintains that only sage men are suited to assume leadership in a society. Such leaders do not need to do very much themselves; their task should be to get "all the talents in the country to do their best"; in this way everything will be done. Fung writes:

> What the man who is the supreme leader needs is a mind which is open and impartial and all-embrasive. It is only the man who lives in the transcendent sphere who can really be like this. He identifies himself with the Great Whole and

> can see things from the standpoint of the Great Whole. His mind is like the Great Whole in which all things follow their own course and do not conflict with each other. Thus his mind is all-embracing. In his sphere of living he is not on the same level with things, but is above them. Therefore he is the most suitable to be the supreme leader in society.[7]

He has "sageness within and kingliness without," *i.e.*, "he is able to attend to the sublime, yet to be concerned with common activity." There has been such a leader in recent times, but in India, not China. Mahatma Gandhi was such a sage-leader.

After Communism established its dictatorship in China, Fung Yu-lan in 1950 repudiated this philosophy. He called his Citizen of the Universe ideal "escapism" and said that his metaphysics reflected the "crumbling feudal society" as Communist materialism taught. It is difficult to know whether or not Fung was sincere in his repudiation of his system or succumbed to the tremendous pressure to follow Communist ideology.

Fung's latest formulation of Confucian thought manifests what a great mind learned in both Western (he received his Ph. D. from Columbia University, New York) and Eastern thought finds of universal value in Chinese philosophies. Fung's ideal man and leader manifests sageness within and kingliness without. Sageness within means living at the sublime level of oneness with total nature, the entire universe. This joy in all the myriad forms and phases of nature and intuitive oneness with this totality are the gifts of Taoist thought to Fung's system and to world thought. Kingliness without is the characteristic of the "man of jên" which belongs to the Confucian ideal. He is the man of high moral character who is devoted to the effort to reconstruct the social order in such a way that all men can be good and happy men. The unity of knowledge (this means ethical values) and action brought out so explicitly in Wang Yang-ming's philosophy, has been a dominant aspect of Confucian thought since the time of its founder. This essential social involvement of the virtuous man is the Confucian contribution to Fung's and world philosophy; it is identical with the ideal of the karma yogin in Hinduism.

The Value Situation in Eastern Culture: India

India, like all the nations of the globe is witnessing the turmoil and general social unrest found almost everywhere today. As in the West traditional values are being questioned. Around what values will India reintegrate itself and what will be the significance to the probable values adopted in the emerging world order? In answering this question we shall begin with the traditional Indian view of the present value crisis in history and of what might follow.

The Indian traditional philosophy of history interprets the growing disintegration of society as the usual characteristic of a Kali Yuga, the

fourth epoch of a culture-cycle. The cycle begins with a Satya (or Kṛta) Yuga, an era of perfect effortless virtue, when there was "no malice, weeping, pride or enmity; no contention, no lassitude, no hatred, cruelty, fear, affliction, jealousy or envy." In the next epoch, the Tretā Yuga, virtue decreased by one-fourth, and man's happiness by the same amount. In the third era, the Dvāpara Yuga, virtue decreased by one-half, also man's happiness. In the final phase of the cycle, the Kali Yuga, virtue decreases by three-fourths; because of this man's condition now becomes miserable. But then when virtue is almost reduced to zero, a new Satya Yuga dawns and the cycle repeats itself. After 1000 of these cycles of four eras each, the universe is dissolved into a seed state—the Pralaya—but again blossoms forth to repeat the entire process. This cyclical view of history as the traditional one has influenced twentieth century Indian thinkers.

It is popularly agreed upon that this era is a Kali Yuga; but optimistically the Satya Yuga comes next and its advent is ardently longed for. This is evident in a speech by Vinobā Bhāve to Gandhian workers in Kerala in 1957. Bhāve said:

> Some of the Jana Sangh Party used to meet me. They used to tell me: "You talk about ahimsa, but it will never be practicable in this kali-yuga; it was only possible in the satya-yuga of the past." These are the traditionalists. They oppose us thus, while the Communists oppose us by saying that we are only wandering in an utopia. They say: "For the present we have to be prepared to make use of violence. But ultimately nonviolence will come to prevail" ...But if we are to prepare ourselves mentally for some violence today hoping that nonviolence is bound to come at some distant stage, it is possible that nonviolence itself would never be realized. In this way we differ.
>
> About the conception of satya-yuga there is no difference between us. There is no difference either in our conception of the ideal order of society and its nature. While saying this I pass over the minor differences...[8]

The principle of Sarvodaya, the Welfare of All, a major concept of his guru, Gandhi, is the one that Bhave holds in common with the Communists. But this ideal cannot be put into practice, Bhave says, by violent means. It is essential that the spiritual atmosphere of Ahimsā first prevail. This is the only foundation for a satya-yuga. Bhave believes that mankind, or at least India, is now ready to make this value a reality. He points out that Indian spiritual history has shown a gradual but steady progress toward this attainment. He describes the major steps in this progress in four stages.[9]

In stage 1, the non-violent man had to save himself from the violent through the protection provided by the Ksatriya varna. But then

the Kṣatriyas went too far in their violence. The attempt to save society was made by the Brahmin avatār, Paraśurāma, who, although, as a Brahmin was an advocate of non-violence, engaged in violence to remove the violence of the Kṣatriyas. This attempt was unsuccessful ; " the seed of violence survived, " but this was a stage forward in establishing Ahiṃsā.

Stage two was the age of Rāma. The brahmins now would not commit violence themselves, but had no qualms about using the Kṣatriyas, notably Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa, to rid themselves of the violence of the Rākṣasas. However, if there had been no Kṣatriyas to defend them, brahmins like Vasista and Viśvamitra would have preferred death to the commission of acts of violence. This was a step forward again, but Ahimsa was not yet established because the brahmins had "a wish that others would protect them."

Stage three showed much further progress. Good men resolved never to seek the help of others to save themselves. They decided that their own Ahimsā was the only true defence. Although this was a large step forward, it was insufficient because Ahiṃsā was applied only on the individual plane. Bhāve comments,

> It would not be true to say that they were never moved to use the method of ahimsa on the social plane. It may be that the conditions of the time did not seem propitious. And so they experimented individually, by themselves.[9]

Nevertheless, it was out of such experiments, Bhave thinks, that a science of Ahiṃsā was born. This led immediately to the fourth, the present stage.

Stage four is the experiment in Ahiṃsā that is now going on. The " whole of society " is " joining together to oppose violence with the methods of ahimsa." Perfection in Ahiṃsā, however, is beyond human attainment. Ahiṃsā is, in fact, the " essence of all good qualities," and " there is only one perfection, and that is the Supreme." The sum-total of all virtues, Bhave declares, is contained in the two qualities of Ahiṃsā and Satya, non-violence and truth. Ahiṃsā includes compassion, tenderness, forgiveness, serenity, patience, non-violence, loyalty.

Ahiṃsā and Satya, Bhāve tells us, can develop only in an atmosphere of fearlessness and humility. Humility is necessary to guard against egoism, enemy of all virtue. Egoism manifests itself especially in the ambitions for the attainment of the demonic (asuric) goals of power, culture and wealth. The egoistic desire to try to force one's own culture upon others is demonic; so, more obviously are the pursuit of power and wealth.

Bhāve has some very specific recommendations to overcome the egoistic, asurik evil of wealth and its pursuit :

> It is a tragic paradox that those who earn laks (hundreds of thousands) are called servants, while those who produce food for the nation are regarded as self-seekers working merely to feather their own nest.....
>
> It is in order to put an end to this hypocrisy that I have put forward the idea of land being the common property of all. All that we have, our land and property and intelligence —everything has to be an offering to the society.....
>
> There is one thing which we will demonstrate through Sampattidān : that nonpossession is a force for social good. We have long known that nonpossession brings about individual purification. We have to realize that it can also serve as a powerful means of social wellbeing. We have to prove that it is not only spiritually efficacious but it can help us in constructing better and richer worldly life.....
>
> The need of the hour is to mobilize all our wealth in every form and press it into the service of the society. The Sampattidān way will turn every house into a bank on which the society can draw freely for all its wants. And because what is offered will be used locally, it will make a very easily workable plan. It will directly lead to the building up of the collective strength of the people. It will unite them with one another and release tremendous energy for constructive effort. We know that the practice of equality and renunciation are good, but we have to look at them afresh and see them as forces for promoting social welfare.[10]

More precisely, Sampattidān is the giving of one-sixth of one's property and wealth for the use of the community. A further goal for those saintly enough to attempt it is observance of Jīvandān, the giving of one's whole life in the service of the poor.

In the above review of Bhāve's ethical ideal it is apparent that he is merely following the basic teachings of his guru, Mahatma Gandhi. Ahiṃsā was Gandhi's cardinal principle founded upon his metaphysical view that God is Truth (Sat), and each man has God or Truth in himself—each is like a wave in the ocean of Truth that is God. Because each man has God in him, violence should not be used against him. Ahiṃsā, often called Love by Gandhi, is therefore the basic principle of all social interaction that accords with Reality, with Truth. "Non-violence is the law of our species,"[11] Gandhi declares. Observance of this law is the way to realize God. Gandhi says, "When you want to find Truth as God the only inevitable means is Love, i.e. non-violence."[12]

Ahiṃsā and Satya (truthfulness) have always been among the five great traditional virtues in Indian ethics, but Gandhi has fearlessly set

the rare example of fearlessly putting Ahiṃsā into practice in public political and economic life as well as in private. The other virtues he observed among the traditional great five—*asteya, brahmacarya,* and *aparigraha*—all hinge upon Ahiṃsā.

How did Gandhi intend to apply his value system to revolutionize Indian society and through India's leadership bring in a new world order, a new Satya Yuga?

Gandhi first asserted the social equality of all men. This follows from the Law of Ahiṃsā which sees God in all men, all have equal dignity, therefore. But Gandhi realized that men differ greatly in their abilities and inclinations towards the various kinds of work that must be done in a cooperative society. He thinks that the traditional varna system of Hinduism is based upon this fact, but rejects the later conception of caste. The division of labour represented by the varna system is necessary for a society, and men fall naturally into groups that can best perform the intellectual, the military, the commercial, the agricultural and the manual jobs.

The more revolutionary proposal Gandhi puts forth is the concept of economic equality—equal wages for all regardless of the kind of work performed. Also Gandhi realized the social stigma attached to certain kinds of work, especially manual. To eliminate this, he recommened that those engaged in other kinds of work do a little useful work with their hands daily, such as farming, weaving or carpentry. It was the duty of each person to perform some useful task for the benefit of the community. He mentions the teaching of the *Bhagavad Gītā* that he who eats without working for his food "eats stolen food". Rough work should not be confined to any one class and "everyone must be his own scavenger."[18]

About the present economic situation in which there are rich capitalists and landowners, Gandhi believed that non-violent methods should be used to distribute their wealth. He thought that these wealthy men could be persuaded through reason and love (Ahiṃsā) to act as trustees of the people's wealth. Bhave had some success in his Bhūdān movement with this kind of appeal.

Gandhi was, of course, against violent methods of resolving the unjust situation between capital and labour. He said that such methods would only result in attitudes of hatred that would destory both groups. He thought that labour might withdraw its cooperation in a peaceful "strike" to awaken capitalists to the injustices suffered, and in this way bring to the attention of the capitalists the injustices suffered. This method could result in the harmonious cooperation of the two groups. For Gandhi the idea of "class war" was an abomination, because capitalists too had God within them and could be brought to see their responsibilities for their fellow men. No man could be an object of hatred, but only of love, although one might hate the acts

that a man is performing.

However it is well known that Gandhi did not favour the further growth of industrialism with its capital-labour antithesis in India even if the State took over ownership of the major industries. He saw how this factory-style economic system had already demoralized and depersonalized humanity in the West. However he said that he did not object to machinery as such, but to the immoral motivation behind its use—greed—rather than saving men from labour; and to the immoral results of its use. "Men go on 'saving labour' until thousands are without work and thrown on the open streets to die of starvation,"[14] said Gandhi. Gandhi's morality of Ahiṃsā and Sarvodaya is very different in its attitude toward machinery. Gandhi explains :

> I want to save time and labour, not for a fraction of mankind but for all; I want the concentration of wealth, not in the hands of a few, but in the hands of all. Today machinery merely helps a few to ride on the back of millions...I am aiming, not at the eradication of all machinery, but limitation...*The supreme consideration is man.*[15]

In Gandhi's view the best kind of political and economic order for each and every man is a decentralized system. The basic unit of society would be the village, for in village life men retain their individualities versus the depersonalization and anonymity of the city. In villages there can be cooperative works, intimate neighbourly love can be developed, men can live simpler lives closer to nature. All these things are conducive to physical health and spiritual development. All men should be educated in Ahiṁsā, Satya, and Brahmacarya (self-control) and the limitation of possessions (Aparigraha) that these high moral principles involve. Non-stealing (Asteya) would be easy to observe; there would be little need for police or other forms of coercive government institutions. Government would eventually be restricted to merely welfare functions. (Communism sets up a similar ideal goal, but demands violence to attain it; therefore never can. As Gandhi says, violence begets more hatred and more violence.)

Although Gandhi has a new social order for India in mind, he is not a narrow nationalist. God is incarnate in the whole of mankind, in all the peoples of the earth. Service to God begins with service to one's immediate community, the village; the village is active in service to the district; the district in turn is concerned with the good of the nation, and the nation with the welfare of all other nations—the entire human community.[16]

Those who, like Gandhi and Bhave, are already at this high level of spiritual attainment, of devotion to the highest good of the entire human community, would be recognized by philosophers such as Aurobindo and Radhakrishnan of India and the western sociologist,

Sorokin, as having attained a new evolutionary level, the level of the supraconscious. We have already mentioned Sorokin's view that this level is the next one in human history. The Chinese ideal leader as the man of "sageness within and kingliness without" described in the previous section is a similar level of human consciousness that Fung Yu-lan calls the Transcendent sphere. But Aurobindo has written at greatest length about the supraconscious level as definitely the next and final one in human history. All of us are familiar with his works that center on this theme. In his concept of the integral yoga Aurobindo makes more explicit the kind of individual and social integration man will achieve. Gandhi, it seems, is the greatest twentieth century saint who has actually lived this integral pattern of action, love and knowledge (Karma, Bhakti and Jnana yogas). Yet Gandhi in his *Autobiography* maintains that he was merely an ordinary man whose attainments in Ahiṃsā and the other cardinal virtues were the result of strenuous self-discipline, a method he recommends for all individuals if the right kind of new world order is to come about.

The Western world, it appears, is far from being ready for the development of a high spiritual level in the near future. Among all the countries of the globe, India alone is in a state of readiness. Despite her troubles, the truth is that only in India could a saint like Gandhi have sufficient popular appeal to become a national leader. This is because India has had a long background education in the cardinal virtues essential in establishing a new harmonious world community around the highest spiritual goals. This education began as early as the earliest of the Upanishads, the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka.* In this Upanishad (V. ii. 1—3) the three virtues recommended are self-restraint (*dāmyata*), giving (*datta*) and compassion (*dayadhvam*). But the ethical ideal of this Upanishad goes much further in a famous passage spoken by the sage Yājñavalkya :

> Lo, verily, not for love of the husband is a husband dear, but for love of the Self (Ātman) a husband is dear.
>
> Lo, verily, not for love of the wife is a wife dear, but for love of the Self a wife is dear...

The same is said of sons, of brahminhood, kṣatrahood, wealth, all worlds, the gods, all beings, all things whatsoever. This is exactly the firm religious basis of Gandhi's Ahiṃsā. For Yājñavalkya and for Gandhi all is dear because the divine Self is incarnate in them.

The general pattern of the history of the observance of this morality in India has been described above as Bhave depicts it ; and although this high morality has, in India's past, been realized in daily life by only a few saints (Bhave might have included the Buddhist ruler-saint, Aśoka), in today's world Gandhi and Bhave have shown the way for its practical realization in everyday life in the contemporary

world.

A value in a different sphere, the aesthetic, the value of Beauty has been another area of India's contributions to the world. India's painting, architecture and sculpture with their own original style and India's great poetry are praised by lovers of beauty all over the world. Most recently Rabindranath Tagore has received world recognition in receiving the Nobel Prize in literature. India's music, also, is another source of aesthetic delight; but more popular, perhaps, is the art of the Bharata Nāṭyam dance, especially in the Western world.

India has made major contributions in the world of Truth, of Intellect as the West thinks of this value. Her contributions in mathematics, especially the decimal system of numerals and the significance in mathematics of zero (śūnya) were of incalculable value to the world. Western physical sciences could not have developed beyond a very rudimentary stage without zero and the decimal notation. In philsophy India also was very early in constructing sophisticated systems of thought. She excelled in exploration of and mastery over the inner self of man in Buddhist and Hindu meditation and yoga disciplines. Her greatest gift has been in this area of man's spiritual self-realization. This is the source of Ahiṃsā, the cardinal virtue of all spiritually-minded world leaders today.

Conclusion

In our glimpse of the value systems of the West and of two great eastern cultures, the Chinese and the Indian, we have noticed much similarity in ethical ideals. The Christian Western value of self-sacrificing egoless love is the same as the ideal of Ahiṃsā, especially as Gandhi interprets its total meaning. In Chinese culture from Confucius to Fung Yu-lan the man of Jên observes a similar morality.

Truth, both in the Gandhian sense as God, and in the meaning of exploration and creativity in the world of thought, particularly philosophy and science, is another great value in all three cultures.

Beauty is a third major value. In Western culture the world of art has always been a source of joy. There has been much beauty in Western literature, especially poetry and drama. Western music, also, has much dramatic beauty. The exaltation of Nature that we find in the Taoist writings of Chuang Tzu inspired the inimitable beauty of China's landscape painting and much of her poetry. The beauty of both are a delight to men of all cultures. Indian arts, too, the fine arts of architecture, painting, sculpture—and classical dance are praised everywhere for their originality and excellence. In the art of poetry no culture excels the Indian. Tagore is the most recent of poets; he sings with the most sublime voice of all.

The values of Truth and Beauty, however, cannot be enjoyed and further actualized unless Ahiṃsā first prevails all over the world.

In the Western world today, we have noted that philosophers of history like Toynbee and Sorokin (also a sociologist) tell us that Western society is disintegrating and will collapse entirely unless there is a return to the egoless, self-sacrificing creative love of *New Tastament* ethics. Many today in the Western world, especially young idealistic students, are disgusted with a world ridden by lust, greed and hatred and the misery and violence they cause. They seek a new world of human brotherhood, of the equal dignity of every human being, of freedom and of friendly cooperation. Some have gone over into the Communist camp; they do not realize that the methods of violence and coercion Communism advocates militate against attaining the end sought.

As we said earlier, India is best suited for leadership in non-violent ways to reconstruct individual national social orders and the world—to lead the world towards the ideal of a peaceful, cooperative community. Gandhi thought that India could lead the world towards this and so does T. M. P. Mahadevan. Mahadevan says that India "has a primary part to play in the great cosmic drama of Time whose sole purpose is to unveil the face of Eternity; to usher in the Satya Yuga."[17] Under Gandhi's leadership India has chosen a democratic, non-coercive socio-political organization in keeping with her religious cultural tradition. But will other powerful political groups of the extreme Right or Left establish a coercive social order and rule by violent means? The West, too, feels the same threat. Only the future can tell what will happen; but whatever halocaust occurs and coercive regimes established, ultimately mankind must live by the cardinal virtue of Ahiṃsā so ardently advocated by Hindu, Buddhist, Jaina, Christian and Confucian ethics. This virtue established and always given priority each culture would be free to achieve and create in its own style around the values of Truth and Beauty.

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9. Vinoba Bhave, *Talks on the Gita* (Rajghat, Kashi: A. B. Sarva Seva Sangh Prakashan, 1958), p. 237.
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13. *Ibid.*, quoted from Bose in Datta, p. 107.
14. *Ibid.*, quoted from Bose in Datta, p. 115.
15. *Ibid.*
16. *Ibid.* p. 145
17. T. M. P. Mahadevan, *Time And The Timeless* (Madras; Upanishad Vihar, 1953), p. 84.