

it is an empirical fact, that many existents lack positive values. The situation can only be retrieved by calling them 'unreal'. But such a linguistic triumph we shall leave for the enjoyment of those who are in love with the words 'real' and 'valuational'. The second statement concerning the rational and the valuational is merely a particular *choosing*, a *question in Importance* and thus *beyond discussion*.

The detailed examination of the three great presuppositions of philosophical thinking has brought us to the conclusion that they are of very questionable validity. On grounds that are so open to doubt, it would be folly to build imposing superstructures yet that seems to be exactly what philosophy has been doing for the last few thousands of years. The fourth seems inevitably to follow from these three presuppositions together and if they seem to fail under scrutiny, it can hardly find another fate. These 'Presuppositions and Implications' characterise the Traditional Philosophy. But anyone who is acquainted with contemporary thinking would be aware of the fact that they have been under a torrent of criticism from all sides. Alternative views of philosophy are being put forward and new definitions of philosophy are being continually attempted. It is necessary that we should examine these alternative conceptions of philosophy and try to find out if they are more adequate than the traditional one. The next part, herefore, will be devoted to a discussion of some of the leading representatives who have suggested some alternative views of philosophy. But before we do it, it would be well if we undertake a brief discussion on the nature of three traditional values of Truth, Beauty and Goodness. This should be considered as some sort of a short supplement to our chapter on 'Value and Reality'.

CHAPTER VI

TRUTH, BEAUTY AND GOODNESS

The distinction between 'instrumental' and 'intrinsic' values, however relative, is inevitable. It is not that things or activities which are valued only instrumentally may not come to be valued for their own sakes, but only that such distinction inevitably arises in the pursuit of values. It should be borne in mind that such distinction arises only in connection with the '*pursuit*' of values and not with reference to the values themselves. Values, in fact, have been understood by many as things 'worth striving for'. But this, as we have seen, is only when they are viewed in relation to the human will and not as they are in themselves. Value is indeed the ground of both the 'Ought-to-Be' and the 'Ought-to-Do' but, between themselves, they do not exhaust the nature of values.

Truth, Beauty and Goodness have been the traditional intrinsic values, while most of the remaining values have generally been regarded as 'instrumental'. This distinction is based on the empirical fact of causation which, within the context of psychological purposes, is viewed as the relation of means and end. On the valuational level, the distinction gets reformulated in terms of 'instrumentality' and 'intrinsicity'.

A deeper interpretation of this distinction seems to correlate it with the hierarchichal structure of values. Hartmann, who has argued most powerfully to establish the view that the lower values should never be regarded as merely a means to those higher than themselves, has nevertheless formulated the law that the higher cannot be realised without the lower, thus making the realisation of the lower values a *necessary precondition* for the actualization of the higher. In this interpretation, all values are regarded as intrinsic. The distinction, on the other hand, is based on the fact that in the hierarchy of values, the higher cannot be realised without the realisation of the lower. The lower values are 'instrumental', therefore, in the sense that without their being realised, the higher cannot be realised. But they are not 'instrumental' in the sense that they are not 'intrinsic'. They do not lose their self-insistent intrinsicity, in face of the higher values. Rather they continue to assert themselves, just

because they possess intrinsic value in themselves. Every value, therefore, is both intrinsic and instrumental—'intrinsic' in the sense that it is a value, 'instrumental' in the sense that there are values higher than it which cannot be realised without its realisation.

The doctrine, however, that the realisation of higher values requires as a necessary precondition the realisation of the lower and not *vice versa*—a doctrine denoted, in Hartmann's phraseology, by calling the former 'weaker' and the latter 'stronger'—is true only within very wide limits. It is true that without the biological values, social, intellectual, aesthetic and moral values cannot be realised. But it is equally true that for the realisation of intellectual or social values, it may become necessary to sacrifice, though not completely, a great part of health values. Pursuance of social values may involve a sacrifice of intellectual values and an intellectual pursuit may entail an incapacity for the enjoyment or appreciation of sensuous and aesthetic delights.

Yet, however necessary the sacrifice of the lower value for the higher, -even where it is clear that the lower is 'really' the lower—it still is a *sacrifice*, a *sacrifice of values*. The lingering regret is not for the pleasure that one has missed, but for the *value* that that pleasure had. The will may choose—and it feels that it *must*—the superior value, yet it feels that it has lost what it *should* not have allowed itself to lose if the world had been otherwise. And it also feels that the *world should* have been otherwise. The tragedy becomes still deeper when the value-intuition fails to judge one value as superior to another, and yet must *choose* the one at the expense of the other. It becomes deepest when the values are so *intrinsically* opposed that the one *absolutely* excludes the other and yet the value-intuition fails to find the one superior to the other. The sacrifice of value in all these cases—even if the sacrifice be that of a lower value for the higher—is tragic because each value has an essential intrinsicity which persists in posting itself. In other words, the sacrifice is tragic because it is the sacrifice of value and not because it is sacrifice. Further, the conflict among values is of a different nature from other conflicts, for it cannot be resolved on grounds of reason or logic. As Hartmann writes, "In the realm of values contradiction exists as an ideal fact, a conflict among values. *Every value here has a certain existence for itself*, a superiority over the relativity of the whole sphere."* It is this 'intrinsicity' of each value which brings it into conflict with other values.

Hartmann, in bringing this antinomy lying at the heart of

values to a clear focus, has indeed done a great service to axiological thought. He is to be congratulated on the masterly way in which he has carried his phenomenological investigation into the realm of values and on his bringing to light of values which people were hardly aware of before his epoch-making work. Who could, for example, have thought of values like 'Love of the Remote' or 'Richness of Experience', though they undoubtedly existed in some vague form in the public mind? It is not that he has *discovered* these values, but only that he has recognised and given them a 'local habitation and a name'. The 'scientific' utopia of Marx and the evolutionistic theories of the nineteenth century had paved the way for the great 'futuristic' value of the 'Love of the remote', while the literary work of the early romantics at the beginning of the last century, of Baudelaire at the middle of it and of men like Oscar Wilde at the end of it definitely brought the other value on the horizon of human consciousness. *The Picture of Dorian Gray* could only be from the pen of a person who was conscious of the value of what Hartmann has called 'Richness of Experience'.

The correlation of the distinction between 'instrumental' and 'intrinsic' with the hierarchical character of values in the sense that the realisation of higher values presupposes the realisation of the lower ones, suggests that 'Truth', 'Beauty' and 'Goodness' in their character of ultimate intrinsicity are regarded as the highest in the hierarchy. They seem to be only 'intrinsic' and not 'instrumental' in the sense that there is no value higher to them which presupposes their realisation for its own actualisation. Further, the necessary relation which this distinction between 'instrumental' and 'intrinsic' seems to hold with the human will in its phase of 'pursuit' seems, on the other hand, to suggest that 'Truth', 'Beauty' and 'Goodness' are regarded as the ultimate object of all human pursuit. The 'intrinsicity' of Truth, Beauty and Goodness, therefore, is supposed to consist in their being the highest in the hierarchy and the ultimate object of human pursuit. Whether these values are distinct from each other and if so, whether there is a hierarchy among them, is a difficult question.

Truth seems to be a characteristic of propositions and the fact that a proposition is true seems to give it a certain sort of value even if what the proposition seeks to refer to is a disvaluational state of affairs. But it does not seem to be a very high sort of value, except in the secondary sense of being 'worth striving for'. In fact, it seems to be an 'instrumental' value *par*

excellence. For, in order that any value may be successfully pursued or realised, a true knowledge of the causal sequence is necessary. Thus even though like all other values it has some intrinsic value of its own, it can, in no way, be considered supreme in the hierarchy of values. The only way in which this can be disputed, is by widening the meaning of truth and thus annulling the distinction between it and other values. If it is considered as *more truthful* to tell a patient that he is not seriously ill when the doctor has told us so, it can only be because of a different meaning of 'truth' from what is commonly associated with that word. The fact that it would be regarded by most people as true in the deeper sense of the word, can be better understood if we interpret it in terms of value rather than truth. What they mean is that it would be *more valuational* to speak the lie rather than the truth in such a case. It would only occasion confusion if we continue to use truth in such diverse senses of the word.

Good, in its turn, may either be understood in the generic sense of 'value' or in the specific sense of moral good. In the former case, it connotes no specific or distinct meaning; while in the latter, it refers to a type of values which can be realised only in the pursuit of other values. Moral values are second-level values which presuppose other kinds of values and their pursuit by some human will. This 'pursuit' presupposes the contrast between the 'is' and the 'ought' not merely in the world of objects but in that of the subject as well. When this contrast ceases in the world of the subject, the person seems to pass into a state which has generally been known by the name of 'spirituality'. Here, there is only a Creativity welling out of Being which objectively appears to be some sort of a supreme concretized harmony that cannot but be felt as Perfect Beauty. Buddha, Christ and Gandhi seem to be the symbols of such a transmutation.

The transformation can take another form—a transcendence into some sort of a silent immobility where all motivations and actions cease. Striving, instead of rising into the creativity welling out of the Eternal Fount of Being, relapses into a supreme withdrawal, which, yet, is not the withdrawal of the schizophrenic. Even though not much known to the West, such a line has been recognised as one of the eternal pathways to the Great Transmutation in the East.

In both cases, however, the category of good signifying moral value, ceases to apply. In the sense of moral value, the

distinction between 'is' and 'ought' would necessarily remain. It would, therefore only be in the secondary sense of 'worth striving for' that a state in which the distinction between 'is' and 'ought' has been overcome can be called 'good'. Good, therefore, in the sense of moral values, though occupying a very high place in the hierarchy of values, does not occupy the highest.

Beauty seems to be even more elusive than the other two members of the traditional trinity. What could there be common to the living marble of a Phidias or Praxiteles and the modern sculptor of Epstein or Henry Moore; the paintings of the Renaissance and a modern Cézanne or Van Gogh; the architecture of the Parthenon and the buildings of Gropius, Le Corbusier and Wright? When we remember the Egyptian, the Negro, and the Primitive Art, our problem becomes still more acute. To compare the Lodi's Tomb with the Humayun's Tomb gives you a contrast of strength and grace. The Jama Mosque seems to have a feminine grace when compared to the famous south Indian temples. When we pass from the chiselled passages of a Pope to some *Lear*, we seem to stand before a mighty Niagra after what was, perhaps, not even a bubbling brook. No phrase excepting some like Clive Bell's 'significant form', seems adequate to describe the types of Beauty that are found in these various places.

Objectively, Beauty may be described as some sort of a concretized harmony which, when perceived by some subject, cannot but be felt as significant or important. Thus, it seems understandable why Russell should find mathematics beautiful or that certain other persons should come to feel the same about moral personalities. The spiritual personality, we have already said, is the concretized Beauty *par excellence*, for, here, the personality which is the ultimate prius of all values, itself becomes a Living, Concrete embodiment of value. Value could equally be characterised as the prius of the personality. The difference in the two characterisations results from the difference in standpoint from which we view the spiritual personality. If we view it from the side of the subject, the personality appears to be the prius of value; while if we contemplate it as an object, value seems to be the prius of the personality.

The bifurcation, or rather the distinction, between Fact and Value, however untenable in the last analysis, seemed to be inevitably made in respect of the values of Truth and Goodness. The same thing can be put in another way if we say that the distinction between 'instrumental' and 'intrinsic' continues all through the realm and that no value is merely 'intrinsic' without

being at the same time 'instrumental'. But with the value of Beauty, we seem to pass into another realm—a realm where fact and value are so inextricably bound up together that any attempt to separate the two seems a sheer abstraction, nay, a positive desecration. The age-old discussion of 'content' and 'form' in the field of aesthetics seems positively to suggest that the aesthetic content cannot be conceived apart from its form or pattern of organisation. In fact, the 'form' itself may become the pure aesthetic 'content' as in Cubist and abstract art.

The dissolution of the distinction between fact and value in the case of Beauty seems to suggest that it is in Beauty that we reach the highest point in the hierarchy of values. Whitehead, in his own language, points to this characteristic of beautiful objects. He writes: ".....there is a singular exclusive unity in the aesthetic object.....it expresses a unity of mutual relevance. It resents the suggestion of addition. No extra patch of scarlet can be placed in it without wrecking its unity."* "The subjective unity of feeling and the objective unity of mutual relevance express respectively a relation of exclusion to the world beyond."† This self-sufficient absoluteness of Beauty, this 'completion which rejects alternatives', has struck Whitehead with such force that he writes: "My own belief is that at present the most fruitful, because the most neglected, starting point is that section of value-theory which we term aesthetics."‡

Value has been considered as some sort of 'requiredness' (Köhler) or 'fittingness' (Broad). Beauty shows this in a pre-eminent degree, for the addition of even an extra patch would completely destroy it. To some extent, this is indeed found in the whole range of values. It can only be in this wide sense that some of the remarks of Whitehead can be considered intelligible. He writes: "Thus when the pragmatist asks whether 'it works', he is asking whether it issues in aesthetic satisfaction. The judge of the supreme court is giving his decision on the basis of the aesthetic satisfaction of the harmonization of the American Constitution with the activities of Modern America."§ Whitehead is not alone in sensing the supreme importance of Beauty in the hierarchy of values. The self-sufficient absoluteness of the experience of Beauty was noted in the aesthetic theories of Kant and

* *Essays in Science and Philosophy*, p. 99.

† *Ibid.*, p. 91.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

Schopenhauer. Will subsides into quiescence, striving ceases—when man is confronted with beauty.

Yet this almost absolute self-sufficient intrinsicity of the value of Beauty is *merely 'almost'*. The taint of 'instrumentality', however little, vitiates even this 'apparently last' in the hierarchy of values. From the view-point of the object, it certainly is the last, for, after all, it is some *concretized, self-sufficient* harmony that we mean by beauty. And it is in this sense of a 'fittingness' that Whitehead has been able to speak of an 'aesthetic satisfaction' in the correctness of a judgment on the part of the highest judicial authority in America. It is also, perhaps, in this sense that Keats wrote his famous line 'Beauty is Truth, Truth, Beauty'.

But, as we have seen before, there are second-level values—values realised in the pursuit of other values. These we have designated as the moral values. The contrast between the 'is' and 'ought' is an essential feature of this level. Yet, when the self-sufficiency of the objective value of Beauty gets realised in the life of the subject, we pass on to another sphere which can hardly be called moral. 'The spiritual' or 'the Holy' seem somehow to describe the state better. Of course, it is not the words, but the difference connoted by the words, that needs to be emphasized. *The Life of the Person instead of finding its justification, worth or value in some end external to itself becomes its own absolute justification.* Values were always, to some extent, self-justified but there also was that straining outwards, that movement beyond themselves. Values, as we saw, were intrinsic-instrumental; but here they are only intrinsic and not instrumental.

Here, perhaps, we also understand what we meant when we said that personality was the prius of all values. It is the supreme value and, hence, when valuationally realised, is the completely intrinsic and ultimate value that can be met with in human experience. Beauty, like all other values, exhibits differences of intensity in its valuational exemplification but, at its apex stands the spiritual personality which is completely free and absolutely self-sufficient.

The three supreme values of Truth, Beauty and Goodness reveal, then, valuational differences between themselves. And beyond them we seem to pass into a region where value seems to stand in its absolute self-sufficiency. This is the realm of the spirit where existence seems to get its supreme and ultimate justification from the sense of value. What appears as a Living concretized harmony which cannot but be felt as Supreme Beauty

by any beholder of a spiritual personality, is felt by that personality itself as Joyous Creativity welling out of the heart of Being. The mystic senses the same Creativity behind the Beautiful Spectacle of objective Nature and, by an intuitive flash, feels their complete identity. Then is revealed the mystic vision which has been so consistent a feature of religious experience all the world over. The Upanishadic Seer's 'That art Thou' is the classic expression of this experience—the flight of the Alone to the Alone, being ultimately lost in some Ineffable Bliss.

* * * * *

This brings this part of our work to a close. We have called it 'Examinations and Clarifications'—for, whatever be the doubts about its being a clarification, there can be little doubt about its being an examination of certain theoretic principles which seem to be of fundamental importance for the philosophic activity in the usual sense of that term. The next part, as we have already said, will be concerned with a discussion of the alternative views of Philosophy held by some of the eminent thinkers of the recent past. One thing we shall find common to all—and it is that all of them are engaged in reducing philosophy to some other branch of knowledge which, however relatively it may be, is autonomously self-sufficient.

PART THREE DISCUSSIONS

CHAPTER VII

PHILOSOPHY AS ANALYSIS—G. E. MOORE & OTHERS

In his 'A reply to my Critics', G. E. Moore has protested against the prevalent view that, according to him, philosophy consists in analysis. That the notion is prevalent can hardly be doubted. That he has repudiated it is equally a fact. He has written, for example, "But it is not true that I have ever either said or thought or implied that analysis is the only proper business of philosophy. By practising analysis I may have implied that it is *one* of the proper businesses of philosophy. But I certainly cannot have implied more than that. And, in fact, analysis is by no means the only thing I have tried to do."*

Yet, it would be hardly denied that his influence in philosophy is due to the peculiarity of his approach or of the method he generally uses for the solution of philosophical problems. This method or approach is generally known by the name of 'Analysis', and there seems no reason to think that this title does not adequately bring out the true character of the approach or the method. In fact, in his authoritative 'personal statement' in the second series of 'Contemporary British Philosophy', Moore informs us that while he was quite sure about the truth of such propositions as 'There are and have been material things', 'There are and have been many selves', he was not at all sure as to what was the correct analysis of such propositions. He writes, for example, "of the *truth* of these there seems to me to be no doubt, but as to what is the correct analysis of them there seems to me to be the gravest doubt."† The very fact that he has chosen to make this distinction between knowing the proposition as true and knowing its correct analysis the central point of his contribution, seems sufficient to show that he regards it, at least, as the most important, if not, the only business of philosophy.

If this were an isolated case in Moore's writings, the truth of our assertion might have been disputed. But when we see it in the background of such famous essays as 'The Conception of Reality', 'The Nature and Reality of Objects of Per-

* *The Philosophy of G. E. Moore*, Ed. Schilpp, p. 675.

† *Contemporary British Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 223.

ception', 'Proof of an External World', 'Some Judgments of Perception', we are well fortified in our judgment that the 'Defence of Common Sense' is not just a by-the-way contribution with regard to a certain problem but the very essence of Moore's approach to philosophy.

Moore himself has confessed that he has been interested in philosophy more because of the philosophers than because of the problems of philosophy. He writes, for instance, "I do not think that the world or the sciences would ever have suggested to me any philosophical problems. What has suggested philosophical problems to me is things which other philosophers have said about the world or the sciences."* But Professor Moore has been interested in what other philosophers have said about the world or the sciences, only because he has felt that what they said is so absurd and strange that they could have said it only owing to some confusion in their minds or some mistake in their thinking. He has set, out, therefore, to clarify such confusions.

Most thinkers, for example, have been concerned with the question of Reality with a capital R, as also with the allied question:—What things are real? And enquiries concerning these have led to such strange conclusions that the whole world of space and time is 'unreal'. Professor Moore, in his 'The Conception of Reality', suggests that it is only due to a confusion between such propositions as 'Lions are mammalian' and 'Lions are real', that such extraordinary views should have come to be held. Because the term 'mammalian' in the first proposition does stand for a property or conception, it is thought that the term 'real' also stands for some conception or property. But this is only a grammatical illusion. He writes, "The only conceptions which occur in the proposition 'Lions are real' are, on this interpretation, plainly, (1) the conception of being a lion, and (2) the conception of belonging to something, and perfectly obviously, 'real' does not stand for either of these."† That the term 'real' does not stand for the conception of being a lion, is too obvious to need discussion. Discussing the second, however, he writes, "If 'is real' did stand for 'belongs to something' then the proposition 'Lions are real' would stand, not for the assertion that the property of 'being a lion' belongs to something, but for the assertion that lions themselves are *properties which belong to something*: and it is quite obvious that what we mean to assert is

* *The Philosophy of G. E. Moore*, p. 14.

† *Philosophical Studies*, p. 212.

not any such nonsense as this."* The 'real', therefore, does not stand for any conception at all. This, it should be noted, is in consonance with the position argued in our chapter on 'Logic and Reality'. Similarly, in his 'The Conception of Intrinsic Value', Moore shows that many of the difficulties in value-discussion occur because of a confusion between the 'intrinsicity' and the 'objectivity' of values.

The title 'Defence of Common Sense', therefore, is not merely a shock tactic of Professor Moore, but an articulation of his profound conviction that the philosophers' deviations from common-sense owe their origin to confusions which a subtler mind and an acuter analysis could have avoided.

The central confusion, because of which these departures from commonsense occur consists, according to Professor Moore, in "confusing the question whether we understand its meaning (which we all certainly do) with the entirely different question whether we *know what it means*, in the sense that we are able to *give a correct analysis of its meaning*".† This distinction between knowing, in the sense of *understanding* the meaning, and knowing, in the sense of being able to give a *correct analysis* of the meaning, is fundamental to Moore's way of thinking about problems. The first, he contends, cannot be open to doubt or discussion while the second, according to him, is such a profoundly difficult problem that, perhaps, nobody quite knows the correct answer to it.

This distinction, however, is not to be confused with Russell's distinction between 'knowledge by acquaintance' and 'knowledge by description'. It goes much deeper and is definitely more radical in nature. It includes amongst things which are known to be true, objects which could possibly never have been known by direct acquaintance. Propositions such as 'The earth has existed for many years past' could not be known directly and Professor Moore admits this. But even the certain fact that he *does not know exactly* what the evidence was for the assertion of such a proposition, seems to him no good reason for doubting that he understood the meaning of that proposition and knew it as true. He writes, "Yet all this seems to me to be no good reason for doubting that I do know it. We are all, I think, in this strange position that we do *know* many things, with regard to which we know further that we must have had evidence for

* *Ibid.*, p. 213. Italics author's.

† *Contemporary British Philosophy*. Vol. II, p. 198.

them, and yet we do not know *how* we know them, *i.e.* we do not know what the evidence was."*

Professor Moore is not the only person who thinks that he knows something even when he does not know what is the evidence for it. In fact, unless we choose to confine the word 'knowledge' only to those cases where we are fully aware of the evidence as also of its adequacy, there seems no reason why we should not be considered to have 'knowledge' of all that we are aware of.

Yet, it is equally obvious that if we come to doubt, for any reason, the evidence upon which our knowledge of a thing was supposed to be based, then, we also begin to doubt our knowledge of that thing. Knowledge may be of different types—perceptual, intuitive, ratiocinative, etc. and also may be aware of its grounding evidence or not. But, *qua knowledge*, it stands in contrast only with the state of doubt. The knowledge that obtains after doubt is resolved, is knowledge that has become conscious of itself as well as of its own grounds. Professor Moore, therefore, should not have supposed that any considerations which *affected* the evidence for the knowledge of a thing, would leave the knowledge of that thing *unscathed*. Doubt regarding the evidence would inevitably be reflected in our knowledge of the thing. The question how we can doubt the evidence when "we do not know what the evidence is", is mainly irrelevant, for even if we do not know what the specific evidence is, we know, at least, what *type* of evidence is in demand that would be sufficient for the purpose. Hence any considerations affecting the evidence, whether in respect of its nature or adequacy, will be sufficient to raise grave doubts about our knowledge itself.

We certainly do have knowledge of things about which we may later have doubt—a doubt that may be resolved into belief when the reasons for it are known to be unfounded. We all start with a *prima facie* belief—a belief that, till then, we have found no reason to doubt. As C. S. Pierce has put it, "We cannot begin with complete doubt." †

When Professor Moore claimed to know such propositions as 'the earth has existed for many years past' he could, therefore, mean either that no reasons for doubting such a proposition had yet arisen in his mind or that the reasons that arose have been found to be wrong or inadequate or that no *possible* reasons

* *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 206.

† *Chance, Love and Logic*, p. 2.

could *ever* arise to raise doubts about propositions such as this. He, however, seems to be inclined towards the third alternative. It is not that he is unaware of the fact that there have been other thinkers who have doubted such propositions and who have also thought that they had sufficient reasons for their doubting. In spite of this fact, he inclines towards the third alternative, for he thinks that all those persons who considered themselves to have sufficient reasons for such doubting, did so only because of a subtle confusion in their thinking.

The confusion, as we have already pointed out, consists, according to Professor Moore, in failing to distinguish between the 'understanding of an expression' and the 'knowledge of the analysis of what we understand by such an expression'. He himself says, "But to hold that we do not know what, in certain respects, is the analysis of what we understand by such an expression, is an entirely different thing from holding that we do not understand the expression. *It is obvious that we cannot even raise the question how what we do understand by it is to be analysed unless we do understand it.*"* Understanding, therefore, is *prior* to analysis and reasons, however acute and relevant, can affect *only* the analysis and not the ordinary understanding of our objects of experience.

Professor Moore, however, is in no doubt, not merely about the priority of understanding to analysis, but also that such an understanding is inevitably true. As already quoted, he wrote, "of the truth of these proposition there seems to me to be no doubt, but as to what is the correct analysis of them there seems to me to be the gravest doubt." † But mere understanding does not ensure the truth of a proposition; it is merely the precondition of intelligible communication. Understanding, therefore, is *prior*, not only to analysis but also to the determination of the truth of a proposition. Whether a proposition is true or false can only be determined if we first understand what the proposition means.

Professor Moore's account seems to suggest that the meaning of a proposition is something simple contained in the proposition which can be read off at a glance by a mere inspection of the proposition. But propositions, as we have already argued in another chapter, have no intrinsic meanings of their own. They are merely structural symbols referring to certain 'states

* *Contemporary British Philosophy*. Vol. II, p. 199. Italics ours.

† *Ibid.*, p. 223.

of affairs'—symbols that are intelligible only with reference to a common convention and community of experience. Where either of the two is lacking, the proposition conveys no meaning and is merely a jumble of noises or unmeaning marks on paper. Further, it is only in respect of the primitive and common objects of experience that the propositions convey their meaning so immediately. Otherwise, the meaning of most propositions needs to be determined with some exactness before the question of their truth or falsity can arise.

The confusion between meaning and truth seems to be shared by a writer like Morris Cohen, whose view of meaning is opposed to that of Professor Moore. Following Charles Pierce, he thinks that "anything which has any conceivable *consequences* has meaning",* for it is only possible consequences that can determinate the truth or falsity of a proposition. For him, "these consequences *constitute* the meaning of the proposition in question". While for Professor Moore, meaning was something simple contained in the proposition which could be read off at a glance; for Professor Cohen, it is constituted by all possible and conceivable consequences which can never be completely known. But the consequences, however necessary to the determination of the truth or falsity of a proposition, do not really constitute its meaning. The proposition 'I thought of him yesterday' can perhaps have no possible consequences which can determine its truth or falsehood. Yet, it would hardly be denied by anybody that it has a meaning. Professor Cohen, of course, admits that "it is not true that without verification propositions are utterly meaningless".† This should not be taken to deny Professor Cohen's previous assertion that the meaning of a proposition is constituted by all its possible and conceivable consequences, but merely that the consequences may be such that they are unverifiable. What we are pointing to, on the other hand, is the simple consideration that a proposition may have no possible consequences and yet have meaning.

This is possible, because it is only the verification which depends on the consequences. The understanding of the meaning, on the other hand, depends primarily on the community of experience—a community which, on the primitive levels, is ensured by the structural and functional similarity of the psychophysical constitution of most persons. On levels other than the

* *A Preface to Logic* by Morris Cohen, p. 59. Italics ours.

† *Ibid.*, p. 60.

primitive, meaning itself has to be determined, and understanding is reached only in proportion as this determination has been achieved. A proposition in philosophy or science can fairly be understood only by those who have the relevant background for the exact determination of the meaning of that proposition. This determination of meaning necessarily presupposes empirical and logical analysis. Professor Moore, when discussing such complex questions as 'How do we know that other people exist' or whether 'Time or Matter were real', does not himself think that their meaning is very clear. In fact, his attempt is first to determine their exact meaning, to disentangle it from confusions in which somehow it has got involved, and only then to raise the question of its truth or falsehood.

Meaning and Analysis are, therefore, not so separated as Professor Moore thinks them to be. They are rather so inter-related that clarity in the former can only be achieved through clarity in the latter. The view that meaning may be evident even when analysis is inadequate, is rooted in confusion. A meaning is *clearly conveyed* if the state of affairs we wish to refer to has been grasped by the person to whom it is conveyed. The *adequacy* of the analysis, therefore, would be determined by what we wish to convey and not by any *intrinsic* standard pertaining to the proposition itself. To think otherwise, would amount to upholding the dogma that propositions have intrinsic meanings of their own. An analysis that is inadequate for logical purposes may, however, be completely adequate to convey the meaning one wishes to convey.

To conceive, then, of adequacy as something absolute is the fundamental fallacy underlying these objections. The 'adequacy' is rather a function of what one wishes to convey and hence is always relative to what one intends to mean. All meaning involves analysis and however primitive an analysis may seem from levels more advanced, it still is adequate for the meaning we wish to convey. In thinking of meaning as apart from analysis or even as inevitably prior to it and in confusing the understanding of the meaning of proposition with the understanding of it as true, Professor Moore has laid himself open to serious objections.

But Professor Moore would perhaps reply that his view of meaning as prior to analysis, relates only to primitive experiential propositions and not to propositions in general. But it may still be objected that even primitive propositions involve some form of analysis and that they would be ununderstandable to anyone

who has not performed that analysis. Psychological studies of perception have shown that it is essentially selective and involves both analysis and synthesis in its knowledge of objects. It is this fact which makes many thinkers reject the self-evidential certainty of perceptual knowledge. As we shall see later on, Russell's insistence that it is sense-data and not the objects of perception that have primary certainty and his difference in this respect from Professor Moore, derives mainly from this fact about perceptual knowledge. And though we shall find reasons to accept Professor Moore's view, it would not be because of his distinction between meaning and analysis or of the priority of the one to the other.

Professor Moore, in another part of his argument, however, seems to imply that it is not only due to the fact that understanding is prior to analysis that propositions such as 'the earth has existed for many years past' are indubitable. The reason why such propositions are incapable of being doubted is rather that their denial would involve a self-contradiction. He observes: "If we know that they are features in the 'common sense view of the world' it follows that they are true: it is self-contradictory to maintain that we know them to be features in the common sense view, and that yet they are not true; since to say that we know this, is to say that they are true."* By the phrase 'Common sense view of the world' he means the view that there are, have been and will be persons who have entertained such propositions about themselves as that 'they were born at a certain time', that 'the earth has existed for many years past', etc., etc.—propositions that I myself entertain and that I know to be true.

The existence of other persons, according to this argument, cannot be doubted for, in trying to controvert the views that most people hold, we are implying that these people exist and that they hold these views. What Professor Moore seems to be meaning, is pretty clear and it is only because philosophers have used the word 'knowledge' in a very restricted sense that they have been able to doubt other peoples' existence. But what is of deeper interest in Professor Moore's contention, is his view that we can never doubt what we understand or know for, doubt can only arise when empirical or logical analysis has been either inadequate or confused or wrong. Doubt, therefore, belongs to the field of analysis and not to that of understanding or knowledge. But such a bifurcation between analysis and understand-

* *Contemporary British Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 207. Italics author's.

ing or knowledge is, as we have already seen, inadequate and wrong.

What Professor Moore seems to be reaching for—if we give up his inconvenient terminological distinction between 'Understanding' and 'Analysis'—is perhaps the contention that *there can be no reason whatever for our doubting the whole of experience*; that universal scepticism regarding experience is impossible, for it is only *on grounds of experience* that we can come to doubt any specific experience. No evidence derived from Physics or Physiology or Psychology can make us doubt experience, for they themselves are based on and constructions from experience. In other words, these branches of knowledge are derived from and verified through experience and, hence, can afford no ground for doubting experience itself. Logic also can provide no ground, for it is concerned not with experience but only with formal, hypothetical implication between propositions.

Neither empirical sciences nor logical considerations therefore, can ever militate against experience and if some philosophers have considered them competent to do so, it is only because of some misunderstanding regarding the function of logic or of the empirical sciences or both. The misunderstandings concerning the function of logic have already been treated of, at length, in our chapter on 'Logic and Reality'. As for those concerning the empirical sciences, we cannot do better than quote Russell's masterly formulation of the problem—a formulation, which though specifically made in respect of physics, can equally well apply to other sciences.

In his essay on 'Sense-data and Physics', Russell has formulated the problem thus, "Physics exhibits sense-data as function of physical objects, but verification is only possible if physical objects can be exhibited as function of sense-data."* Physics treats colour as a function of the light-waves which impinge upon the eye, but, as Russell remarks, "*the waves are in fact inferred from the colours, not vice versa*". This is the fundamental reason why no empirical science can provide grounds for doubting experience, for, to be empirical, it must be verifiable; and verifiable it cannot be unless it grants validity to experience. Science is a construction from sense-experience and, therefore, can never ultimately deny it.

When a new advance in science, therefore, shows the inadequacy of the older analysis, it is *only* the analysis that is affected

* *Mysticism and Logic*, p. 146. Italics ours.

and *not* the sensory experience on which the analysis was based. L. S. Stebbing makes this consideration the central point in her book *Philosophy and the Physicists*. She argues that the physicist-philosopher who tells us that the pavement on which we walk is not solid at all, forgets that *the meaning of the word 'solid' is constituted* by the sort of sensation we get from touching things of such type as the pavement is. What has changed in recent times, she contends, is the physical world-picture based upon the analysis carried out by classical physics and not the sensory experience from which so many of our words derive their direct meaning.

Professor Moore would, perhaps, agree with this point of Russell and Stebbing. But one great difference between him and Russell would, we think, be on the status of sense-data. Sense-data, for Russell, are the only 'hard' facts of experience. For Moore, more properly they are involved in the *analysis* of such propositions as 'This is a hand', 'That is the sun', 'This is a dog', etc., etc. The proposition 'This is a hand' is obviously not a proposition *about* the sense-data, though propositions concerning sense-data may be involved in any correct analysis of it. Professor Moore feels quite certain, at least, about two things concerning this proposition: first, that "there is always some *sense-datum* about which the proposition in question is a proposition—some sense-datum which is *a* subject (and, in a certain sense, the principal or ultimate subject) of the proposition in question and second that, nevertheless, *what* I am knowing or judging to be true about this sense-datum is not (in general) that it is itself a hand, or a dog, or the sun, etc., etc., as the case may be".* The phrase 'about which the proposition in question is a proposition', when taken in conjunction with the second part of the quotation, can only mean that atomic propositions about sense-data would always be found to be ultimately involved in the analysis of any such proposition as 'This is a hand' and not that the proposition itself is about a sense-datum.

The first part, particularly that within brackets, suggests that Professor Moore would accept the *ultimacy* of sense-data as asserted by Russell, while the second part seems completely to go against the spirit of Russell's assertion. For Russell, while the sense-datum is not judged to be a hand, the hand is, in fact, *a construct from the sense-data*. The logical construction may be faulty or inadequate at any point, but the sense-data remain

* *Contemporary British Philosophy*, Vol. II, p. 217. Italics author's.

unaffected by the faultiness or inadequacy. For Moore, on the other hand, what is most indubitably certain is not the sense-datum but 'This is a human hand'. Its analysis into propositions about the sense-data may, on the other hand, be faulty or inadequate.

This difference between Russell and Moore brings into focus what Moore exactly wishes to mean by his claim of 'knowing' the truth of such propositions as 'This is a hand', even when he does not 'know' their correct analysis. He is pointing to the fact that what we start from is the perceptual experience of the adult and not sense-data. They are rather a result of psychological analysis on the part of the individual. What is indubitably foundational, therefore, is not the sense-data which are only the result of introspective analysis but the *unanalysed experience of the adult* from which all of us start. Russell was, therefore, right when he treated the light-waves as a function of the sense-datum of colour but wrong when he stopped here—for, the sense-datum itself is a function of the abstractive analysis carried upon the unanalysed experience of the full-grown adult.

The fact to which Professor Moore is pointing to seems certainly correct. Yet, what it ultimately comes to is the simple fact that given the psycho-physical constitution we happen to have, our experience is final and inevitable for us. Whatever the physical analysis may reveal about the table, when I open my eyes I shall see the same table which I saw when I was ignorant about its physical analysis. And even if the physical analysis undergoes a change, the perceptual table will not change. So also, any mistake or change in the epistemological or psychological analysis of the factors involved in our knowledge of the table will not affect our perceptual experience of the table. This, certainly, is of the greatest importance for our practical living and, in fact, our whole life is planned and conducted with reference to this ultimate fact. But the great importance which it has for thought can be evident only if the empirical or logical analysis leads anyone to doubt the reality and validity of experience. Unfortunately, such has been the rule rather than the exception with most philosophical thinkers. In fact, the reminder was long overdue and the 'Defence of Common Sense' needed, not for the commonsense men of the world, but for the philosophers who pride themselves on being uncommon.

Still, Professor Moore seems to have gone too far in his attempt to save commonsense knowledge through a restriction of the word 'knowledge' only to this type of knowledge and treat-

ing the rest as 'analysis'. The dichotomy between Analysis and Knowledge, as we have already seen, is wrong and hence to confine the word knowledge or the certainty of knowledge to either one or the other would equally be a mistake. Certainty is not something absolute; it is merely a function of certain factors and is always relative to the object and purpose under consideration.

But, even if we admit Professor Moore's dichotomy between understanding and analysis, the question would remain, 'What is Analysis?' Analysis would either be empirical or logical. The empirical analysis, whether of physical objects, mental processes or selves is performed by different sciences. It cannot, therefore, be the function of philosophy proper. From Moore's own practice and the practice of those who have followed him, it appears that what they mean by Analysis is 'propositional analysis'. But Propositional Analysis is on the borderland of Logic and Language. And it is perhaps because of this that the thinkers of this school are mainly concerned with semantic and logistic considerations in their discussion of philosophical problems. To think, therefore, of philosophy in terms of propositional analysis is merely to reduce it to problems in logic and language. The identification of Philosophy and Logic, or rather their reduction into each other, is not, however, a new thing in the history of philosophic thought. Linguistic considerations too have been coming more and more to the forefront and it was perhaps I. A. Richards who defined Philosophy as the disease of language.

Such denial to philosophy of any specific function, is a common feature of the philosophical circles in modern times. The breakdown of the classical tradition in philosophy has resulted in a search for alternatives—a search that has ended generally in the reduction of philosophy to the particular subject-matter in which the philosopher happened to be specially interested. Logistic and linguistics are not philosophy—though, they, like any other science, may be used for the purposes of a philosophical construction. In fact, logistic and linguistics, as used by such famous logical positivists as Wittgenstein, Carnap and Ayer, are not the pure sciences bearing these names, but those sciences as adapted to a specific purpose. Russell's 'logical atomism', for example, is not a chapter in logic but in metaphysics.

Logic and language are being used for arriving at certain conclusions, just as Physics, Biology, Mathematics and Aesthetics were used in the past for a similar purpose. The sceptical or rather agnostic *conclusions* reached through the application of

logistics and linguistics are nothing new in the history of thought. The deduction of the meaninglessness of metaphysical propositions from the analysis of Logic and Language is regarded by these thinkers as a philosophical activity.

But their thinking, certainly, is not a thinking about logic or language. It is, rather, about a certain relation generated through a certain tension between their analysis of these studies and certain other set of questions which have agitated the metaphysical minds of most centuries. Their thinking is sustained by a relation between these studies of theirs, on the one hand, and the metaphysical propositions of other thinkers, on the other. In other words, theirs is a *philosophy* of logic and language rather than a study of these distinct and yet allied subjects. Their practice, therefore, does not correspond to their conviction that philosophy has no distinct subject-matter of its own. In fact, their thinking is completely *parasitical* in character; it presupposes the metaphysical nonsense of ages past, in the refutation of which the sole importance, nay, the very existence of their thinking lies. Otherwise their studies would relapse into those about logic and language which, however important in themselves, are no more philosophy than Physics or Mathematics, in their field, are. This is a significant pointer to the nature of philosophy and philosophical thinking, which, as we shall find in the sequel, will be of decisive importance for our discussion of the problem.

Yes, it is a fact that the thinking of these persons would have no object or *significance* apart from metaphysics, which they are continuously trying to show as consisting of nothing but 'nonsensical' propositions. Yet, the moment these thinkers try to become constructive, they find themselves in the net of that Nonsense which like the bear-blanket in the fable does not leave the tempted swimmer even though he wishes to leave it. 'Physicalism', 'Logical atomism', 'Positivism', 'Neutral monism' are all metaphysical positions and are treated as such by other thinkers.

The view of philosophy as Analysis, therefore, seems to be extremely inadequate and unclear in its formulation. In fact, it has seldom been explicitly formulated. Rather, it has been implicit in the practice of these thinkers. Moore's 'Defence of Common Sense' which, perhaps, is the best example where the central approach is formulated, is vitiated by the dichotomy between 'Understanding' and 'Analysis' and the confusion between 'Understanding' and 'understanding as True'. Also, Professor Moore has devoted a large part of the paper to the discussion of the

status of sense-data which, however interesting in itself, is mainly irrelevant to the chief problem of Analysis.

Yet, this practice seems implicitly to contain a view of philosophy and philosophical thinking which, when articulated, would be found to fit in not only with the thinking of these persons but also with that of the classical thinkers whom they have condemned. But before we undertake to show this, we shall consider the other alternative views suggested or formulated by some of the greatest thinkers of the recent past.

CHAPTER VIII

A. N. WHITEHEAD

Whitehead has been one of those thinkers who have found their way to Philosophy through a thorough thinking-out of the problems that inevitably arose in their field and that, for their solution, demanded an incessant reaching-out till they could be seen and fitted into almost a universal intercalated context of being. The specialized study of specific problems in different sciences is, at times, forced to break through and reach out for a universal understanding of things and it is then that we find the scientist turning into a philosopher. It is only when the general notions, in terms of which a science develops, begin to break and themselves stand in need of elucidation and clarification, that we find such a change occurring—otherwise, as Whitehead himself has remarked, “the main stress is laid on the adjustment and the direct verification of more special statements” and as he adds “in such periods scientists repudiate philosophy”.*

But now is the time when, through an impact internal to science itself, the fundamental categories and the general notions, unquestioned until now, are beginning to break down and thus we have the spectacle of scientists like Pearson, Planck, Jeans, Eddington and others turning into philosophers. Whitehead is the most eminent of all these and he has not hesitated to adventure into philosophising on a grand scale. To the specialized minds of modern science “it was orthodox and acceptable to discuss the relation between two or possibly three of the individual concepts of science, but anything more comprehensive than this tended to be thought slightly disreputable, mere speculation or word spinning”.† Whitehead has had the courage to venture and build and thus his view of philosophy deserves the respect and attention that all great adventures into the realm of the universal deserve and demand.

“Speculative Philosophy”, according to Whitehead, “is the endeavour to frame a coherent, logical, necessary system of general ideas in terms of which every element of our experience can be interpreted.” Explaining the notion of ‘interpretation’ he

* *Process and Reality*, p. 13.

† *The Scientific Attitude* by C. H. Waddington, p. 80.

writes, "By this notion of 'interpretation' I mean that *everything* of which we are conscious, as enjoyed, perceived, willed, or thought, shall have the character of a *particular* instance of the general scheme."* The phrase 'everything' emphasizes "that there are *no* items incapable of such interpretation". It is also presupposed "that *no* entity can be conceived in complete abstraction from the system of the universe, and that it is the business of speculative philosophy to exhibit this truth." †

It is, of course, a negative way of putting things. What Professor Whitehead really wishes to mean, is not merely that no entity can be conceived in *complete* abstraction from the system of the universe, but that it cannot truthfully be conceived even in *relative* abstraction from it. The triviality of the former assertion can only be saved by the profound significance of the latter. *Complete* abstraction of entities, 'of which we are conscious as enjoyed, perceived, willed, or thought' is impossible both as a matter of fact and as a matter of logic. Even complete exclusion would generate certain relations from which certain conclusions would inevitably follow. It may seem foolish to insist on such an obvious truism, but there is implicit in Whitehead's view of philosophy a view of Reality which would make it impossible for any entity or group of entities to be in effective independence of other entities or group of entities. Reality would exhibit a coherent, logical and necessary system—but in such a system things, by the very nature of the system, cannot be even in relative independence of each other.

Whitehead, of course, believes that the exhibition of this coherent, logical, and necessary structure with regard to all that we are conscious of, as enjoyed, perceived, willed or thought, is only an ideal towards which we can make only an asymptotic approach. But "the difficulty", for him "has its seat in the empirical side of philosophy".‡ He is in no doubt about the rational side expressed by the terms 'coherent' and 'logical' and 'necessary'. The whole trouble is that "the metaphysical first principles can never fail of exemplification. We can never catch the actual world taking a holiday from their sway." § It is, therefore, only because of the tendency of mind to observe what is 'important when present, and sometimes is absent' that the coherent, logical and necessary system, of which the whole world of experience is an

* *Process and Reality*, p. 3. Italics ours.

† *Ibid.*, p. 3.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

exemplification, is difficult of articulation. That all, of which we are conscious as enjoyed, perceived, willed or thought *must* exhibit a coherent, logical and necessary structure—Whitehead never doubts.

But it is merely an *a priori* belief or, at best, a working hypothesis. At least, he seems to have given no reasons for it. He, perhaps, thinks that the abstract relations of logic must inevitably be exemplified in any existence whatsoever. In fact, certain remarks in his *Science and the Modern World* seem to support this view. In the last paragraph of Chapter I of this book he writes: "the harmony of logic lies upon the universe as an iron necessity." Speaking of the abstract patterns of mathematical relationships, he writes: they are "also *imposed* on external reality", and that "this is nothing else than the necessity of abstract logic which is the *presupposition involved in the very fact of interrelated existence*."* But if this is all that Whitehead means, he is depriving the word 'rational' of all significant meaning, for, on his view, there can be nothing irrational. The objection that Mooris Cohen put in the form of a question with regard to Hegel's rationalism, may as well be put to Whitehead. "Do we not thus seem to eliminate the irrational only by incorporating it into the essence of rationality itself?" †

Kant, who was also interested in the search for categories that are inevitably presupposed by and involved in all experience just because it is experience, was faced by the question of things as they are in themselves and came to the conclusion that they could not be known for, to know was to know in terms of the categories. Whitehead, too, is faced with this question—but the few remarks that he has made in this connection seem rather to avoid than face the problem. He writes, "the philosophic scheme should be 'necessary' in the sense of bearing in itself its own warrant of universality throughout all experience, *provided that we confine ourselves to that which communicates with immediate matter of fact. But what does not so communicate is unknowable*, and the *unknowable is unknown*; and so this universality defined by 'communication' can suffice." ‡

This may seem to be almost akin to the Kantian position that 'universality' is confined to 'experience' alone or in Whitehead's words to "that which communicates with immediate matter of fact". The subsequent sentence 'the unknowable is unknown',

* *Science and the Modern World*, p. 34. Italics ours.

† *Studies in Philosophy and Science*, p. 185.

‡ *Process and Reality*, p. 4. Italics ours.

the phrase 'can suffice' as well as the footnote "indulging in a species of false modesty, cautious philosophers undertake its definition", suggest that Whitehead would agree with Wittgenstein's famous dictum "whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent". But this would imply that there is something 'unknowable' or 'unspeakable'—in short, that there is a penumbral, mystic fringe beyond the 'speakable' and the 'knowable'. Kant and Wittgenstein will certainly agree—but whether Whitehead would, is a difficult question. He certainly has said, "Philosophy is an attempt to express the infinity of the universe in terms of the limitations of language",* implying or rather suggesting that the infinity can never be completely expressed at all. But the sentence immediately following those quoted above from his *Process and Reality* decisively forbids any such interpretation. He writes, "This doctrine of necessity in universality means that there is an essence to the universe which forbids relationships beyond itself, as a violation of its rationality." †

But whether this essence completely communicates itself in Whitehead's sense or, in older terminology, is completely described and exhausted by its appearance, is the whole question. Whitehead uses the phrase 'what does not so communicate is unknowable' but the sentence would be meaningful only, if the 'does not' is interpreted in the sense of 'cannot'—an interpretation that would make the whole thing a perfect tautology. The problem is not exactly of the 'unknowable' but of the 'unknown' and its relation to the essence 'which forbids relationships beyond itself'. The essence can either be never completely exemplified by any of its manifestations for, there will always be the 'unknown' which, when known, would reveal new aspects and features that will have to stand in some relation to the essence, or it must be ever completely exemplified and the 'unknown' be completely irrelevant to our grasping of it. Most probably, Whitehead would agree with the latter alternative for, the metaphysical first principles, which is what Whitehead means by essence, can never fail of exemplification. The only difficulty as to why we do not become aware of these principles, is answered by saying that it is due to their continuous presence—for, we hardly take cognisance of that which is always present before us.

The difficulty, therefore, is purely psychological. The function of experience is merely to check whether the first princi-

* *Essays in Science and Philosophy*, p. 15.

† Italics ours.

ples found in a certain limited field are exemplified in other fields as well. Whitehead is in no doubt that there are such metaphysical first principles, even though "Philosophers can never hope finally to formulate these metaphysical first principles".* "Weakness of insight and deficiencies of language stand in the way inexorably." † But Whitehead has forgotten that greater than these, is the fact of the 'unknown', which will always make it impossible to know whether the metaphysical first principles formulated from the 'yet known' will be exemplified by that which is 'unknown'. This—and not 'weakness of insight' or 'deficiency of language'—is what stands inexorably in the way of any final formulation of metaphysical first principles. It is because of this that "Metaphysical categories are not dogmatic statements of the obvious; they are tentative formulations of the ultimate generalities";‡ and that "the proper test is not that of finality, but of progress".§

Progress, however, cannot be conceived apart from finality and is, in itself, a rather difficult notion. The progress, certainly, does not lie in the exemplification of metaphysical first principles; it can, therefore, consist only in our knowledge of them. The proposition is reminiscent of the general notion of laws as prevalent in Science. The laws, themselves, are eternal and immutable; it is only our knowledge that progressively approaches them. This asymptotic approach to eternal, immutable self-existent laws, has been sufficiently discussed in our chapter on 'Knowledge—Science and Philosophy' and so need not be dealt here again. In fact, it is a methodological hypothesis which can never be proved and is, thus, outside the pale of all question and discussion. We can only show that there is no *a priori* necessity about it and that the facts do not warrant it.

With Whitehead's hypothesis, however, there may be a difference. He may be talking about the pure logic of formal relations which cannot fail to be exemplified with regard to any entities whatsoever. But, if so, it would be difficult to understand the importance that he assigns to the 'application' phase of his first principles for, the formal relational structure cannot but be exemplified. To understand, therefore, what Whitehead exactly thinks to be the business of philosophy, it is necessary to understand what he means by saying that "everything of which we

* *Process and Reality*, p. 4.

† *Ibid.*, p. 4.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 11. Italics ours.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 19. Italics ours.

are conscious, as enjoyed, perceived, willed or thought, shall have the character of a *particular instance* of the general scheme." *

The idea of a particular instance exemplifying a general scheme, though prominent in Science and Mathematics, is quite familiar to the man of commonsense in his observation of ordinary similarities and identities in the world of his experience. He recognizes not only the recurrent identities of qualities but also of patterns and much of his success in practical life is due to this. Plato, who was the first to have recognised the all-importance of this fact, conceived of the recurrent universal as the essence of which the different particulars were only more or less adequate 'imitations' and which they could never completely manifest or embody. Thus the notion of essence as exhibited (adequately or inadequately, that is not the question) in innumerable particulars, came into being. It did not take long for philosophers to ask "what is the most general essence exhibited not in any special group of particulars but in all particulars, even all *possible* particulars"? The problem of the universal of universals which had thus arisen, is still being tackled by philosophers. The philosophers have, however, usually conceived of the universal essence as some sort of an entity rather than as a relational structure exemplified in all sorts of its relational determinates.

Science, on the other hand, came to be interested more in the relations between entities and found that they alone, perhaps, were the true universals. The law of gravitation, for example, states a universal relation between all physical things—a relation which is described by the formula $\frac{M \times M'}{d^2}$, where M and M' are respectively the mass of any two physical thing and d the distance between them. The recent formula, given by Einstein, for the equivalence of mass and energy, is again a universal of which any particular equivalence is merely an instance. mc^2 , where m is the mass and c the velocity of light, describes the universal from which, given any particular mass, we can deduce its equivalent energy. Science, in fact, is a search for those recurrent uniformities of which the particular is only an instance and an embodiment.

But there remain the limitations of physical interpretation without which the formulæ of Science have no meaning.

* *Ibid.* p. 3. Italics ours.

Mathematics overcomes this limitation and thus enables us to find universality in almost its essence. One, two, three, four, are not specific particulars, but have a certain generality about them. On a higher level, algebra is a generalisation of arithmetic and arithmetic merely a specific instance or interpretation of algebraic relationships. $3 + 5 = 5 + 3$ is merely a particular instance of the general relationship signified, symbolized and completely described by the formula $a + b = b + a$. At a still higher level, there are certain abstract relationships involved in the very notion of relation itself which will inevitably be exemplified by any relational structure whatsoever. The calculus of relations is the classic example of this attempt at greatest generality. In pure logic or pure mathematics, therefore, the relations are supposed to hold between terms which are undefined. In technical language, what we are concerned with in logic, is not propositions, but propositional functions. But, as Morris R. Cohen and Ernest Nagel have pointed out in their *An Introduction to Logic and Scientific Method*, "although no terms are *explicitly* defined, an *implicit* definition of them is made. They may denote anything whatsoever provided that what they denote conforms to the stated relations between themselves." * Instead of the explicit definitions, therefore, the elements are defined implicitly through the axioms or rather the assumptions. "This latter procedure makes it possible to give a variety of interpretations to the undefined elements, and so to exhibit an identity of structure in different concrete things." *

Professor Whitehead, however, is in search of that structure of relationships which is exhibited by all that communicates itself as 'immediate matter of fact.' He is interested in the finding of those relationships which are exemplified by any and everything—the word 'thing' here including all that is enjoyed, perceived, willed or thought. But that which is exemplified by any and everything can be so exemplified only because of some sort of an *a priori* necessity. Otherwise, it would be merely an empirical generalization always at the mercy of new facts. Further, such a scheme would be purely formal and, being inevitably exemplified in all sorts of diverse determinates, *would in no way account* for the *difference* in those determinates. In Science, the structural relationships obtaining within a particular field do help us to understand the *difference* between the behaviour of a particular

* *Quoted in Mathematics and the Imagination* by Edward Kasner and James Newmann, p. 155; the whole quotation on p. 153-56 should be read.

group of entities as against other groups True, Science does not help us to approach the specific individuality of the individual particular, excepting in its character of *belonging* to a class of which there are other members as well. Even then, it is interested in the differences evinced by a class of entities in contradistinction from other classes, and in *accounting for* those differences.

Whitehead's first principles, on the other hand, are *intrinsically* unable to account for *any* differences among their innumerable determinates. These principles were equally exemplified when about two or three billion years ago the Great Explosion happened, building up in about half-an-hour all the atomic bricks of the universe from 'free neutrons' at a temperature of about a billion degrees and to-day when the scientist discovers and Whitehead philosophises about it.* The differences, which are equally, if not more, important than the identities remain neglected and unaccounted for in this search for relationships that somehow hold the whole together. We are inevitably reminded of that universal category of Being, the lowest common factor, the supreme identity pervading all differences, that has again and again lured the philosopher into regarding it as the supremest of all realities. What difference does it make, if, this time, it appears in the garb of universal relationships instead of some sort of an entity by virtue of which all that is, is what it is—and all that is not included in it, is, well, not at all? The *specificity* of the determinates is not accounted for either by the universal category of Being or by any coherent, logical, necessary system of metaphysical first principles, if there be any.

It is difficult, however, to decide whether Whitehead's metaphysical first principles, in terms of which every element of our experience can and should be interpreted, is to be conceived in terms of purely formal logico-mathematical principles or merely as empirical categories of the utmost generality. The same difficulty exists with regard to the notion of 'interpretation' for, while with regard to logical principles their 'application' 'exemplification' or 'interpretation' is merely an accident; for empirical generalities, it is of their very essence. $E = Mc^2$ is unmeaning unless mass, energy and the velocity of light are all empirical entities; but it inevitably *follows* from the relationships expressed in the formula, whether they have any physical interpretation or not, that $M = E/C^2$. The expression of these formal 'if.....

* *The Story of Our Time* by George Gamow.

then' relationships is the essence of logic and it is only because of these relationships, embedded in the notion of relation itself, that we are able to escape the insistent atomicity of the isolated particular. Logic, however, can never remove the 'if'; it can only *assert* the relationships but *never* the terms. As we have pointed out in our chapter on 'Logic and Reality', the *assertion* of the term together with the relationships, requires a purely empirical proposition of the type "such is the case".

Whitehead, however, seems to be emphatically insistent on the 'application' part of his metaphysical first principles. But he seems to have forgotten that the 'application' part of scientific generalities is made possible by certain principles which, in themselves, are impossible of proof or disproof through the 'application' principle, *e.g.*, the Uniformity of Nature. The generality of a scientific principle, further, is always of an empirical kind. Not mere terms but also relations expressed in a scientific general principle are empirical in nature. Whitehead's first principles, on the other hand, cannot be empirical as the whole future is supposed to make no difference to them. In fact, they are already and were always exemplified. The whole empirical process seems utterly alien or rather 'accidental' to them for, whatever the process, it must exemplify them. To scientific laws also the future is supposed to make no difference but the contention, whether valid or not,* is made with regard to such determinate conditions that it loses much of its significance. Whitehead's general principles, however, are *expected* to apply to no *determinate* set or sets of conditions, but to *any and every set*. The first principles, therefore, must be non-empirical in character.

The clue to Whitehead's thought does not seem, thus, to be general Physics, but Mathematics. He has remarked on page 7 of his *Process and Reality*, "It is a remarkable characteristic of the history of thought that branches of Mathematics developed under the pure imaginative impulse thus controlled, finally receive their important application." It may be a remarkable characteristic—calling, perhaps, for such a great effort as that of Kant for its explanation, but how can it at all suggest that the 'application' was necessary for the 'adequacy' of those branches of Mathematics, is more than we can understand. Anybody who has understood the central contention of the *Principia* cannot

* For discussion, see our chapter on 'Knowledge—Science and Philosophy'.

but say that this 'application', far from *contributing* to the 'adequacy' of that branch of mathematics is mathematically a mere 'accident'. If the application, then, is *essential* to Whitehead's first principles, they cannot but be empirical in character. Such then is the dilemma. If the principles are to be anywhere and everywhere present, they cannot be empirical; while if the application is to be the *essence* of them, they must be empirical in character. Empirical generality is always a *limited* generality; it is only the logically general which is the truly universal. The universality of logic is the universality of hypothetical implication, which, just because it is formal and hypothetical, is also universal. Such a universality is inevitably illustrated for, whether the 'if' of the implication is asserted or denied, the implications following from the assertion or the denial always follow.

Such a difficulty is not confined merely to us. W. Mays, for example, is confronted with the same problem in his paper on 'Whitehead's account of Speculative Philosophy in *Process and Reality*'. He asks, "Are we to assume that metaphysical first principles deal with empirical activities or with logico-mathematical principles?"* His own reply is—and he believes it equally to be that of Whitehead—that the two can be separated only by a process of abstraction. The disjunction is false for, empirical activities are thoroughly informed by the formal, relating principles which alone give them a unity. To conceive the two as separate and then to wonder how to unite them, is not a real but a pseudo-problem. This is, perhaps, made clear by such a statement as the following from Whitehead. He writes, "It is a complete mistake to ask how concrete particular fact can be built up out of universals. The answer is, 'in no way'. The true philosophic question is, *How can concrete fact exhibit entities abstract from itself and yet participated in by its own nature.*" †

The problem is the problem of Aristotle, or perhaps more particularly, that of Kant. Form apart from Matter and Matter apart from Form were abstractions for Aristotle. (We are not here concerned with the problem of Pure form). For Kant, the solution lay in the view that the transcendental forms were involved in knowledge itself. The knowing of the concrete fact was mediated by the forms involved in the very process of knowledge

* *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*. 1945-46, p. 19.

† *Process and Reality*, p. 27. Italics ours.

and, therefore, it could not but exhibit them. Kant's forms may be characterised as transcendental forms of *empirical relatedness* and in this characterization lies, perhaps, the clue to what Whitehead is seeking. He is seeking not logical forms, but metaphysical forms, *i.e.*, forms of *empirical relatedness*, which though universal, have yet an intimate and *essential* relation to all that 'we are conscious of, as enjoyed, perceived, willed or thought'. It is once more the search for the categories, the pervasive features of the Real which Whitehead undertakes and if we look at *Process and Reality*, we find that it is so. Even Kant's thing-in-itself is not completely absent from Whitehead's thought. It appears in the form of the category of the Ultimate. He writes, "The definiteness of fact is due to its forms; but the individual fact is creature, and *creativity is the ultimate behind all forms, inexplicable by forms*, and conditioned by its creatures."* Excepting the last clause 'and conditioned by its creatures'. Kant would find here nothing that he could not consent to.

Still, though we may understand what Whitehead is striving after on the analogy of Kant or Aristotle, problems raised earlier in this chapter do not get shelved thereby. Can there be universal forms of empirical relatedness apart from the logico-mathematical ones? This is the exact question for, the generalised forms of empirical relatedness that we are aware of in Science, are always limited in character. The answer, strictly speaking, is that the concrete fact exhibits the logico-mathematical relatedness, just because the logico-mathematical relatedness is an explication of the notion of relation itself. Apart from the formal tautologies of logical relatedness, there is nothing that the concrete fact does or must always exhibit. The principles exhibiting the formal logico-mathematical relatedness, however, in no way depend for their validity on any 'process' whatever. The whole search for the *a priori synthetic* fails, breaking up into the *a priori* of the tautologies of pure logic, on the one hand, and the empirical process, on the other. Of course, the 'process' exhibits the *a priori* but without, in any way, being made rational by it. Also, the *a priori* depends neither for its validity nor for its objectivity on any empirical process at all. Modern mathematical logic, in whose foundation and elaboration Whitehead himself has played a prominent part, has proved—if it can be said to have proved anything—the utter impossibility of the synthetic *a priori*.

At certain other places, Whitehead has tried to conceive of

* *Ibid.*, p. 27. Italics ours.

philosophy in an analogous, yet rather different, manner. He writes, "All occasions proclaim themselves as actualities within the flux of a solid world, *demanding* a unity of interpretation." † A unity of interpretation is certainly *demande*d but whether there is such a unity or not is merely a matter for empirical investigation. In fact, the phrase is rather ambiguous. If what is meant is logical unity, it can always be achieved by a suitable manipulation of concepts. A class formed of the highest mountain, the tallest man and the square circles would have a logical unity—the unity of belonging to the same class. But the whole problem is whether it would have an empirical unity as well. The ascertainment of this unity—if it be there at all—is the task, not of logic or philosophy, but of science. Russell has doubted whether there is such a thing as the *universe* at all. In fact, excepting for certain logical reasons, the proposition is such as to be extremely difficult of any proof. Whitehead has written, "There are no brute, self-contained matters of fact, capable of being understood apart from interpretation as an element in a system. Whenever we attempt to express the matter of immediate experience, we find that its understanding leads us beyond itself, to its contemporaries, to its past, to its future, and to the universals in terms of which its definiteness is exhibited."* In his *The Concept of Nature*, he has expressed a similar sentiment "The false idea which we have got to get rid of is that of nature as a mere aggregate of independent entities each capable of isolation." ‡ It would be interesting to ask if the entities are not capable of sufficient isolation, how is science possible at all?

These sentences, which any idealist would agree to, testify to that character of Whitehead's thought which has earned it the name of the philosophy of Organism. Not merely amusing, but even instructive it may be here to note, that Russell, whose view of logic agrees completely with that of Whitehead, reached a position diametrically opposed to that of Whitehead and which he himself has characterised as logical atomism. If any evidence were needed for our contention that logic is completely irrelevant to one's view of reality, a more classical example than this, we could not have imagined. This refusal on Whitehead's part to note "any relative independence or externality of relations between things which happen to be juxtaposed in our universe", is surprising for,

† *Ibid.*, p. 20. Italics ours.

* *Ibid.*, p. 19.

‡ *The Concept of Nature*, p. 141.

it is on the simple fact that different things behave differently and that some relations are more intimate than others that the whole procedure of science is based. "If anything is to be affected by something else, it must be distinct from the other. It must, then, have a realm which is not due to or affected by that other."* Whitehead, with many philosophers before and after him, has contended that a thing cannot be understood except as an element in some system. Of course, the system does not remain merely 'some' system but, like the famous flower of Tennyson's poem, comes to embrace the whole universe of the actual and the possible and calls itself 'the system'. Such a contention has no warrant from either logic or facts—a contention which has at length been argued in our chapter on 'Logic and Reality'. It may only be pointed out here that even if certain laws of the utmost empirical generality can be found, the laws of lesser generality obtaining among the limited fields of biology, psychology and sociology cannot be deduced from them. Further, there can be no intrinsic guarantee that these laws of utmost generality will hold of phenomena not yet studied as well as of those that are yet to present themselves to us. In short, the very postulation of such laws is, at best, a methodological hypothesis; at worst, complacent dogmatism.

A unity of interpretation, a systematization of knowledge, a search for larger and more comprehensive categories—this, if it is not to be a mere exercise in bold and ingenious imagination, should be the task of Science itself. In fact, Whitehead's use of the hypothetico-deductive method so largely prevalent in sciences and its constant rechecking by any and every experience, suggests that he conceives of the task of Philosophy on the pattern of Science. In fact, his procedure reminds us of the sometimes prevalent definition of philosophy as the science of sciences. And this in spite of the fact that Whitehead himself has remarked: "The task of philosophy is to reverse this process and thus to exhibit the fusion of analysis with actuality. It follows that Philosophy is not a Science." † But it is only because he here conceives of Science as an abstractive analysis from actuality, that he refuses it the name of Philosophy. Science, however, is not merely abstractive analysis but integrated knowledge—of course, with the proviso that the integration should be founded not merely on logic, but on fact.

* *Studies in Science and Philosophy*. Morris Cohen, p. 19.

† *Essay in Science and Philosophy*, p. 86.

For that matter, even Philosophy is only a *conceptual* fusion of analysis with actuality and conceptual fusion, however comprehensive, remains fusion in terms of concepts alone. The fusion of analysis with actuality in terms, not of concepts, but of some integrated experience, can be achieved only through Art or Religion. "Religion", Whitehead himself has written, "is an ultimate craving to infuse into the insistent particularity of emotion that non-temporal generality which primarily belongs to conceptual thought alone."* If then, we are to have the fusion of the abstractive generality of analysis with the insistent particularity of the actual, we should have to turn to religion rather than philosophy.

Philosophy, then, as a conceptual integration, is the task of Science. Such an integration, however, is made under the limitations set by the objective process itself. The limitation cannot but be accepted for, the integrative unity is merely a hypothetical assumption and there is no 'must' about its being conformed to by the empirical process. Whitehead, therefore, assimilates the subject-matter of Philosophy to that of general Science and is, thus, in line with those thinkers who are trying to reduce the subject-matter of Philosophy to some other subject-matter.

CHAPTER IX

PHILOSOPHY AS PHENOMENOLOGY

EDMUND HUSSERL AND OTHERS

The attempt at a radical re-thinking of problems has been made from time to time in the history of Philosophy. In fact, there have been thinkers who have felt a deep dissatisfaction with the seemingly persistent insolubility of fundamental philosophical problems and devoted their energy to a radical reform of the philosophical method in order to find a way out. René Descartes and Immanuel Kant stand out in the history of modern philosophy among those who have tried to give a radical reorientation to philosophical thinking itself. Husserl's is another great attempt in this direction.

The view of philosophy as phenomenology is primarily, a reorientation in the philosophical method—a reorientation, however, which radically determines anew the subject-matter of philosophy. Like the view of Philosophy as Analysis, it profoundly affects both the approach and the problems with which these philosophers are concerned. An understanding of the methodology adopted by them is, therefore, the prime requisite of any discussion of the view of philosophy as phenomenology.

Phenomenology starts from the consideration that whatever be the form of the objectivating consciousness, *viz.*, doubting, supposing, feeling, willing, etc., or the content 'intended',* *viz.*, a tree, rabbit, self, God, Number, Value, etc.—a consciousness, exhausted neither by the form nor the content of what is 'intended', lies as the ultimate root and the inevitable presupposition of all that we 'intend' or the form through which we 'intend' it. That there is a content to every act of our consciousness and that this content can be 'intended' in different forms by consciousness, is a well-known fact. We can doubt, suppose, feel, will, know or believe the same content. Also, different contents can be 'intended' through the same form of objectivating consciousness. However, what is not so equally obvious, is the fact that the consciousness which assumes the different forms of 'intending', is neither exhausted nor described by them. It is this fact which

* *Process and Reality*, p. 21.

* The term "intend," as used in phenomenology, is far wider than the term "to know." In fact, it covers all possible forms that a consciousness can take in its *objectivating* function.

the phenomenologist takes hold of and tries to bring into the focus.

The inevitable duality of the subject-object form of all experience, when closely examined, reveals the ultimate 'founding' activity of the subject through which alone the object is constituted and of which it itself remains the basic foundation. Ordinarily, our attention is focussed on the object and we believe it to be independent of and *prior* to the subject. This is the natural-empirical level on which most of our thinking is done. But it is forgotten that even if all that is 'intended' is intended 'as an object', there remains still a subject that 'intends', a subject that *can never become an object*. This subject, then, is the prius of all our experience. The centrality of the subject, thus revealed, results in a radical alteration of our natural standpoint which centres round the object and regards it as prior to and independent of the subject. So long as this radical alteration does not occur, philosophical thinking does not start. The transcendence of the natural-empirical level is the *sine qua non* of philosophical thinking and, as Husserl points out, some of the greatest confusions in Philosophy have been the result of a failure to distinguish between these two levels.

This radical change in standpoint is effected by what is technically known in phenomenology as 'transcendental or phenomenological reduction'. Till this reduction is effected, we remain on the empirical-natural level, believing in a world of objects which exists prior to and independent of us and to which we belong with other things. The transcendental reduction changes the very character of the 'I' and, thus, also of its correlate, the 'world'. As Husserl remarks, "I am now no longer a human Ego in the universal, existentially posited world, but exclusively a subject *for* which this world has being, and purely, *as* that which appears to me, is presented to me and of which I am conscious in some way or other, so that the real being of the world thereby remains unconsidered, unquestioned, and its validity left out of account."*

This unconsidered and unquestioned character of the real being of the world is technically known as the 'bracketing of reality' 'Epoche' is another name for this 'bracketing' and this 'reduction' and is generally used in the literature of phenomenology. The ego-centric predicament is treated, not as a predicament at all, but rather as a clue to the creation of a pure founda-

* *Ideas: Pure Phenomenology*. Author's preface to the English edition. Italics author's, p. 14.

tional science which may or may not be treated as a ground for building up an idealistic view of reality once more.

The transcendence of the natural-empirical attitude occurs when the philosophizing ego is forced "to reflect back on that very subjectivity of his, which *in all his experience and knowledge of the natural world*, both real and possible, is *in the last resort* the Ego that *experiences and knows*, and is thus *already presupposed in all the natural self-knowledge* of the 'human Ego who experiences, thinks and acts naturally in the world.'"* Here, therefore, there "is a reversion to that which is already presupposed *implicite* in all presupposing and in all questioning and answering".† This reversion reveals "that only transcendental subjectivity has ontologically the meaning of Absolute Being, that it only is non-relative, that is relative only to itself; whereas the real world *indeed exists*, but *in respect of essence* is relative to transcendental subjectivity, and in such a way that it can have its *meaning* as existing reality *only as the intentional meaning-product* of transcendental subjectivity."‡

Husserl is rather a difficult writer to understand. Yet, if we concentrate on the italicized portions in the last quotation, he seems to mean that what is relative to transcendental subjectivity is the essence, the meaning and not the existence of the world. He seems to use the term 'relative' in a sense in which all that 'exists' is not relative. But such a sense is difficult to understand for, the essences revealed are as objective as the 'facts' of existence and the 'facts', in their own turn, involve and presuppose the objectivating function of consciousness as *much* as any essence. Fact and Essence, therefore, cannot differ *in their relation* to transcendental subjectivity, which is equally essential to, and equally presupposed by both. Existing reality, which exists prior to and beyond the objectivating function, in the sense of being the intentional meaning-product of transcendental subjectivity, is a concept belonging to the natural-empirical level only. After the transcendental reduction has been performed, such a concept cannot be used.

The opposite of 'relative' is clearly indicated by Husserl in his phrase 'relative only to itself' and, in this sense, certainly neither 'fact' nor 'essence' is the opposite of 'relative'. There seems to be no difference between fact and essence with regard

* *Ibid.*, p. 16. Italics ours.

† *Ibid.*, p. 19.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 21. Italics ours.

to their relation to transcendental subjectivity. Within the phenomenological reduction, the objectivity of the object is merely a correlate of the objectivating function of consciousness. Of course, no claim is here made for temporal or genetic priority. In fact, the question of the independence of existing reality or of its temporal or genetic priority can arise on the natural-empirical level only. Once the level has been transcended through the phenomenological reduction, the question cannot arise. Either, therefore, both fact and essence should be considered as independent of transcendental subjectivity, in the sense of a *determinate* potentiality, or as relative, in the sense of being an object to some subject which cannot itself become an object.

It is in this sense that transcendental subjectivity has, "ontologically the meaning of Absolute Being." In other words, it *alone* is presupposed by all that is 'object' and, in its own turn, it can never become the object.

Descartes, whose method of universal doubt is in line with, and an anticipation of, the method of phenomenological reduction, almost realised the pivotal character of the Self. His 'Cogito, ergo sum' is a formulation of the foundational character of the Self in contradistinction to all that is 'object'. The 'object' can be doubted but the self posits itself even in the very process of doubting itself. The reason for the absoluteness of this pivotal point, therefore, is the fact that the self continues to be presupposed in all mental activities, even if they be that of doubting.

But, somehow, he failed to see the significance of his insight. In fact, he failed to effect the 'transcendental reduction' on the verge of which he was standing. It was so, for the obvious reason that he found it impossible to find his way back to the world from the self-grounded certitude of the 'Cogito, ergo sum'. Descartes was afraid of solipsism and the only way he could find his way back to the world was through the idea of God, which was not *grounded* in the self, but drew its *possibility* and authority from something outside itself, *viz.*, the reality of God. Undoubtedly, the self entertains the idea of God among other ideas, but the idea is not *grounded* in the self for, otherwise, Descartes would have felt no necessity of going outside the sphere of Self and find the grounding of the idea of God therein. In fact, Descartes has forgotten his insight that all ideas, including the idea of God, are 'objects' to some subject and hence can never be the ground of themselves.

Such an attempt to save the independence of the world from the 'cogito' through the back-door help of the Almighty, is not

confined to Descartes alone. Bishop Berkeley, for example, saves the objective world in a similar way. His only difference, in this respect, is that he deduces the reality of God from the objectivity of the world rather than infer the objective reality of the world from the reality of God. Both, of course, find it necessary to take such a course because of their continuous confusion between the transcendental and the empirical ego. The 'self-grounding' certitude and the 'relativity' of the object are in relation to the transcendental subject and not to the empirical self.

However, even if the transcendental ego is sharply distinguished from the empirical, the question remains as to whether it is a unity or a multiplicity and as to how is it related to the object? The whole history of thought from Kant to Hegel is a grappling with these questions. For Kant of the *Critique of Pure Reason* the questions are inadmissible for, the categories do not apply to the realm of the transcendent* at all. The categories, of course, are transcendental, but only in the sense of being the *logical* presuppositions of the possibility of knowledge, having no metaphysical status of their own. The character of being a *metaphysical presupposition* of the possibility of knowledge in the system of Kant, can be claimed only by the transcendent subject and the transcendent object which, because of that very reason, remain unknown; for, to be known, is to be known through the categories. With Fichte and Schelling, the problem oscillates between the primacy of the pure subject and of the pure object till at last they seem to receive an equal importance in the system of Hegel. The subject without the object was held by him to be as much an abstraction as the object without the subject. Yet the exact nature of the object was not so much clarified by Hegel himself as by some of his later disciples. He, of course, had said that the subject finds itself in the object but this could have meaning only if the object, in its own turn, were itself a subject. This in fact, has been the view put forward by such Hegelian interpreters as Hiralal Haldar and Metaggart. Solipsism is thus avoided by regarding the object as *real* and as necessary as the subject. The subject is not merely a subject, but an object as well, *i.e.*, an object to some other subject. In a society of selves, each is both a subject and an object at the same time.

Husserl, for his part, seems to avoid solipsism in a somewhat

* The transcendental ego, certainly, does not belong to the realm of the transcendent. The problem of the exact status of the transcendental ego will be discussed later on.

similar manner. According to him, the real and the whole meaning of transcendental subjectivity is not merely the "I, the transcendental, absolute I, as I am in my own life of transcendental consciousness; but besides myself, the fellow-subjects who in this life of mine *reveal themselves as co-transcendental*, within the transcendental society of 'ourselves', which simultaneously reveals itself." * He further writes, "It is thus within the intersubjectivity which in the phenomenological reduction has reached *empirical givenness on a transcendental level* and is thus itself transcendental that the real world is constituted as 'objective', as being there for everyone." † The subject, in other words, finds other subjects as co-present on the transcendental level and the 'objective constitution' of the world is seen to involve and presuppose, not merely a transcendental subject, but a 'society of such subjects'. The other selves, therefore, are implied in the very 'objectivating constitution' of the world. Other selves, of course, are not 'objectivated' or 'constructed' like the world, but are known as co-present only through "an act of apperception by analogy which Husserl calls 'appresentation'." ‡

This seems more like Berkeley's concept of 'notion' as distinct from 'idea'. In Berkeley's system, we are supposed to have 'notions' of persons and 'ideas' of things. On the other hand, it seems distinct from Hegel's thought about the problem of the subject and the object. Of course, in Husserl, as in Hegel, the 'other' is found to be the involved correlate of the self. But the similarity lasts only thus far for, the distinction lies in the very contents of the 'other' itself. For Hegel, the 'other' is identical with all that is 'object': it includes both persons and things. For Husserl, on the other hand, objects are 'constituted' and persons 'appresented'. The word 'object', therefore, in Husserl, does not include persons while it does so in Hegel.

This difference between objects and persons which, according to Husserl, is fundamental, points to a great weakness in his thought for, as Farber remarks: "The statement that other persons can only be *found* and not created can hardly be reconciled with the assertion that the objective world is 'innate' in the monadological world. What is true of persons *ought* to be true of things in general." § There is, in fact, no difference between

* *Ideas*, p. 21-22. Italics ours.

† *Ibid.*, p. 22. Italics ours.

‡ *The Foundation of Phenomenology*. By Marvin Farber, p. 532.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 532.

persons and things *qua* their being 'objects to some subject'. So, with regard to their status as 'object', what is true of the one ought to be true of the other and *vice versa*. Farber, in order to make the last sentence in the quotation complete, should have added: 'and what is true of things in general *ought* to be true of persons'. In fact, with regard to objects, Husserl, in his metaphysical construction, seems to have reverted to the position of Fichte, who tried to 'constitute' the object through the acts of the Pure Ego. The equal importance of the object for the subject and *vice versa*, as discovered by Hegel, is completely forgotten by Husserl. In the transcendental phenomenological reduction the subject, of course, becomes the *prius* of the object but this, within the phenomenological reduction, provides no warrant for the *metaphysical* primacy of the subject over the object.

In fact, Husserl has not grasped the true nature of the transcendental subject within the 'phenomenological reduction.' The very fact that he feels, with Descartes, Berkeley and a host of others before him, the necessity of escaping from solipsism is a clear indication of this. The posing of the problem is metaphysical rather than phenomenological. Berkeley and Descartes had felt the necessity of escaping from solipsism for, they had not realised the revolutionary implications of their procedure, but Husserl feels the same necessity *even after* he has contended for the radical significance of his revolutionary 'right-about turn.' This, if anything, shows the inevitable lure of metaphysical construction, which, even for Husserl, seems difficult to avoid. Kant's standing warning against metaphysical constructions goes unheeded, even with Husserl, who started with a suspension of belief in all existence whether objective or subjective.

Farber, while admitting that Husserl is in agreement with the two cardinal principles of transcendental idealism, *viz.*, that *existence is in principle the result of 'constitution'* * and that *meaning is prior to being*, tries to denote the difference by observing that in phenomenology they are, at best, assumptions. He writes, "But in phenomenology the professedly non-metaphysical procedure requires the elimination of the dogma of idealism, and the *constitutive* procedure, in keeping with the 'radical' method, *allows the metaphysical question to remain open and unanswered*,

* It is doubtful if Husserl would agree to this formulation of his first principle. As already quoted, he seems to think, though mistakenly in our opinion, that it is the essence, or meaning that is "constituted" and not the existence.

or, at best, it is merely a partial answer, going as far as the analysis of experience will allow."* We have little doubt that Kant would agree to this statement excepting, perhaps, to its last part. The whole difference between transcendental and dogmatic idealism lies just in the interpretation of these two principles. Are they to be constructed *merely* epistemologically or are they to be given a metaphysical status as well? In their divergent answers to this question, lies the whole difference between Kant and the other idealistic thinkers.

For Husserl also, the problem regarding the phenomenological or metaphysical character of the essential centrality of the self remains in force. There is, however, a difference between him and Kant on this point. With Kant, there is no 'bracketing' of reality. From the critical standpoint, the 'natural-empirical' attitude is obviously wrong because it involves both—metaphysics and a wrong epistemology. In fact, the critical standpoint stands for a reform of traditional epistemology and points to the impossibility of metaphysics. Phenomenology, on the other hand, does not reject the natural-empirical attitude as wrong. The world as a correlate of the natural-empirical attitude is *merely* 'bracketed'. As Farber writes, "It is not a question of *choosing* either the phenomenological method or the natural view of the world." † Both are right. Phenomenology merely supplements but does not supplant our knowledge of the natural world. Of course "in a systematic, analytic sense it may be said to provide the *foundation* of all ordered knowledge", though, "one must be careful to *avoid metaphysical dogma*, as well as seemingly persuasive epistemological arguments leading to such dogma, and to see the phenomenological method as retaining all knowledge from its detached point of view, while making its own addition to knowledge in providing answers to its own questions." ‡

If phenomenology, in a certain sense, provides the foundation of all knowledge and if the self is the *prius* for the phenomenological attitude, it is difficult to see how the idea of the ultimate primacy of the self can be avoided? As regards Kant himself, the exact status of his 'transcendental self' is difficult to determine. It, of course, is not transcendent,—yet, as transcendental unity of apperception, it is involved in and presupposed by all knowledge. Also, it certainly is not the empirical ego. The transcendental

* *Ibid.*, p. 546. Italics ours.

† *Ibid.*, p. 535. Italics ours.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 535. Italics ours.

categories through which the empirical ego is constituted, do not apply to the transcendental self itself. The transcendental self seems to be mid-way between the transcendent and the empirical ego. It, perhaps, is the focus of the categories themselves viewed under the aspect of the unity of apperception. The question of the relation between these three egos, would perhaps be held to be inadmissible by Kant for, it would obviously refer to the knowledge of that which cannot be known by its very nature.

Husserl, too, is faced with the problem of the three egos: "(1) the world-immersed ego, or I the man; (2) the transcendental ego; and (3) the 'epoche'-performing 'observer'." * Farber adds: "What is at issue, in this distinction, is the *degree* of reflection" and hence, the increasing reduction "does not interfere with the 'world-belief', thus allowing the world-immersed ego to remain valid." †

The overriding proviso—'on its own level, as a correlate of the empirical-natural attitude'—needs to be added if the last sentence is to have any meaning. The validity of the world-belief is suspended in the phenomenological attitude through the transcendental reduction. Within the attitude brought into being by the phenomenological reduction, the world is seen only as a constituted construct out of the acts of the transcendental ego. The attitude, further, shows itself, in a certain sense, according to Farber himself, to be of foundational and prior validity to all other attitudes. From the standpoint of phenomenology there can, therefore, be no talk of the validity of the empirical-natural attitude. It would merely be a piece of irrationality if one chooses the empirical-natural attitude even when it has been shown to be of secondary validity and that too because of its origin on unreflective levels of consciousness. If all attitudes are held to be equally valid on their own level, then the consciousness that can take up these attitudes and yet remain unbounded by any or all of them, is revealed as the ultimate fact of all experience. The phenomenological attitude claimed itself to be radically foundational just because it started with this fact; but if this fact is not foundational at all, the phenomenological attitude is just a *mere attitude*—an interesting attitude perhaps, but after all only an attitude. Farber, therefore, is wrong when he interprets the distinction between the three egos as consisting merely in the *degree of reflection*. The distinction is far more radical and the relation between the three

* *Ibid.*, p. 554.

† *Ibid.*, p. 554.

egos is not so easy to make out as Farber, in these sentences, thinks it to be.

He has warned us that "if reduced and non-reduced elements are confused, pseudo-problems result".* The 'reduced' and the 'non-reduced' elements, however, are merely a correlate of the phenomenological and the natural-empirical attitudes. The relation between these two attitudes is a vital problem, even though it is doubtful if such a problem could itself be phenomenologically treated.

The whole problem, in fact, arises from the double meaning of the term 'phenomenology'. It has been used "in a narrower sense, as pure 'eidetic' or 'essential' psychology: (2) in a wider sense, as transcendental Phenomenology or First Philosophy, which is supposed to serve as the ultimate ground of all Science." † In the narrower sense, it is a powerful method for the study of transcendental eidetic structures involved in all knowledge. Before phenomenology came into the field of philosophy, the study of essences was confined mainly to mathematics and logic. Plato, who tried to study the essences denoted by such words as virtue, justice, courage, friendship, approached the problem through the Socratic method of definition instead of what phenomenology calls 'inspection,' 'essential intuition,' or 'seeing'. Phenomenology has widened the scope of the study of essences so as to include not only the subject-matter of Logic and Mathematics but also all that Plato was trying to study and even much more without, of course, the limitations of his method or approach. Nicolai Hartmann's *Ethics* is a remarkable example of the application of this method to a field which, when compared with Logic or Mathematics, would hardly seem to be a fruitful ground for the study of essence. Husserl himself has employed this method in many fields and his contributions therein have great value, no matter how one may judge his fundamental position with regard to phenomenology and the phenomenological method. It should be noted here, that such studies into the realm of essences *do not involve the phenomenological reduction*; they simply involve an insight into the difference between fact and essence, which, while so easy to see in Logic or Mathematics, can, only with difficulty, be grasped with regard to other sciences.

In the wider sense, Phenomenology can become 'the ultimate ground of all science' or 'The First Philosophy' *only* through the

* *Ibid.*, p. 564.

† *Ibid.*, p. 511.

method of transcendental reduction. Here the problem is not of 'seeing' the essences involved in all sorts of possible or factual data, but of seeing them—whether they are facts or essences—as *constituted* through the acts of the transcendental ego which, *because of the reduction*, is now seen as the *prius* of all that is objectivated through any mode of consciousness (knowing, feeling, willing, doubting, supposing, etc., etc.). The facts and essences have to be seen as *constituted through the acts of the transcendental ego* for, they can now no more be regarded as being independent of and prior to the transcendental ego—an attitude which has been given up through the transcendental reduction. It is in this sense alone that Phenomenology introduces a radical re-orientation into the world-outlook on the natural-empirical level. In this sense, it also resembles the fundamental epistemological-critical approach of Kant and is, in fact, far more radical and exhaustive than Kant's. It is this that justifies Farber's remarks that "Husserl's thought may in an important respect be considered to be a generalisation of the Kantian Philosophy. The question of the conditions of the possibility of experience is generalised to be the question of the possibility of truth in general, and of deductive unity in general." *

It would have been, perhaps, more accurate if Farber had said '*the possibility of objectivity and transcendental unity in general*'—for, the unity found by phenomenology is not deductive but transcendental, while the truth is not a matter of ratiocinative determination but of 'essential seeing.' Whatever is 'essentially intuited' is true and thus, the problem within the 'phenomenological reduction', is not of the possibility of truth in general but of the possibility of that objectivity which, though not metaphysical, yet confronts the pure subjectivity of the subject. The possibility of this objectivity or rather the conditions of its constitution are the subject-matter of Phenomenology in this wider sense. The continuity with Phenomenology in the narrower sense, is found in the persistence of the method of 'essential insight', which, because of the reduction, is now directed to the objectivating constitutive acts of the transcendental ego. Thus, in constitutive phenomenology "various *levels of objectivity* are traced, from the level of sensibility to that of the ideal objectivities of the understanding". †

The transcendental reduction, thus, changes Phenomenology

* *Ibid.*, p. 166.

† *Ibid.*, p. 523-4. Italics ours.

from a study of eidetic essences into a pure epistemology which studies the constitution of objectivity. The 'bracketing' of reality, on its part, closes all questions of metaphysics. Metaphysics, however, is not declared to be impossible, as with Kant, but merely *suspended*. But with the problem of the *constitution of transcendental* subjectivity a door is again opened for metaphysics to enter in. The transcendental subject must either constitute itself and thus be metaphysically self-existent or be itself constituted by some other subject which is transcendent to it. In the former case, metaphysics stares us in the face; in the latter, it is only a step behind.

We may, of course, not consider the constitution of *transcendental* subjectivity and confine ourselves merely to a study of the 'objectivating' acts which go to constitute a fact, an essence, or even an ego. Thus we shall remain within the phenomenological framework and avoid the question of the independence of the object from the subject on the one hand (naturalistic metaphysics) and that of the subject from the object, on the other (idealistic metaphysics). Such an attitude, while eminently useful in the study of specific 'objectivating constitutions', becomes difficult to maintain when the problem becomes general. Farber, who has so persistently argued the non-committal nature of the phenomenological method and is never tired of warning us against the idealistic dangers and deviations of the later phase of Husserl's philosophy, himself concedes *independent* validity to the empirical-natural attitude and, thus, to empirical-natural metaphysics. He, however, fails to attribute the same validity to idealistic metaphysics, perhaps because it is post, rather than pre-phenomenological in character.

But if phenomenology is neutral with regard to all metaphysics, it cannot regard the natural-empirical attitude as valid for, the attitude, in fact, is not an attitude but a metaphysics. The phenomenological attitude 'suspends' and, hence, can provide no grounds for the validity of any non-phenomenological attitude. It is a self-sufficient, self-imposed enclosure to get into which is as arbitrary as to get out of it. The transcendental reduction is a positive arbitrary act which takes place not because of any inherent necessity in the situation but simply because it facilitates a study of the objects from a certain angle, which, without it, would not have been possible.

The critical attitude that suspends metaphysics is, for Hegel, merely a *phase* in the development from the naive empirical-natural attitude to the attitude which recognises the Subject and

the Object as being both essential to each other. For Kant, on the other hand, the critical attitude is cut off from both the natural-empirical and the idealistic metaphysics and it is impossible for it to move to either of these positions without denying its own insight. The 'phenomenological reduction' also cuts itself off from both the sides, but as the 'reduction' is only a result of the *voluntary* 'bracketing', it involves no essential impossibility of leaving the 'bracketing' and moving to either of the metaphysical constructions. That, however, would not be Phenomenology but something else.

But the 'bracketing' itself may lead to a metaphysical problem of the first importance. For, the reduction once effected, the centrality of the transcendental subject inevitably comes into the focus and once the phenomenologist has started facing the problem of the constitution of transcendental subjectivity, the metaphysical abyss seems to appear terrifying close. The methodological prohibition fails as it had previously done with Kant and his successors—for, the method itself reveals a problem which it cannot solve.

Further, Phenomenology, as a pure methodology, does not have even the *a priori* necessity of Kantian criticism. The 'epoche' is purely arbitrary and, thus, cannot declare as invalid any attitude which refuses to perform the 'epoche'. With Kant, the critical standpoint is shown to be the only possible epistemology. The reason why metaphysics is impossible, is shown to be involved in the very nature of knowledge. Such is not the case with phenomenology; it 'suspends', but does not show the necessity of this 'suspension'. Of course, phenomenology comes very near to declaring itself the *only* valid and foundational attitude; but it definitely does not do so.

On the other hand, the relation between the epoche-performing ego and the empirical-natural ego, which is reduced in the phenomenological attitude, becomes a headache to the philosopher. As Husserl himself observes, "the expression 'constitutive identity' indicates, that one of them constitutes the other. The identity in question is so conceived that *it cannot be determined within the horizon of the mundane idea of being*. But the separation of the two egos is just *as false* as the equating of them."* Earlier, he contended, "that all ontic forms of identity are incapable of 'logically' determining the *constitutive identity* of the transcendental ego and of man".† This raises

* *Ibid.*, p. 559. Italics ours.

† *Ibid.*, p. 550. Italics ours.

another problem; for, what is wanted is a *constitutive identity* and not an ontic one and, for Husserl, the one cannot be the ground for the other.

The distinction is, perhaps, merely a face-saving device to hide from oneself the fact that phenomenology, with this one turn, has become metaphysics. In fact, phenomenologists like Farber have understood the later Husserl* thus, and have accordingly condemned him on this score. However, they themselves have not seen that the problem of subjectivity cannot be solved on the 'reduced' phenomenological level; for its solution we will have either to fall back upon the natural-empirical attitude or rise beyond the limitations imposed by the phenomenological attitude. As Husserl himself concludes, "no phenomenological analysis, above all of the deep constitutive strata of transcendental subjectivity, can be presented adequately." †

The three paradoxes with which Husserl's thought concludes take us direct into a mysticism of the most uncompromising variety. "The first paradox states that the phenomenological realm cannot be 'known', *i.e.*, in natural terms; and the second informs us that it cannot be 'communicated', *i.e.*, in natural language, or in any language for that matter." ‡ "The third paradox is called 'the logical paradox of transcendental determination' and is intended to show that *logic is not equal to the task of solving the problems* arising in the determination of basic transcendental relations." §

Knowledge, communication and logic, therefore, ultimately fail to discharge their functions and Phenomenology ends in a mysticism which has its *own* logic and means and ways of having and communicating knowledge that are ineffable and incommunicable to anyone excepting the phenomenologist himself. We should be excused if we are reminded not only of the perennial teaching of religious mystics but also of the great S'āṅkara who, after all his logic, declared the whole problem of empirical-natural Māyā 'Anirvacnīya' (unspeakable) and the questions regarding the identity of Ātman, Brahman and Jīva as 'Ati-praśna'.

How the world of timeless essences as revealed by the phenomenological method is related to the spatio-temporal world of empirical-natural happenings, is the ultimate question which fails

* The phrase "later Husserl" in phenomenological writing, denotes Husserl in the latter phase of his philosophical thinking.

† *Op. cit.*, Farber, p. 558. Italics ours.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 559. Italics ours.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 559. Italics ours.

to find an answer. Hegel would have said that the very question reveals that the natural-empirical standpoint has not yet been given up. Marx would have called it an abstract disjunction, S'āṅkara an unanswerable question. But the problem, of course, if it be regarded as a problem at all, remains. The historical and the logical, the temporal and the timeless *demand* a relation but *refuse* to be related except in terms of the one or the other. For history, logic is *merely* an *occurrence*; for logic, history *only* an *accident*, an exemplification entirely unnecessary. Neither for Hegel nor for Marx would the problem be a problem, for it is abstract. But it is only abstraction that reveals the *independence* of the entities interlocked and thus *sets* the problem for consciousness. All problems are abstract for, in Being or Process there are no problems. The problems exist *only* for consciousness and this very fact itself is again a problem of consciousness alone, for in the realm of Being *it is not a problem* but a fact and thus must have *some* relation to other facts. However, this whole problem of the nature of problems, of abstraction and of the relations between History and Logic, we shall better discuss in our next chapter on 'Philosophy as History'.

Philosophy as Phenomenology, then, divides itself into three parts. The first is the study of transcendental eidetic structures through the method of essential intuition. This is understood by Husserl as Pure Phenomenology. Farber writes, "Pure Phenomenology was defined by Husserl (in the logos essay) as a science which investigates essence alone, and not as concerned with the investigation of existence, or with 'self-observation'." * But this is merely a wider study of which logic and mathematics form only a part. The generalisation of the notion of 'essence' gives us undoubtedly a new dimension for study. But there seems to be no reason for identifying it with Philosophy, unless it be the love of the word which everybody wishes to appropriate for himself. It leaves both 'self' and 'existence' outside its scope and refuses to discuss the relation between 'essence' and 'existence'. As a study of essences, it simply forms another science *alongside* of other sciences—nay, it may even be regarded as in some sense more foundational than others. But that would in no sense justify us in calling it philosophy. With equal justification we could have identified it with logic or mathematics in the past for, undoubtedly they are foundational for all other sciences.

* *Philosophical Essays In Memory of Edmund Husserl*, Edited by Marvin Farber. p. 27.

What is in dispute here is not the name, but the tendency behind it to deny to philosophy any specific subject-matter of its own. What we notice here is the same tendency we saw elsewhere, of identifying philosophy with either science in general or some new branch of science that has lately arisen.

In the second sense, Phenomenology goes deeper. It tries to see the object, whatever it may be, as constituted out of the objectivating acts of the subject. Fritz Kaufmann has beautifully described this phase. He writes: "The leading impulse and principle of phenomenology is to revive and to vivify the, perhaps, merely verbal significations, the more or less empty intentions and the traditional positings of our actual life by means of going back to the source of their *original constitution* and their authentic fulfilment in self-giving evidences." * This necessarily involves the transcendental reduction and brings into being what may be called 'transcendental phenomenology' which fulfils in a wider and deeper sense the work initiated by Kant.

But the 'reduction' cuts itself off from all metaphysics, and this is the sign of its greatest strength and weakness. The 'reduction' does not make metaphysics *impossible* but simply declares itself *incompetent to judge* any metaphysics. It is, therefore, a method *alongside* other methods and claims its foundational validity *only* when you have *adopted* the method. It should be noted that the empirical-natural method makes the claim and with, perhaps, equal validity. It is, therefore, not so much a difference of subject-matter as that of attitude which differentiates Phenomenology from Science. Husserl himself has written, "it is certain that phenomenology also deals with all these 'phenomena' and in all their meanings, but *from a quite different point* of view, the effect of which is to modify in a determinate way all the meanings which the term bears in the old-established sciences." † He further observes, "it is still at the same time evident that, at *every conversion* of meaning which concerns the phenomenological-psychological content of the soul as a whole, *this very content* by putting on another existential meaning (Seinsinn) becomes transcendental-phenomenological, just as conversely the latter, on reverting to the natural psychological standpoint, becomes once again psychological." ‡ But this conversion, this change in point of view is *completely arbitrary*. It, therefore, cannot declare other attitudes to be invalid or even to be of lesser

* *Ibid.* p. 187. Italics ours.

† *Ideas.* p. 41. Italics ours.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 15. Italics ours.

validity than itself. The problem of *comparative validity* cannot arise for, whatever be the attitude we *choose*, the very choice completely annihilates all others.

To treat of Philosophy as Phenomenology in this second sense, therefore, would be to make it the result of an arbitrary attitude which has no necessity about it. The natural-empirical attitude has, at least, this advantage about it that it is natural to us. The phenomenological attitude, however, does not invalidate metaphysics and, hence, if we confine the term philosophy just to this attitude we would be constrained to admit that metaphysics is not part of philosophy. This might have been justified if the phenomenologist, like Kant, had shown the impossibility of metaphysics. But as he has not done so and, on his principles, is utterly incapable of doing so, he cannot be justified in the terminological conclusion that seems to follow from his identification.

The third sense, in which Phenomenology is an idealistic construction which, though *not necessitated*, is yet *allowed* by the phenomenological reduction, is Philosophy in the traditional sense of the term. It, like most others, presupposes the presuppositions that we have discussed already from chapters 3 to 6. To some, it may be a surprise that Husserl who started 'as a staunch upholder of rationalism and the unlimited power of reason' ended in mysticism. One of his disciples went so far as to define psychologism as regarding "reason as dependent in some way upon something non-rational in character".* Yet, this great opponent of psychologism ended in mysticism. In fact, there will be little surprise if we remain ourselves of the end of another great thinker who started with supreme faith in pure reason, Immanuel Kant. The Critique of Faith as Spengler has somewhere said, gives rise to knowledge and the Critique of Knowledge once more to Faith. "Western Philosophy", he has written, "swings to and fro between religion and technical science and is defined thus, or thus, according as the author of the definition is a man with some relic of priesthood still in him, or is a pure expert and technician of thought." †

This is a historian looking at Philosophy, but there are philosophers who claim to have swallowed up History within themselves. In the next chapter, therefore, we shall consider this identification of Philosophy and History and attempt to understand *which is which*.

* John Wild in *Philosophical Essays In Memory of Edmund Husserl*, p. 20.

† *The Decline of the West*, Vol. II. p. 306.

CHAPTER X

PHILOSOPHY AS HISTORY

Philosophy, as every student of the subject knows, has itself been the object of philosophical speculation. Thus, there has been both a History of Philosophy and Philosophy of History. History sees philosophy as merely an occurrence among other occurrences while philosophy claims to judge the very validity, meaning and reality of history. The question of validity does not arise for history. For it, the more important question is that of *effectivity*. Only that which succeeds is regarded as *important* in history and though the success always stands in relation to the failure, still it is not a question of values and validities, but only of effectivity and success. Christ, for example, is important for History because of the triumph of Christianity and Marx because of Lenin and Stalin. Otherwise, perhaps, the former would not have been known at all and the latter would have been known only in the histories of sociological thought.

The disciples, of course, have always inferred the validity of the doctrine from its effectivity on the socio-political plane of history. Sometimes, of course, they have continued to believe in the truth of the doctrine in spite of the fact that it has failed to succeed in the course of history, as, for example, in the case of the Jews. But the inference, however natural to most persons, is unwarranted and incorrect.

The general historian, however, is not interested in the question as to which faith or theory is valid. He only tries to ascertain what effects they have had and whether the range of the effects is of such extent, order and dimension as to be taken serious notice of by any chronicler of events. This holds good not only in the case of the history of philosophy or the history of religion but in all cases, whether of science or of art or of anything else. Of course, in these histories one may come across theories or speculations or art-objects which one may judge to be logically valid or intuitively profound or aesthetically perfect. But such a judgement falls outside of history proper. For, in the eyes of a historian, a subject is important *only* with reference to the effects—positive or negative—which it has produced on contemporaries or posterity.

The notion of 'effect', however, is not so simple or rectilinear as one may be tempted to suppose. That which may seem to have had a very great effect when viewed within a limited field, may be judged to be utterly ineffective in a larger perspective. Russell's definition of number as well as his whole *Principia Mathematica* may, for example, loom large in the region of pure mathematics or logic, but within the sphere of socio-political events in the twentieth century it does not deserve mention even as a foot-note. Similarly, Keynes is important mostly for the economic theory of the second quarter of the twentieth century, but Marx is important for its political history also.*

The choice of the effectivity co-ordinates, therefore, is determined not merely by the determinate domain of the subject-matter chosen but also by the importance which we assign to the different domains. For the historian, however, the world of socio-political events remains the ultimate framework and the final criterion. The space-time co-ordinates, however, remain here as everywhere important. For a Spengler or a Toynbee even centuries may not matter. Philosophy, therefore, like every other theoretic knowledge or living institution, may be seen as one product among other products of a living society getting sustenance therefrom and reacting thereupon in a more or less continuous fashion. However, such a cross-section will be important for the historian and not for the philosopher. For the philosopher, the very relations between History and Philosophy would become a problem—a problem not in the realm of history but that of philosophy.

The problem, arising inevitably out of the historicity of the thinker himself, leads many thinkers to a reinterpretation of the concepts of History and Philosophy so that some solution may be reached. Most generally, the attempts result in a mutual assimilation of the two concepts till the one comes to be regarded as identical with the other.

History may either be regarded as comprising the sum total of all that has happened or of all that we may *regard* as having happened on the basis of certain *evidence* from which that which has happened can be constructed and thus known. The first merely involves the notion of happening with its correlate notion of time distinguished into past, present and future. The second not merely presupposes the existence of evidence but also of its

* The statement remains true by and large, even though the Keynesian economics has increasingly become a feature of the social and economic policies of most of the democratic governments of the world.

realization as *evidence* by some person. The philosophers have declared the distinction abstract but even they would find it hard to deny the empirical fact that evidence is not regarded as evidence, in fact, not even suspected as such for a long time and that the past was past even when nobody in the present was aware of it. The Minoan, the Maya, the Aztec, the Early Indic are only a few examples of the Past that was not even known as past a few centuries ago.

The irreversibility of Time involved in the distinctions of past, present and future assures that the past, as that which has happened, shall always remain past. Of course, the past can only be *known* in the present but it is only the act of knowing that is in the present and not the past which is known through that act. Further, the evidence which is essential to the knowing, though always in the present, is not the past itself but only leads to it through the causal-constructive imagination of some mind which judges it as evidence. However, being the very stuff out of which the past is constructed, the evidence should be conceived not as a mere logical possibility but as an empirical actuality. Therefore, there can always be events in the past which may have left no evidence that we can recognize as such and thus are incapable of being constructed. Also the evidence might have been destroyed because of the lapse of time, making it impossible to know the past. Further the evidence-character of things presupposes some causal law in the field of nature and psychological-motivational law in the history of man. Such a law is only a generalization of the habitual modes of experiential happening and, thus, is always a more or less inadequate ground for the construction of the past. The evidence, thus, makes all the difference between the past and the knowledge of the past. Unless, therefore, we wish to say that the past is continually changing or in other words that it is not past at all, we shall have to admit that the past and the knowledge of the past are two different things, and that while the latter is dependent on the former, the converse is not true.

Yet even the second definition seems too wide. Time being irreversible, there certainly is a historicity in all things. But the historicity that belongs to knowledge is of another order and level. In it what has had history is, if we may call it so, the self-articulation of experience at different moments of time. This self-articulation of experience embraces the object, the subject and the growing interrelation between the two at different levels

and in different forms. The independence of the object is not thereby impugned nor its independent development denied. The historicity of knowledge, in a sense, includes or rather comprehends all other historicities, for, as objects of knowledge, they too have had their history. This does not, we should repeat, in any way imply that the object, in its turn, has not had a history. What we mean is merely this that the *knowledge* of the history of the object has itself had a history.

The temporal span of the two histories, however, may be so different that, for all practical purposes, the changes in the knowledge of the object may still be ascribed to the object as it was in the past without any very great danger of being mistaken because the object might have changed its ways of behaving with the lapse of time. We may safely assume that the constitution of matter has not much changed during the last few centuries of rapid changes in our *knowledge* of the physical world. The time-span of the changes in the physical universe seems so great that the independent changes in the physical objects in their life-history is practically immaterial to our reconstruction of their past from the knowledge of their behaviour in the present. But this would not hold in the case of other things that change rather rapidly and that is why we only read our own feelings and meanings into the customs and words of the past. To relive those modes of feeling and thought is practically impossible and that is why we continuously reinterpret the past in terms of the present.

But it is not so with natural history. There the past is understood better with the growth of knowledge and not reinterpreted as in the case of human history. In the latter case, it is the mere scaffolding of events that comes to be known with greater accuracy with the growth of knowledge, but their significance has to be reinterpreted by every age for itself. However, as the *knowledge* of physical nature falls within the history of humanity and has significance for it, it may be treated as a part of the history of man having a relation with his other activities which he has regarded as significant. It is only in this sense that History may come to be regarded as more fundamental than Nature; for the knowledge of Nature is itself a historical product and may depend upon changes in factors that themselves are historically conditioned. Collingwood observes, "that natural science is not.....a self-contained and self-sufficient form of thought, but depends for its very existence upon some other

form of thought which is different from it and cannot be reduced to it."* This mode of thought, of course, is historical, for a 'scientific fact is a class of historical facts'. Also "a scientific theory not only rests on certain historical facts and is verified or disproved by certain other historical facts; it is itself an historical fact, namely, the fact that someone has propounded or accepted, verified or disproved, that theory." †

These remarks which form the transition from 'The Idea of Nature' to 'The Idea of History' are unexceptionable if we confine ourselves to the 'Idea' only. But if we wish to imply that not merely the idea of nature but nature itself "is a thing that depends for its existence on something else" then we are certainly wrong.‡ We do not know if Prof. Collingwood will assert that no elections existed when we did not know about them or that the nebulae 1000 million light-years away as revealed by the 100 inch telescope did not exist before that telescope came to be constructed. The historicity of the fact does not determine its validity, otherwise all facts being inevitably historic would be equally valid. The fact that there are changes in our knowledge of nature does not mean that nature has started behaving differently, but only that our knowledge has become slightly more adequate than it was before. This does not imply, as we have already said, that natural objects do not change in their mode of behaviour, but only that their time-span is so different that practically it may be taken as if it were so.

History, thus, has been understood as the developing self-articulation of Reality and, in this sense, has been regarded as identical with Philosophy. Hegel who was perhaps the first to assert this identity, conceived of Philosophy as the self-knowledge of the Absolute Spirit which finds itself in the Object and the Object in itself. The differentiation in this articulation does not imply division into self-enclosed and self-sufficient parts but a concrete unity that can express itself only in and through the differences. The division of History and Philosophy from each other is, on the one hand, merely for purposes of the convenience of their treatment and, on the other, a necessary articulation of the essential forms of the activity of the Spirit. The former can easily be noticed in the multifarious sub-divisions of different

* *The Idea of Nature*. p. 175.

† *Ibid.*, p. 177. Italics ours.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

subjects; the latter, in those perennial forms in which the Spirit seems to have expressed itself always. In Philosophy, as Croce has written, "none of the parts are without the whole and the whole does not exist without the parts". "The truth is that general philosophy is nothing but the special philosophic sciences, and *vice versa*. The plural and the singular cannot be separated in the pure concept, where the plural is plural of the singular, and the singular is singular of the plural."*

This idea of an organic unity expressing through multitudinous forms of being has been accepted by such historians as Oswald Spengler. For him, the soul-form of a society expresses itself as much through Art as Mathematics, as much through Science as Religion, as much through systems of Philosophy as styles of Architecture—both in the period of Growth which he calls Culture and the period of Decline which he calls Civilization. For Marx too, the prevalent forms of productive relations resulting in the particular forms of class division in a society, provide the basic framework for science, art, philosophy, law and religion. There is a logic or pattern in the dialectical development of these productive relations just as there is an organic logic in the growth and decline of a Culture for Spengler. However, the unity with Spengler is a unity of the soul-form which can only be intuited through a comparison of the cultural manifestations of one society with those of another; with Marx, the unity is given only by the basic class-relations prevalent at the time and only in terms of the dominant class whose interests the social system serves in all its multifarious functions. This society, however, for Spengler at least, is not the Universal Society. In this Toynbee is at one accord with Spengler; for him too, the history is not a universal history but only a history of different societies.

In this, therefore, there is a deep difference between the meaning of History as the self-articulation of Spirit and as the self-articulation of a particular society. The first implies a unitary universal organic development whether in the form of a linear or dialectical progression; the second merely presupposes fairly independent societies which might even have had no relations with each other. The thinker or historian, as Spengler has remarked, cannot but see the whole of the past from his particular standpoint i.e. as leading up to that thinker himself and finding its

* *Logic*. p. 275.

consummation therein. Yet, the great defect of Western historians and thinkers has been the obvious assumption that the stream of the whole historic past and not merely a certain section of it i.e. the Western European, finds its progressive fulfilment in their consciousness. Of course, Spengler and Toynbee—particularly the latter—have allowed their minds to be suffused with the histories of different societies and then tried to find the law, if any, of their origin, growth and decline. Yet, they are exceptions and of the two, Spengler at least centres more on the Greco-Roman, Modern Western and the Magian worlds than on any other.

The identity of History and Philosophy, therefore, would hardly be admitted by any historian for, even in the sense of a self-articulation, History is the articulation of merely a society and not of the whole of humanity. The relative valuation or a judgement of validities between different societies is impossible and if performed, would merely reflect the valuational co-ordinates of either the thinker concerned or, at best, of the historical society of which he happens to be a member. For History, therefore, there would only be philosophies rather than Philosophy, each reflecting in the theoretic consciousness the presuppositions of a given society. These presuppositions may either be conceived in terms of class-structure and class-interests as in Marx or as the specific soul-form of a particular society as in Spengler or as some ultimate unquestionable metaphysical principles as in Collingwood.* Whatever be the form in which they are conceived, they share one common characteristic and that is, that they can only be given up but never proved as false. As Collingwood has said in his *Metaphysics*, they are neither true nor false but merely presuppositions. Philosophy, therefore, on this view, would not be true or false but merely more or less adequate in the sense of articulating to a greater or lesser degree the organically interrelated presuppositions of that particular society in which it happened to be born. The difference between the lesser and the greater thinker is not that the former is wrong and the latter right but only that the latter is more adequate and comprehensive in his articulation than the former. Every age, therefore, would require its own philosopher or rather, a series of philosophers who will articulate that society in ascen-

* Sorokin's *Social and Cultural Dynamics* and Northrop's *The Meeting of East and West* belong to a similar category.

ding levels of adequacy. Philosophy, therefore, like History will never be final.

Yet those philosophers who have asserted the identity of History and Philosophy, have not remained satisfied with only such formulations. They have tried to find the *essential* forms of the activity of Spirit or the Dialects through which the historical process must necessarily move or the organic forms of growth and decline which all historical movement must bear within itself. This *necessity* is trans-historical and lies with some sort of an *a priori* necessity on it. Whether Hegel or Marx or Spengler, they are all agreed, at least, on one point, *viz.*, that the necessity they have discovered has nothing historic about it. The categorical forms of Hegel's dialectic, the dialectical forms of the historical process, the organic logic that turns a Culture into Civilization—all claim a validity that transcends any and every historical epoch.

Collingwood is, perhaps, the only person who has consistently refused to formulate an *a priori* necessity for the historical process. Croce, who has argued for the eternity of Philosophy from the eternity of History and contended that each age has a philosophy of its own has, however, given us the essential forms of the activity of the Spirit. According to him Aesthetics, Logic, Economics and Ethics form the four distinct moments in the activity of the Spirit. Each of them "is not the whole, but a moment in the ideal development of the whole".* Philosophy, therefore, is the articulation of these essential forms of the Absolute Spirit and of their relation to each other. History is identical with the movement of the Spirit itself—for "there is no whole in the static sense. Mind immanent in the concept is movement, tendency, direction." † Only Philosophy, on the other hand, is the articulation of those forms which the mind immanent in the movement must take. As Guido Calogero writes in his article 'On the So-called Identity of History and Philosophy', "Philosophy is only concerned with the clear distinction of the categories or forms of the Spirit, by means of which the historian can discern the character of all that Spirit experiences." ‡

But, as Calogero himself notes, Croce seems to use the word

* *The Philosophy of Benedetto Croce*, Wildon Carr. p. 151.

† *Ibid.* p. 151.

‡ *Philosophy and History*, Ed. Raymond Klibansky and H. J. Paton. p. 36.

philosophy in two senses. "On the one hand, as is well-known, 'philosophy' is *only* one of four such forms; art, philosophy, 'economic' or non-moral action, and moral action. But, on the other hand, since philosophy surveys the whole System of Spirit, it *cannot itself be any particular activity*, but must be a consciousness immanent in all."* Thus Philosophy is either a moment in the activity of the Spirit which is History, or a trans-historical reflection on the essential forms of the Spirit and their relation to each other. In the second sense, too, the thought arises in the mind of some thinker but its validity is not confined to the historical epoch or society in which the philosopher is thinking. The presuppositions which he discovers are not of that particular society or historical epoch but of the very activity of Spirit itself. It is because of this that the philosopher's claim to validity is transcendental and not historical—for the forms belong to the essentiality of Spirit itself and not to this or that historic epoch. It is in this sense that Croce himself has defined Philosophy as the Science of the Pure Concept. He writes, "If Philosophy is the pure concept, it is also the distinctions of the pure concept; it is all the pure concepts capable of serving as predicates to individual judgements and so of acting as categories."†

Philosophy, however, as the organic articulation of pure concepts, can never be if it "changes with the change of history" for "since history changes at every moment, Philosophy at every moment" will have to be new.‡ Croce has, of course, completed the sentence with the words "*is new*" and not as we have done, with "*will have to be new*." The problem, however, is just this: if the *pure* concepts can *change*, they cannot be pure at all. In the case of a pure concept, its very essence involves its existence. The exact meaning of this statement can only be realized when we contrast the pure concept which is the concern of Philosophy with other pseudo-concepts with which the natural and the mathematical sciences concern themselves. The pure concept is both transcendent and immanent *i.e.* universal and concrete, while the pseudo-concepts are never both together and may, at times, lack

* *Ibid.* p. 37. Italics ours.

† *Logic.* p. 264.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 315.

both of them. As Wildon Carr has written, "The pseudo-concept either are not transcendent or they are not immanent."*

We have suggested the possibility of their being neither at the same time, for the simple reason that mathematical concepts as understood by Croce and Carr are not even universal concepts. A triangle is no more universal than a cat. The concepts merely possess a generality, the difference between them lying only in the concreteness of the one as distinguished from the other. It would be wrong, therefore, at least in the sense in which Croce and Carr understand mathematical entities, to regard them as universal. Of course, in the sense of a system of defining relationships which itself has certain abstract and general properties involved in the notion of relation itself, *i.e.* in the sense in which pure mathematics is identical with pure logic, it may attain a true universality instead of mere generality. But in that sense, would not the abstract relational properties be also *immanent* and thus *concrete* as they would certainly be realized by any and every existent whatsoever? It seems that true universality cannot be divorced from immanence at all.

However that be, what we wish to emphasise is the fact that all the characteristics ascribed to the pure concept by Croce would, if taken seriously, make it impossible for the concept ever to change. It is expressive, universal and concrete. The three together make the concept a pure concept; otherwise, it is either not a concept at all or merely a pseudo-concept. The universal which is necessarily immanent in the individual and is expressed as such is the pure concept. The universal is *completely* immanent in the individual and hence, the individual in its historicity cannot exemplify it more. The empirical pseudo-concepts may exemplify more or less the supposed ideal form but the concrete universal can never be exemplified in any 'more or less' manner. The transition is from the forms as conceived by Plato and Aristotle to those as conceived by Kant. Even the empirical pseudo-concepts do not seem to be immanent in a 'more or less' degree. A cat cannot be more or less of a cat nor a house more or less of a house. 'Cat' is not a pure concept—not because it is not completely immanent, but because it is not truly universal. The forms have never had historicity, but while the empirical pseudo-concepts may be said to have changed because they were never universal in character, the pure concepts, just because they are universal, can never change. Even the mathematical pseudo-

* *Op. Cit.* Wildon Carr, p. 39.

concepts as understood by Croce and Carr never change—for they are universal even if not concrete.* The unchangability of a concept, hence, is derived from its universality and to say that the truly universal concept can have a historicity about it is, therefore, a contradiction in terms.

For Croce, however, the universality of the concept presupposes and involves the individuality of intuition and thus the element of historicity belongs not to the universality of the concept but to the individuality of the intuition. The intuition and the concept are two moments in the unity of a single process. As Carr writes, "*Thinking is universalising what is presented in the individual intuition.*" † The universalisation of the individual belonging to intuition, it should be noted, pertains to *thinking*. In the aesthetic activity the intuition is merely the expressed individuality with no universalisation involved. It should, however, be noted that the universalisation involved in the act of thinking is not arbitrary. As Wildon Carr himself has written, "The unity of the individual intuition with the universal concept is not therefore posterior to experience, but original, that is a condition of experience." ‡ It would have been better if Carr had qualified the word 'experience' by the word 'reflective', for Croce would not agree to such a description of the aesthetic experience.

The necessity in any theoretical thinking of combining the individual moment of intuition with the universalisation of the concept, provides the basis for Croce's view of the identity of History and Philosophy. "History, being the individual judgment, is the synthesis of subject and predicate, of representation and concept", writes Croce.§ But the same description would apply to Philosophy, for "if history is impossible without the logical, that is, the philosophical element, philosophy is not possible without the intuitive, or historical element." ¶ But they

* As pointed out in the previous paragraph, we suspect that the mathematical concepts are not even truly universal in the sense in which a pure concept is supposed to be universal. The question, then, would arise whether the mathematical pseudo-concepts are unchanging in any sense in which the empirical pseudo-concepts are not. If so, to what is their unchanging character due, for it certainly cannot be due to the true universality which they lack? However, the more important point, for the present discussion, is that the pure concepts *must* be unchanging because of the very reason that they are pure i.e., truly universal.

† *Op. Cit.* p. 97. Italics ours.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 96.

§ *Logic.* p. 279.

¶ *Ibid.* p. 310.

should not be considered as mutually exclusive, or even as conditioning each other, for they "are not two forms, they are one sole form: they are not mutually conditioned, but identical. The *a priori* synthesis, which is the reality of the individual judgment and of the definition is also the reality of philosophy and history."* It is only a difference of focus and emphasis that makes us use two different words, namely, History and Philosophy for the same thing at different times. When we wish to emphasize the individual aspect or the subject of a judgment we call it History while we call it Philosophy if we wish to emphasize the universal aspect or that which is the predicate of a judgment.

Yet, even if history, like all other knowledge, is an individual judgment, a unity of representation and concept—even then it is not necessary that the concept should be a pure concept. The subject itself may not be a representation but a pseudo-concept and the judgment, in its own turn, may not be of the subject-predicate form at all. We hope, it will be granted that "Brutus killed Caesar" is a historical proposition—yet neither "Brutus" nor "Caesar" nor "killed" is a pure concept and the whole proposition is not of the subject-predicate form. "Newton discovered the law of gravitation" is another example of a historical judgment, at least, in the sense in which Croce uses the term universalisation for the pure concept.

Croce himself has confused the whole issue at this stage by refusing to distinguish between the pure concepts and the pseudo-concepts. Referring to the consuls who, after having sufficiently explored the routes, followed the Carthaginians, entered Cannae, and seeing themselves face to face with the army of Hannibal, pitched and fortified their camp, he writes: "No one ignorant as to what is man, war, army, pursuit, route, camp, fortification, dream, reality, love, hatred, fatherland, and so on, is capable of *thinking* such a sentence as this." † But we fail to find what there is of the nature of the *true concept* in all these and how their necessity for the thinking of such a sentence makes it History or Philosophy, when we are explicitly told that the pseudo-concepts are not a form of knowledge at all. "The difference . . . between the pure concept and the pseudo-concept is not that the one is true and the other false, or that the one is useful and good, the other illusory and evil, but *that one is a form of knowledge and*

* *Ibid.* p. 324.

† *Logic.* p. 287. Italics author's.

the other is not."* Even the concept of 'reality' which is nearest to the notion of pure concept in Croce's list, ceases to be pure if it is contrasted with dreams or illusions for, the moment it gets so contrasted, it ceases to be truly universal.

True, it can be shown that the pure concepts are involved in all these statements, but that, in no sense, can make the judgment historical. The pure concepts would be involved just because they are pure i.e. both truly universal and concrete. They can neither be the basis for the distinction between true or false judgment nor for the distinction between the historical and the non-historical judgment. There is nothing to choose between "Caesar killed Brutus" and "Brutus killed Caesar" or "this is a crow" and "you are a fool" as far as the exemplification or involvement of pure concepts is concerned. The pure concept without the individual of intuition is certainly empty, but for its concreteness it does not distinguish between this individual and that and hence is completely indifferent to the individuality of the individual. It is universal not because it is concrete, but it is concrete because it is universal. In fact, just because the concept is pure i.e. of the nature of form, it is empty and hence alone truly universal.

The fundamental distinction for Croce lies between the intuition and the concept. The concept presupposes the intuition and, in fact, is the intuition made articulate. All knowledge, therefore, would have the two terms, intuition and the concept, indissolubly linked to each other. In his characterisation of Philosophy, however, he makes another vital distinction, *viz.*, between the pure concept and the pseudo-concept. Natural and mathematical sciences are supposed to deal with pseudo-concepts and thus are sharply distinguished from Philosophy. They, of course, cannot exist without using the pure concepts as well, but their distinctive truth and field lies in the domain of pseudo-concepts only. Does History also involve pseudo-concepts?—becomes, then, the fundamental question around which the problem of the identity of History and Philosophy would revolve. For, if History uses pseudo-concepts, it cannot be identical with Philosophy. We do not think it needs much argument to show that all the concepts which Croce has listed for our understanding of the pitching and fortifying the camp before the army of Hannibal, are pseudo-concepts. It should, therefore, be obvious that if other sciences using these very same concepts are not identical

* *Op. Cit.*, Wildon Carr, p. 91. Italics ours.

with philosophy just because they use these concepts, History cannot also be so, for it uses these very concepts.

In fact, Croce has not distinguished between the two lines of thought which lead him to assert the identity of History and Philosophy. The above line from the unity of intuition and concept is untenable for, it would make all knowledge knowledge and not History or Philosophy or Science or Mathematics. The analysis is the analysis of all presuppositions necessarily involved in the very notion of theoretic knowledge and would, therefore, provide no ground for the assertion of any selective identity of Philosophy with one rather than another branch of knowledge. Philosophy, if it be identified with *a priori synthesis*, is presupposed by all knowledge and is identical either with all or none of them. If a distinction is made between Mathematics and the Natural Sciences on the one hand and Philosophy on the other, on the ground that the latter deals with the pure concepts and the former only with pseudo-concepts, the distinction would operate between Philosophy and History as well, for History too deals with pseudo-concepts. In the sense in which the pseudo-concepts of History presuppose and involve the pure concepts, the pseudo-concepts of Mathematics and the Natural Sciences do as well.

The other line of Croce's thought is the problem with which this chapter opened, *viz.*, the historicity of everything and hence of philosophy as well. Trying to give a reason for this assertion of the identity of History and Philosophy, he writes in the very beginning: "For a philosophic proposition, or definition, or system (as we have called it), appears in the soul of a definite *individual at a definite* point of time and space and in *definite conditions*. It is, therefore, *historically conditioned*. Without the historical conditions that demand it, the system would not be what it is."* These sentences show the consciousness of Philosophy as a temporal happening, with a 'before' and an 'after'—the 'after', of course, being conditioned by the 'before'. They are amazingly naturalistic in their texture and setting; the individual is definitely empirical, conditioned by what precedes him in time. The whole notion is causal-empirical with its inevitable distinctions of past and present and the present as determined by the past. This is not an isolated statement but a continuous argument. Denying the non-historicity of Nature, he writes, "The strangest of statements, *that nature has no history*, comes from forgetting the historical foundation of the natural sciences, from ignorance that it

* *Logic*, p. 310. Italics others.

constitutes their sole truth, and from attributing theoretic importance to classifications which have merely practical importance." * Nature is historical because natural sciences are historically conditioned: Philosophy is historical because philosophical thinking is historically conditioned.

Croce, of course, does not distinguish between the idea of Nature and Nature and, hence, Nature, for him, is continuously changing, for it is conditioned by the "definite conditions at a definite point of time and space in the soul of a definite individual". It would be amusing to ask whether Nature has been readjusting herself to the changes in the ideas about herself from the primitive savage to the modern Einstein? And contemporaneously with Einstein, there is the savage still and so, is Nature today Einsteinian or, shall we say, Savagian? However, even if it be so, what is the historical conditioning that is supposed to determine? Is it merely the past *as known* or the past as unknown as well? What, in short, is historical conditioning? What is it that conditions? Not Nature, not Philosophy—for, they both are the conditioned and not the conditioning. The past of the Spirit? But how could the spirit have a past, when it is eternally present? And is it the spirit of Croce or Hegel or Collingwood—for, we hope, none of them would deny that there were other spirits as well. Or is it a transcendent Spirit? If so, then how can it be historically conditioned?

We are not denying the phrase 'historical conditioning' any meaning; what we are merely suggesting is the fact that it has an empirical-causal meaning which is completely incompatible with the whole theory of History and Philosophy that Croce has built up. He, of course, is bound to tell us that we have not understood his position at all. He would, for example, refer us to page 319 of his *Logic* where he has clearly written, "Philosophic propositions, though historically conditioned, are not effects produced and determined by these conditions, but creations of thought which is continued in and through them." He has even gone further and warned us that "when they appear to be produced determinately, they must be held to be not philosophy, but false philosophy, vital interests masquerading as thoughts". Now these sentences may be said to have meaning, but only when interpreted in an un-Crocean manner. What it means, perhaps, is that there is a social tradition which we inherit, a tradition in which we are born and brought up, which provides a setting but does not *completely* deter-

* *Ibid.*, p. 353. Italics author's.

mine thought which always is more or less spontaneous. We do not claim that it is the best way of putting it, but it certainly is something like it. What is denied is a rigid determinism; what is suggested is, what have sometimes been called 'influences'.

But for Croce, historical determinism that yet does not completely determine, is always in the present. The past is always in the present—the present as known. But it seems wrong to say that a thinker born in the present era cannot ignore the whole development of philosophy, say from Kant to Bergson. In fact, a thinker not born in the European tradition and entirely unacquainted with the Western languages would, by that very fact, completely ignore the whole of Western Philosophy. Such a possibility is not impossible to be realised. In fact, one sometimes meets persons in India who have no knowledge of any language excepting Sanskrit (with, of course, their additional provincial language) and whose modes and categories of thought are so steeped in classical Indian tradition that, unless one regards the specifically European thinker as the only real representative of the Spirit, one would have to admit that the past which is always in the present is only a sectional past and not the whole of it.

The common-sense interpretation presupposes the primacy of both Nature and Society to the individual spirit—a primacy that Croce denies. For him, Nature and Society are false abstractions from the Life of Spirit and, therefore, the term historical determinism cannot mean anything else excepting the self-determination of the Spirit by itself. This, however, was not the argument. The second line gained its plausibility only because it meant something on the empirical-natural level. The "definite individual at a definite point of time and space and in definite conditions" is a natural-empirical individual involving and presupposing natural-empirical notions of 'time', 'space' and 'conditions'. Without that the phrase is meaningless; there is no *definite* individual as distinguished from other individuals, no distinct time, space and conditions abstracted from the Living Life of a Transcendent Spirit which determines itself.

The second line of argument, if valid, would thus undermine Croce's system. Not only this, it would not even prove the identity of History and Philosophy, for to be valid the argument must assume the priority of Society to History and of Nature to Society. The identity of intuition and expression may have been valid, but not identity of 'thought' with the 'object thought about'.

However, the problem posed by the double fact that the concept of History or even History itself can be the subject of philo-

sophical thought and that this itself is merely a historic occurrence in a chain of occurrences—remains unsolved. The first is the non-historical attitude of the 'transcendental reduction'; the second, the unreduced natural-empirical attitude of the normal individual. Philosophy, for Husserl, starts only when the natural-empirical attitude has been given up. For Croce, the problem is no problem, for the individual moment of intuition is inevitably presupposed and involved in the Pure Concept. This, however, is not a solution but an evasion, for the individuality of the intuition and the universal forms of the Pure Concept remain essentially separate. The individual intuition does not need a concept—a fact which Croce himself admits. The essential forms of the Pure Concept do not have, on the other hand, the individuality of any intuition on their part. Any theoretic knowledge must, of course, have both. The *synthetic a priori* is, of course, the very presupposition of knowledge, though we certainly do not know what is the synthetic in this very piece of knowledge. But even if it be so, it only proves that all Knowledge is Knowledge and not Philosophy or History or Science or Mathematics. Of course, one has the liberty to define Philosophy or History in one's own manner, but, if so, then it is merely a terminological affair and does not affect the difference between Philosophy and History. Further, if History means an *a priori* synthetic judgment, then all knowledge is History—a statement no better than a superfluous tautology.

The two fundamental attitudes do not deny each other. The one merely supersedes the other. The natural-empirical-historical attitude arises only when the subject is regarded as an object; but the moment the foundational centrality of the self is realised, the second attitude arises. The relation between the temporal and the non-temporal is the essence of the problem. It may be dismissed as an abstraction, and thus be regarded as no problem at all. But it is forgotten that all problems are abstract. In reality, there are no problems; they exist only for a self-conscious mind which seems to feel two incompatible propositions to be equally necessitated. The philosopher has generally regarded the foundational non-temporal centrality of the self as of *deciding importance*, while the scientist and the historian—more interested in the philosopher as object rather than themselves as subject—have, on their part, felt the *utter unimportance* of the so-called trans-temporal subjectivity of the philosopher when they saw him as one among a chain, preceded and succeeded by other thinkers. The notion of 'importance', however, is difficult to elucidate. What

can clearly be seen is the fact that both 'importances' can be and have been held. They seem to be mutually exclusive and though one can easily deny the one or the other, it would be only because of a bias and not because there is sufficient ground for doing so.

Whatever it be, the identity of Philosophy and History involves a re-interpretation of the concept of History in such a sense as to lose all its distinct meaning. Even here, philosophy retains its distinctness, for the forms of the Pure Concept have no temporality about them. The Categories of Kant, the Dialectic of Hegel, the Forms of Croce are all essentially unhistorical in character. To conceive, therefore, of Philosophy as identical with History is wrong, though, History, like all other sciences, can set problems to Philosophy. Philosophy may be treated as a chapter in Sociology, or History, or Psychology, or perhaps, even Physiology. But then it would not be Philosophy but psychology, sociology, history or physiology. One may be interested in those cross-sections and one may even come to regard them as most important; but that would be no justification for reducing all studies to the one which one regarded as most important.

The problem of validity is entirely different from the historical accuracy of the 'what' of a judgment made by anyone, though, of course, the 'what' must be determinable with sufficient accuracy before the question of validity can be raised at all. That somebody, say Aristotle, thought in a certain way is no ground for the correctness or validity of what he thought. Otherwise, everything would become equally valid or invalid—a conclusion that would destroy the very basis of thought itself.

Philosophy, therefore, is identical neither with its own History nor with History in general. In other words, the philosophical problems raised by the statement 'Brutus killed Caesar' are entirely different from the historical problems raised by it. For the philosopher, some other sentence, say, 'Hamlet killed Polonius' would equally suffice. But such can never be the case with a historian. The whole historical evidencing for the establishment of the proposition is completely irrelevant for the philosopher's purpose. In fact, the philosopher's discussion does not require the mention of any specific person at all; it would be satisfied with the statement of the form 'A killed B' where A and B represented any person. He may not even be interested in the relation 'killed' but only in the 'ed' part of it *i.e.*, in the notion of the past which distinguishes it from the present and the future. The names of Caesar and Alexander occur in Croce's writing, but do they occur as in a book of History *i.e.*, as unalterable and irre-

placeable? No—and, in fact, it could never be, for Croce is not concerned with the historic individual called Alexander but merely with some illustration which may clarify what he wishes to mean.

History, like all other knowledge, involves the Pure Concepts, for it cannot become knowledge without involving them. But unlike both Science and Philosophy, it is concerned with the intrinsically individual—that which never recurs, the unrepeatable. Art, having the intrinsic individuality of intuition, is not controlled by anything excepting the logic of Imagination. History, however, has an objective control, though more tenuous than in Science. Further, being a theoretic knowledge, it essentially uses the concept, both pure and pseudo, because without the one it would not be knowledge and without the other it would be not History but Philosophy.

Thus, it stands on the borderlands of Art on the one hand and Science and Philosophy on the other. Concerned theoretically with the intrinsically individual not in its immediacy, but in its temporality, it can concern itself with Science, Art or Philosophy, for they too, as thought in the mind of a thinker, have an individuality and a temporality. When it confines itself to a single person, we call it biography; when it deals with groups or societies in their individual temporality, we call it History. To think of Philosophy as History is, therefore, wrong for though philosophy has had a History, yet that history is a history of Philosophy and not, say, of Physics or of Biology or of the Roman Empire. There must, therefore, be some distinctive subject-matter of Philosophy; otherwise it could not have a history of its own as distinct from the histories of other subjects.

CHAPTER XI

EXISTENTIALISM

The centrality of the Self revealed by the 'transcendental reduction' and the problem of temporality brought into focus by discussions on the relation between Philosophy and History, seem almost to be directional pointers to the movement in philosophy known as 'Existentialism'. The Self that was revealed as central does not seem to be merely a knowing Self, but primarily a Self that wills—a Self that has the form of time, at least in its aspect as the future, within itself. This 'future' is, however, a valuational future. The problem of Self, Value and Time is, thus, once again re-opened—but, this time, not on the level of knowing, but on that of willing.

The problem of 'willing the good' has been a continuous pre-occupation of philosophy alongside that of 'knowing the Real'. Yet, there always have been philosophers who have been more interested in the one than in the other. Plato, at the very beginning, was equally interested in both and, following Socrates, thought that 'knowing the real' would inevitably lead to 'willing the good', for the real and the valuational were identical to his mind. In general, philosophers were, however, more interested in knowing the real and tended to *assume* that the real would inevitably be good and that the knowledge of the good would necessarily result in willing it as well.

Sometimes, the good in the sense of values has even been taken as a clue to the determination of the nature of the real. Even Kant could think only of the 'practical reason' as the way out of the impasse created by 'pure reason'. At other times, as in Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, the clue to reality has been found in 'the Will', though the Will admitted by them was, in no sense, the will that willed the good. Kierkegaard, like Kant before him, saw the deep relation of the will to choice while Nietzsche discovered the creative aspect of choice which, just because it is choice, creates value. Kant however, did not see the non-rationality of Freedom as evidenced in the fact of choice, for to him Freedom consisted in willing according to the pure form of reason and not otherwise. Thus he missed altogether the essential indeterminacy, which Kierkegaard has called the fact of the 'leap'. Nietzsche,