

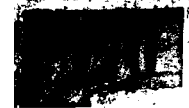
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Philosophical
Quarterly

July



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THE
PHILOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY

Vol. XXX, No. 2]

[July, 1957



AN ORGAN

OF

THE INDIAN INSTITUTE OF PHILOSOPHY

AND

THE INDIAN PHILOSOPHICAL CONGRESS

Managing Editor :
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421

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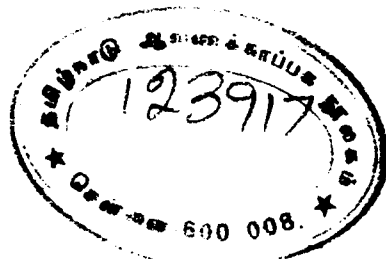
Yearly Subscription Rs. 4
For Congress Members Rs. 3
Foreign 8 Shillings or 2 Dollars. Single copy Re. 1/8 or 3 Shillings

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Q.M. 2, N 25

157-30-2



THE PHILOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY

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Dialectical Consciousness

By

G. R. MALKANI

It is a well-known fact that Western philosophy emphasises reason and Indian philosophy emphasises intuition as a method of knowledge. There is a lot of misunderstanding about this. It is supposed that there is no place for reason in Indian philosophy and that therefore it is not pure philosophy. We propose to remove this misunderstanding. Our thesis is that reason is not a method of knowledge in philosophy at all, and that it is helpless without intuition. There must be a method therefore by which we could directly intuit reality, and then there would be scope for reason.

Reason can only give *certain* knowledge when it is deductive in its procedure. But then it must start from certain clear ideas of reason not derived from experience or from certain intuitions of reason that cannot be doubted. This, however, is not possible. A mere idea of reason, however clear, remains only an idea. It proves nothing about reality. An intuition of reason, if it claims objectivity, cannot be undoubted. The result is that any purely rational system becomes more or less dogmatic. The reaction against dogmatism naturally takes the form of the dialectical consciousness.

Dialectical consciousness may briefly be described as critical consciousness. It is the consciousness of the inadequacy of all world-views, or the consciousness of the inadequacy of categories of thought to describe the nature of reality, or lastly the consciousness of the inadequacy of reason as such to give us knowledge

of reality. The dialectical consciousness, however, has invariably a positive purpose. It seeks to give some positive guidance about the nature of reality.

Kant used the dialectical form of argument in his Critique of Pure Reason. He first of all showed the limitation of our knowledge. It was knowledge of what could be sensibly intuited. This knowledge presupposed certain concepts of the understanding which were valid not absolutely, but only with respect to possible sensible experience. Our reason, however, could not rest there. It sought to go beyond possible experience to the thing-in-itself, and raised certain ultimate questions having reference to the latter. How are these questions to be answered? The only way to answer them was to extend the application of the concepts of the understanding to the thing-in-itself. The result was antinomies. If the thesis could be proved, the antithesis could also be proved for equally good reasons. Thus it could be shown that the employment of the concepts of the understanding for the solution of ultimate metaphysical questions gave rise only to antinomies and so to conflicts in reason.

Kant used the dialectic to show that any use of the categories of the understanding beyond their legitimate sphere of possible experience was bound to give rise to transcendental illusions. The concept of substance, the concept of cause and the concept of a necessary being are all mere concepts valid in experience. When we seek to go beyond the legitimate use of the concepts and seek to prove from them the nature of reality as it is in itself,—e.g., reality consists of simple ultimate substances, the world as a whole has a super-natural cause, the necessary being or God exists,—we are really suffering from certain transcendental illusions. We may dialectically correct our false beliefs in the matter and expose the illusions, but we cannot quite prevent reason from indulging in these self-created illusions. They are likely to continue. Such is our human nature. We must therefore regard these metaphysical concepts of God, freedom and immortality as regulative ideas of reason only. They have no theoretical value for knowledge. We must therefore seek their justification elsewhere. An analysis of our moral consciousness shows that these beliefs are not altogether wrong or valueless. We cannot dispense with them on moral grounds. They are in fact necessary here. The dialectic has served the purpose of safeguarding their essential truth. It has denied knowledge in order to make room for faith, which is no less important than knowledge in our total experience. The dia-

lectic as a way of criticising wrong arguments and showing up the transcendental illusions of reason has served a positive purpose.

Hegel also has used the dialectic. He evidently wanted to make Kant self-consistent and more of a rationalist than he actually was. If the thing-in-itself could not be known, it could not be posited either. Our experience was confined to what was given. That was all the reality there was. But in our knowledge of this reality there was an element which was purely sensuous, and there was an element which was purely rational. The purely sensuous element was by its very nature indeterminate. The indeterminate however could not as such be known. To know anything is to determine it. The indeterminate is therefore as good as nothing. It can be ignored. It has no ontological value. What is left of reality is the element of reason. The real is therefore the rational, and vice-versa. But what is the content of the rational? Has reason any content at all which could be known? It is Hegel's view that Reason has a content and a constitution of its own which we could know apriori and without any reference to experience. Reason lays itself out before us. We have merely to turn the eye of reason towards itself and all the secrets of reason will reveal themselves to it. How is this to be done? Through a method which is inherent in reason itself. It is the dialectical method.

Kant started arbitrarily by giving a catalogue of categories abstracted from types of formal judgment. Hegel wanted to go about this business more scientifically. For this, what was wanted was a starting point and a method. He found the starting point in the most universal and the most empty concept of "being". Nothing could reject *being*, and yet *being* did not stand for any specific content which could be known. *Being* taken by itself was so empty that it was indistinguishable from non-being, and led on to it. The two concepts were distinguished and yet united in the concept of becoming. This was the method of the dialectic. It was the method of negation. Analyse a concept of reason. It is found to imply its own negation. To annul the contradiction which thus arises, we are impelled by reason itself to recognise a higher concept which synthesises the thesis and the antithesis and thus removes their contradiction. The truth of both is retained in the synthesis, only their opposition is eliminated and transcended. In this way, the idea of reason becomes more and more inclusive, more and more stable, till at last it becomes adequate to the whole of reality and nothing can fall outside of it to contradict it. It then becomes the Absolute Idea. The Absolute Idea is both sub-

ject and object. It is subject that knows itself as object, so that there is nothing foreign to it or outside of it which it knows. It is a true form of self-consciousness.

This whole dialectical process laboriously constructed really leads nowhere. It is based upon an abstraction. By giving up the thing-in-itself, we have lost the very basis of objectivity. Whatever is known is to a subject and it is nothing in-itself. Still, what is known is something *concrete* or *real*, not a mere idea. Then comes another abstraction. The sensible is to be dropped as something indeterminate and so unreal. What is left are pure categories of thought. Can they be equated with reality or with self-subsistent being? Knowledge can only be of *reality* or the *self-subsistent*. And yet it is difficult for any-one to admit that the Hegelian categories have this character. They are no more than ideas which are thought; and what is thought is always abstract, non-self-subsistent and mental. It is to be distinguished from objective reality. It is not what we can be said literally to know.

The great merit of the Hegelian dialectic is that it exposes the inadequacy and the one-sidedness of every concept. No concept can therefore be self-complete or a whole. And yet strangely, Hegel contradicts himself when he brings in his Absolute Idea as the culmination of his dialectical process and as an idea which is not further open to criticism. That is very arbitrary. The Absolute Idea is still only an idea to us. To prove from this idea the objective reality of the idea is reverting to the ontological argument which Kant denounced; and to regard this idea as really absolute, so that its negation has no meaning, is for Hegel to contradict his dialectical principle. No mere idea can be adequate to reality or free from contradiction, when it is universalised to embrace all reality.

This is what the Mādhyamika Buddhists showed who also made use of the dialectic. The mādhyamikas were most thoroughgoing in their use of the dialectic. Every concept, every world-view and every construction of thought was shown to involve self-contradiction. They constructed what is called *catuṣkoṭi*, the four-fold division,—it is, it is not, it both is and is not, it neither is nor is not. Every assertion can be put in one of these four divisions, and it can then be shown that it contradicts itself. If it is a positive assertion, we can show that it implies its own negation. If it is a negative assertion, we can show that it implies a positive assertion. Nothing, again, can be really both; and what is

neither is nothing at all. In this way, they rejected all constructions of thought imposed upon reality and all world-views. When this negative process is completed and thought is silenced, this very thought is transformed into what may be called the intellectual intuition of reality. This intuition is not of reality, but one with reality, and so reality itself. We realize the ideal of not-two or *advaya*.

Kant's dialectic closed the theoretical enquiry into metaphysical questions, but paved the way for faith in metaphysical entities on the basis of practical reason. It had therefore only a negative value. It dispelled illusions of metaphysical knowledge, but did not lead on to any positive knowledge. It was a negative dialectic only.

Hegel's dialectic was positive. Negation was employed as a method to get at the rational knowledge of ultimate truth. The dialectic was integrally related to this truth, and led on to it by an inner necessity. The dialectic thus became *the means* of true knowledge.

Bradley's dialectic was once again negative. It merely criticised and showed up self-contradictions. For actual knowledge a positive rational construction of Absolute Truth was necessary. Thus both Hegel and Bradley exceeded the critical function of the dialectic, and did not turn their dialectic against their own speculative systems. To this extent, their dialectic was deficient, and they were both dogmatic in their use of the rational method.

The mādhyamika was different in his approach from all these thinkers. For the mādhyamika the dialectic was everything. It was universal in its scope. At the same time, it was not only negative, but also positive, in significance. In its negative aspect, it criticised all mere constructions of thought and all speculative systems based on supposed reason. It spared no system. It gave no room to dogmatism anywhere. It was through and through critical. But it did not stop with a negative attitude. That too was an intellectual attitude to things which needed to be criticised. The maturation of criticism thus transformed itself into positive knowledge. The dialectic became the only way to the truth. It had a negative as well as a positive function.

How a negative attitude to all thought-constructions can transform itself into a positive enlightenment is however a difficult question to answer. All we can surmise is that the complete ne-

gation of all attitudes, both positive and negative, on the part of thought, and therefore the abolition of thought in its discursive or relational aspect, is followed by a subtle spiritual culture or discipline called yoga, whereby thought is integrated to a reality which is above and beyond thought and becomes thereby informed and enlightened by that reality. Thought has here ceased to mediate, to relate and to use concepts or categories. Since it is directly informed by reality, it has in that sense become *intuitive*. Only this intuition on the part of thought is not brought about through conscious thinking or through any recognised method of knowledge, but through unconscious suggestion as in all spiritual disciplines. It is accordingly not knowledge in the proper sense of the term, but more akin to an achievement of a state of being through the will or what is called *samādhi* in yogic literature. Thus the dialectic is crowned by a non-dialectical activity on the part of the will. Mere dialectic *cannot* achieve a positive result, unless thought turns dogmatic and so hostile to the dialectical spirit.

We now come to a new form of the dialectic. Vedānta is not often understood to be dialectical; or if it is dialectical, it is so with regard to other systems, not with regard to itself,—for it has a system of its own. Now our contention is that Vedānta is dialectical in the sense that it criticises all speculative systems and all positive philosophical constructions arrived at *through reason*. In this it is at one with the *mādhyaṃika*. But it differs from the latter in an important respect. While both share equally the distrust in speculative reason, the *mādhyaṃika* provides no *theoretic* way to the truth, but only a way that is practical or the way of the will. The theoretic activity of the *mādhyaṃika* ends with universal criticism. After that thought has no further guidance, no symbolism which it can use to find its way to truth. It is perforce obliged to follow the practical discipline of the will and just stop thinking. It is not so with Vedānta. When all speculative systems fail us, truth must not fail us; and truth is a matter of the theoretic consciousness. What then is the theoretic alternative to speculative thought? Vedānta says, as against the *mādhyaṃika*, that if speculative thinking cannot lead to the truth, nor can any dialectical thinking or mere criticism. Knowledge is only possible through some method of knowledge or *pramāṇa*, which can remove ignorance. You may criticise these methods, but you must first accept them. It is only when they are found through internal evidence to be incompetent, you can reject them. But if you reject some of these methods, there must be some other method of

knowledge which is true and reliable. If there is no such method, true knowledge itself is not possible. The dialectic is no method of knowledge. It is a negative instrument for exposing error. It cannot itself lead to the truth.

Vedānta accepts the word or *śrūti* as *the only* reliable *pramāṇa* in matters of the super-sensible. If this is not acceptable, there must be some other positive way of knowing the higher truth. Reason in any known form of its activity is no such way. But if that is so, the authority of *śrūti* must be accepted as a means to knowledge. In the sphere of action, its authority is necessarily dogmatic. It may therefore be accepted or even rejected. It depends very much upon the sweet will of the individual and the quality of his faith in the scripture. This however cannot be said where *śrūti* is adopted as a means to knowledge. Here the acceptance of *śrūti* as the way is provisional only. It must be justified in real knowledge which cannot be disputed on its own account and can be shown to be self-evidently true. Thus no trace of dogmatism is left in our acceptance of *śrūti*. This way of knowledge has accordingly to be tried before it is criticised. Does it lead to the truth-consciousness or not? Only when it fails can we reject it. We do the same with regard to other methods of knowledge.

It might now be asked, does Vedānta have a system which is proof against criticism? Now we must remember that Vedānta is not primarily a system of philosophy, but a way of knowledge. The truth which it seeks to know is beyond thought and speech. There is therefore no formulation of it which is literally true to it. It is literally inexpressible. When therefore we seek to express this truth in language, the expression cannot be literally justified. It is a fundamental thesis of Vedānta that what can be *meant* is some kind of object and necessarily finite in character. Truth is not finite. It is therefore beyond all meaning. It is what cannot be meant or meant only as unmeant. But if that is the nature of ultimate truth, it is an ideal of truth which is yet to be known. What we at present know is opposed to it in nature. This necessitates a conceptual scheme which *symbolises* the truth without literally meaning it, and which also intelligibly relates it to the known facts of our present experience. The so-called Vedāntic system of philosophy is thus only a means to an end. It is not the end itself. It is not literally true. If taken literally and in a purely logical way, which is the way appropriate only to thought-contents and literal meanings, it is open to grave objections. The

dialectic can be turned against it. This is what the Mādhyamikas have done. It thus shares the fate of all systems adumbrated by reason in its search for objective truth. But this is the wrong way to take the philosophy of Vedānta. It is not a system which claims to be literally and objectively true. It is only a symbolism for a higher truth which cannot be literally expressed, but which yet must be expressed for the sake of communication. If Brahman is the only reality, how are we to know it and communicate this knowledge to others? Again, if Brahman is the only reality, how is it related to the apparent world? These and other similar questions can only be resolved at the level of thought. The Vedāntic system seeks to answer them appropriately at that level. The truth of the system however hangs upon the nature of reality itself, which is self-revealing, and not reached through any reasoning. It is symbolically pointed out to us by the word of revelation, which is the only pramāṇa or method of knowledge here.

In Vedānta, we do not proceed through the dialectic to the truth. The dialectic is purely negative. It is not a method of knowledge. Where it is so conceived, it either contradicts itself and turns dogmatic, or it requires a non-dialectical or conative activity to supervene upon the negative dialectic. The Vedāntic way is just the reverse,—not through the dialectic to the truth, but through the truth to the dialectic. Once the truth is known through other means which are appropriate to it, we can put the dialectic to use against all systems of philosophy which claim to be rational and true. No system can withstand criticism. The dialectic thus rounds off and confirms a truth otherwise achieved.

Every system may be said to have its own logic; and that logic is quite sufficient for its own purposes. Different systems have different logics. But all these logics can be repudiated either through internal contradictions to which they lead or through wrong suppositions. The very fact that one logic is countered by another shows that many logics are equally possible, and that no logic is *the logic* which gives us *the truth*. Each may be strong in its own way, if we grant its presuppositions and its procedures; but we need not grant these, and then the logic ceases to be an instrument of truth. The only alternative to this arbitrariness of logic is to go beyond all logic and to apprehend a truth which is a-logical. Once this is done, a logic can be devised in conformity with this truth and deriving its strength from the latter; and although it will not prove the truth, it can certainly challenge all objections against it and refute them. The Vedāntic logic has this

limited scope. It is negative in character. It can meet all counter arguments. Its own position is impregnable only in the sense that it has the support of a truth which is a-logical, and known intuitively or directly with the aid of the word of revelation. This intuition being given, no logic can avail against it, while a logic in conformity with it can meet all possible objections.

Vedānta occupies this impregnable position. Its truth, being known directly and intuitively, has the character of absolute certainty. Its dialectic can then be used with devastating effect against any system which is a mere thought-construction or a theory based upon imagination. Intuition is one thing and imagination another. Any system different from Vedānta must prove its *bona-fides* in the truth-consciousness. Can there be many systems which have this character? That is the challenge of Vedānta. However that be, Vedānta is a system which is not a system. It does not stand by a rigid system. It stands only by the truth which cannot be literally expressed, but only symbolised by a system. If one form of system is not acceptable, another may be substituted for it—*so long as it symbolises the truth and is a convenient form of argument against certain opponents*. The system can be adjusted, but not the truth. The system is not sacrosanct—but truth is. How we get at the Absolute Truth is the question of Vedānta. It finds it in certain statements of śrūti when they are rightly interpreted. The dialectical consciousness may be universal—but truth-consciousness is greater than it and supersedes it. Only the truth-consciousness can wield the dialectic effectively, purposively and constructively. Short of this consciousness, the dialectic is bound to be barren.

The Principle of Verification

By

PROF. A. JHA

Patna University, Patna

Though much has been written both for and against the principle of verification, since it came to be propounded by the logical positivists, it will not be out of place here to discuss a few salient features of this principle and their implications in view of its prestige and wide influence in the world of Philosophy.

Let us now begin with the formulation of this principle. "The principle of verification is supposed to furnish a criterion by which it can be determined whether or not a sentence is literally meaningful."¹ A statement, according to this school, "is literally meaningful if it is either analytic or empirically verifiable."² The question now naturally arises as to what the term "verifiable" means. Ayer has, to start with, made a distinction between a 'strong' and a 'weak' sense of the term "verifiable". "A proposition is said to be verifiable in the strong sense of the term, if and only if its truth could be conclusively established in experience; but that it is verifiable, in the weak sense, if it is possible for experience to render it probable."³ At a later stage he comes to realise that no empirical proposition can be conclusively verified in experience and so he comes to adopt only the weak sense of the term for his principle of verification. This shift from the strong sense of the term to the weak sense as the only sense of the term reminds one of the inherent contradiction of the empirical position which reduces all knowledge to the status of bare probabilities and possibilities.

Ayer goes to the extent of saying "that the truth of any such proposition was never conclusively established and that it never could be; for however strong the evidence in its favour, there would never be a point at which it was impossible for further ex-

1. Ayer—*Language, Truth and Logic*, p. 5.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

perience to go against it."⁴ So according to this criterion a statement is verifiable and therefore meaningful, 'if some possible sense experience would be relevant to the determination of its truth or falsehood.' Ayer seems to be very much conscious of the weakness of his own position and he makes himself very vulnerable. He speaks of "some possible sense experience." Such a possible sense-experience is definitely meant to be an experience in space and time. The span of space and time being limitless (I avoid the use of the word 'infinite'), such a "possible sense-experience" may never actualise, and the statement may never be verified even in the weak sense of the term and as such may never become meaningful. Moreover, if the verifiability and so the meaningfulness of a statement depend on some possible sense-experience relevant to its truth or falsehood, the criterion fails as the criterion of distinction between meaningful and meaningless statements. How can any one dare declare a statement to be nonsensical or meaningless unless he claims to be one who has the experience of the entire range of all possible sense-experience? Is it possible then, for a human being to accept some statement as meaningful and some as meaningless on the basis of this criterion? How can any statement be declared as meaningless, because some possible sense-experience which has not become actual may be relevant to the determination of its truth or falsehood?

Moreover, this criterion is not free from the subjectivism which is inherent in empiricism. Space-time being a continuous series, and sense-experiences being inter-connected with one another, how can one cut out a segment and declare it to be relevant? To whom and to which situation is it relevant? The question of relevance will arise only if psychological elements such as personal purpose and motives are introduced. In that case the statement becomes entirely personal and as such subjective. The same statement may be meaningful for one and entirely meaningless for another. It may, however, have the same meaning, "if and when a situation arouses practically the same interests in a number of men."⁵ In that case the linguistic analysis of a statement defeats its own purpose, and we are left without any objective criterion to determine its meaningfulness or meaninglessness. The subjectivism of this position becomes still more marked when one analyses the term "sense-experience". Sense-experience is

4. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

5. Schiller—*Logic for use*, p. 249.

always the sense-experience of some-one endowed with senses. Any experience gained through the senses comes under the category of sense-experience, and as such illusions, hallucinations and such other experiences are all sense-experiences. If some possible sense-experience is the only determinant of the truth or falsehood of a meaningful statement, all actual and possible sense-experiences (both illusory and non-illusory) come to have the same status, and the distinction between truth and falsehood becomes meaningless within the realm of one's possible and actual sense-experience. One becomes a prisoner within the four walls of one's own sense-experiences. These being some of the implications of the positivistic criterion, can any criterion be more subjectivistic and solipsistic? A fresh formulation of the Principle, "that a statement is verifiable, and consequently meaningful, if some observation-statement can be deduced from it in conjunction with certain other premises, without being deducible from those other premises alone,"⁶ does not alter the situation.

The more Ayer modifies his position the more confusing he becomes. Every attempt to reach precision and exactitude leads him to a blind alley. He himself comes to realise that this formulation of the principle makes it so liberal that "it allows meaning to any statement whatsoever."⁷

Turning again to the point of subjectivism in Ayer, it is so thorough-going that he seems to be an exclusive prisoner of the present moments of his sense-experience. When the question arises as to the application of the principle of verification to a statement referring to the past or to the future, he seems to fumble. Speaking regarding the propositions about the past he seems to suggest "that they can somehow be translated into propositions about present or future experiences".⁸ The use of the word "somehow" makes it quite clear that he is unable to give us a criterion by means of which propositions about the past can be judged to be meaningful. He becomes very apologetic when he says that "if one is justified in saying that events which are removed in space are observable, in principle, the same may be said of events which are situated in the past."⁹ So the application of the

6. Ayer—*Language, Truth and Logic*, p. 11.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 19.

principle to the past is dependent on such an "if", the fulfilment of which is itself doubtful.

The source of this difficulty lies in the whole of the empirical position. It appears that Ayer also takes sense-experiences to be completely discrete and atomic, and as such it becomes difficult for him to weave the past, present and future into one continuous series. He should have looked for the solution in a direction other than that of empiricism; but the bogey of idealism prevents him from doing so. Bradley gives an answer to this difficulty when he says, "The ideal world of spaces beyond the sensible space, and of times not present but past and future, fastens itself on to the actual world by fastening itself to the quality of the immediate this. In a single word continuity of the content is taken to show identity of element".¹⁰

"The here and now in which the real appears, are not confined within simply discrete and resting moments. They are any portion of that continuous content with which we come into direct relation."¹¹ Had the empiricists, including Ayer, taken the past to be an ideal construction connected with the present on the basis of the identity of quality and content, the difficulty with regard to the propositions about the past would not have arisen. Bradley very correctly points out that "it is wholly unjustifiable to take up a complex, to do any work we please upon it by analysis and then simply predicate as an adjective of the given these results of our abstraction".¹² He further says that "the whole that is given us is a continuous mass of perception and feeling; and to say of this whole, that any one element would be what it is there, when apart from the rest, is a very grave assertion."¹³ It is unfortunate that Ayer in his enthusiasm for the principle of verification and in his abhorrence of Idealism does not realise the gravity. That is why his principle of verification is caught in a chain of "ifs" as a result of which not a single statement can be declared either as meaningful or as meaningless.

A similar conclusion is forced on us when we take into consideration Ayer's account concerning the experiences of others. Explaining his position with regard to this problem he says that

10. Bradley—Principles of Logic, p. 72.

11. Bradley—Principles of Logic, p. 56.

12. *Ibid.*, p. 95.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 95.

"just as I must define material things and my own self in terms of their empirical manifestations, so I must define other people in terms of their empirical manifestations—that is, in terms of the behaviours of their bodies, and ultimately in terms of sense-contents."¹⁴ So according to him the evidence for a belief in the existence of other selves is the sense-experience that we have about them. 'A' knows that 'B' exists because 'A' has certain sense-experiences of 'B'. Now 'B' may be the cause of various sense-experiences of 'A' at different times and places. 'A' may have similar sense-experiences at different times and places with regard to another self which we suppose to be 'C'. Now if empirical manifestations are the only materials on the basis of which 'A' can define 'C' or 'B', then how can 'A' be in a position to make a distinction between the two series of empirical manifestations of which one belongs to 'A' and the other belongs to 'B'? Empirical manifestation being more or less similar, how can 'A' even assert that empirical manifestations spreading over different times and places belong to one continuous series and the series belongs to 'A'? On the basis of the theory propounded by Ayer, one seems to live in a world of pure *sensa* or sense-experiences, and these sense-experiences are all discrete and atomic, cut off from and disconnected with one another. There does not seem to be any order or unity in the world of experience. There are no centres to which the various series belong or of which they are the empirical manifestations. Such a theory, instead of verifying any statement, falsifies all statements.

In view of these implications of the Principle of Verification one may say that Locke and Berkeley were wiser than the present-day Logical Empiricists. The belief in a substance by Locke is said to be inconsistent with his empiricism. However inconsistent such a belief may be, he at least had the vision to see that bereft of some unifying base the ideas derived from sense-experience would all be merely floating loose. Berkeley posited an infinite spirit, besides the finite ones, to prove the objectivity of our experience. Howsoever inconsistent Berkeley's position may be with his epistemology, he at least could realise that human experience must have an objective basis. The present-day empiricists, unfortunately, have all the vices of the old empiricists but none of their virtues.

14. Ayer—Language, Truth and Logic, p. 130.

Philosophy of History in the Bhagavadgita

By

DR. VISHWANATH PRASAD VARMA, M.A. (PATNA),
M.A. (COLUMBIA), PH.D. (CHICAGO),
*Professor of Political Philosophy,
Patna University, Patna-5.*

1. Introduction

The Bhagavadgita is decidedly one of the greatest of the world's scriptures. For over two millennia it has been the most precious gem in the literary and philosophical masterpieces of the Hindu people. It has been commented upon, studied, recited and revered by generations after generations, and it still commands a tremendous following. It epitomizes in a short compass the spiritual achievements and experiences of the ancient seers, and its conciseness as well as its majestic style have endeared it to the Hindus for centuries. Mystics and sages as well as dialecticians and scholastics have found it a very helpful instrument in their respective pursuits. Since the introduction of Sanskrit studies in Europe this book has won adherents in diverse camps. Idealists, romanticists, theists, Christians and others find words of great meaning in it. William Von Humboldt wrote in a letter to Frederick Von Gentz (1827): "It is propably the most profound and most sublime work the world can show". August Schlegel prepared a critical edition of the text with a Latin translation. Unquestionably, the Bhagavadgita is a great book and the very fact that it has had such a glorious career of surpassing influence over thinkers and masses is a great testimony to the vitality of its message. The Gita, or the divine song as it is called in English, is a unique book in the world in the sense that it combines profundity with a great popular appeal. The dramatic scene of the famous Mahabharata War and the emotional fervour and reverence with which the Hindu mind looks upon Krishna have combined to give this book greater power for influencing the cultural evolution of India. The Gita is synthetic and integral in its approach. It is not sectarian. It does not criticize or condemn, but it reconciles and harmonizes. It does not have the narrow outlook of the fanatical prophet bent upon denouncing whatever appears antagonistic

and antithetical, but it wants to provide the foundation of a large reconciling and synthetic vision and experience. It aims to awaken moral and spiritual consciousness in the minds of men. Even in the modern age of scientific, sceptical and critical intellectualism it has continued to attract persons of diverse cultural and social background. Its intellectual appeal and success make it necessary that its message and teachings should be critically examined and analysed. In the Western countries we find that Plato and Aristotle are being constantly studied, interpreted and commented upon. In India the intellectual influence of the Gita has been comparable to that of Plato in Europe. Besides, the Gita is also a great religious scripture which Plato's dialogues have never been. Hence one does not have to apologize for a new sociological study of this powerful book.

Hitherto the Gita has been discussed as a mystical and metaphysical book. I will try to stress its nature as a philosophy of history. Although the theme of philosophy of history is a new development and has been mainly emphasised in the European continent, still in the older scriptures and classics we can find ideas and notions which bear on the theme of historical causation. In this sense we can say that in books VIII and IX of the *Republic* and Book V of Aristotle's *Politics* we have a philosophy of history. History has been, in this broad sense, always the subject of reflection and philosophical speculation. Sensitive and critical souls, who cannot take things as they are, want to probe into the rationale of things, and they make reflections upon the philosophy of history. In the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* we find attempts to find some meaning behind events, and in one sense we can say that in the Uttarakanda of the *Ramayana* and in the Santi Parva of the *Mahabharata* we have such historical reflections. The basic and fundamental problem of the philosophy of history is social causation. In the ancient classics and scriptures we find an integral approach in the sense that human history is linked up with cosmic history. For us at the present day, strict naturalistic causal investigation of specific social problems has a great appeal. We are living in an era of empiricism and formal and inductive methodology. But the grasp of the ancients was more intuitional and more universal. To them the individual was part of the cosmos. The explanations of social and political events also required the mediation of imponderable spiritual forces. To take an example—the law of *Karma* provides an illustration for the explanation of the details of the happenings in a man's life. Unless we take into

account this cosmic orientation we may fail to understand the philosophy of history in the Bhagavadgita. If we want to find replicas of Buckle, Hegel, Marx and Spengler we shall be disappointed, but if we want to know the fundamental conception of historical motivation we certainly can find something relevant to our purpose. Since the Gita offers a spiritual interpretation of history, it is necessary to have in mind its basic metaphysical conceptions.

2. *Metaphysical Foundations of the Gita's Philosophy of History.*

According to the Gita the conception of a primordial spiritual being is central. This spiritual being is to be intuitively perceived, felt and realized. This supracosmic agency is called Brahman, and since the Rigveda it has been the dominant category of Indian philosophy. In the principal Upanishads there is great stress on the attributeless and indeterminate character of this supernal being, although in some of the Upanishads there is to be found the tendency to conceive of the absolute as being the perfection of all noble attributes. The Gita accepts the conception of the attributeless spiritual being, but for purposes of religious devotion it conceives of that as a personal lord. In its conception of the Purushottama it posits a being even higher in status than the impersonal absolute. The Purushottama is beyond the *Akshara Purusha*. The Indian mind takes peculiar delight in conceiving of the simultaneous presence of antagonistic attributes in the supreme being. By regarding the supreme as both near and far, motionless and active, internal and external, it wants to indicate the inadequacy of logical categories to comprehend a being beyond the bounds of logic. By a queer logic, although the Purushottama is the supreme being, still he is supposed to be embodied as Krishna, the divine incarnation. The Gita is emphatic in stating that there is both a manifested and an unmanifested aspect of the absolute, but it is difficult to understand how the supreme Purushottama who is beyond even the supracosmic impersonality of the Vedantic Absolute can be embodied in a human form. It is possible to accept the presence of divine consciousness in men; it is also possible to accept that some human beings can have their life raised to great exalted heights, but to conceive that Krishna represents the fullness and the plenitude of supracosmic transcendence is a little puzzling. But this conception of Purushottama, although difficult from the logical standpoint even for those who accept a spiritual view of the world, is significant for the exposition of the Gita's philosophy of history. The notion of the human embodiment of the divine being invests history with a fundamental worth and

significance. Human life, the political world and the cosmos are not figments of imagination or temporary and transient illusions, but are expressions of the supreme spirit. The universe receives its meaning from being a spiritual laboratory for divine experimentations. The conception of the embodiment of the divine Purushottama stresses the notion of divine humanity. The *Avatara* is the meeting point of the human and the divine. He combines the transcendental unmanifested potentiality and the cosmic concrete actuality. Hence the conception of the Purushottama is supremely important from the standpoint of a spiritual philosophy of history.

The supreme being works through his lower and the higher Prakriti. In the Vedas, we find the conception of a cosmic creative power that is responsible for the being of the mutable universe. The conception of *Prakriti* provides the spiritual dialectic according to the Gita. "Earth, water, fire, air, space, mind, understanding and egoism, this is my nature divided eightfold. But this is a lower form of my nature, and higher than this which is animate...and by which this universe is upheld. Know that all things have these (for their source). I am the producer and the destroyer of the whole universe. There is nothing else...higher than myself; all this is woven upon me, like numbers of pearls upon a thread." In the thirteenth chapter of the Gita the Prakriti is called the Kshetra and the supreme spirit is regarded as inhabiting the various bodies as the knower of the Kshetra. "The great Brahman (i.e. Prakriti) is a womb for me, in which I cast the seed. From that...is the birth of all things. Of the bodies...which are born from all wombs, the (main) womb is the great Brahman, and I (am) the father, the giver of the seed." This conception of Prakriti as the creative power of God and acting ultimately under his direction is a partial synthesis of the notion of Vedantic God and the Sankhya theory of the Prakriti as an unmanifested undifferentiated potential of cosmic multiplicity and diversification. This conception of the Prakriti as the divine executive agency adds additional worth to history and the universal theatre of human activity, because in its ultimate sources the universe is regarded as being impelled by powerful spiritual forces. The two conceptions of the Avatara and Prakriti impart a dynamic significance to history, because the universe is not an illusion but is invested with spiritual significance. In other words, we can say that the notions of the *Avatara* and *Prakriti* bridge the gulf between supracosmic utter transcendence and impersonality on the one side and mere mechanism and blind operation on the other. Thus the universe

comes to have an organic spiritual connection, and thereby it receives a meaning. From the supreme being, through the Avatara and spiritual Prakriti, to the pulsation of the forces and events of the physical world, there is a supreme connecting link. In its cosmological explanations the Gita stresses this notion of interconnectedness. "Those who know a day of Brahman to end after one thousand ages, and the night to terminate after one thousand ages, are the persons who know day and night. On the advent of day, all perceptible things are produced from the unperceived; and on the advent of night they dissolve in that same (principle) called the unperceived. This same assemblage of entities, being produced again and again, dissolves on the advent of night and . . . issues forth on the advent of day without a will of its own. But there is another entity, unperceived and eternal, and distinct from this unperceived (principle), which is not destroyed when all entities are destroyed. It is called the unperceived, the indestructible; they call it the highest goal." Hence according to the Gita there is the supreme transcendent unmanifest Reality, and there is the unmanifested nature containing the potentials of manifestation. But this latter is not an independent power as in the Sankhya philosophy. It is a power of the same supreme spirit. It is not an independent real, but a dependent power for supreme action in the universe. The very conception of a spiritually operative agency provides a powerful spiritual orientation to history and the cosmos. It is Prakriti which holds and provides the foundation for the antagonisms, contradictions and alienations of men, and which imparts the opportunities for their development and growth by its immanent vital power. Hence it is clear that the Gita not only discusses mysticism and transcendental metaphysics, but it provides a meaning to material and vital action by positing a spiritual ontology. It is true that the conception of the spirit, according to the Gita, is not something logical, conceptual, scientific or sociological. It is grounded upon faith; but it is not mere irrational naïve faith. The Gita believes that it is a faith which can be grounded upon inward spiritual realisation produced either by action done in a spirit of dedication, or by spiritual gnosis, or by devotion.

3. Philosophy of History in the Bhagavadgita

The general normal mentality of man is to accept things as they are or appear to be. It is only when there has occurred some great shock or unexpected change for the worse in human or national history that men begin to reflect upon their destiny. Arjuna

at the time of the beginning of the Mahabharata war is stricken with great sorrow and dejection at the prospect of a fratricidal holocaust. In the ghastly prospect of the civil war he sees the doom of all traditional values and social conventions. He is filled with intense inward agony and anguish of the soul at the thought that there is ahead of him the grim prospect of total social collapse. His recoil is not based upon the spiritual rejection of the transient world, but is the despair of a man of action who is unable to bear the prospects of the grim social and political disaster. This tragic historical context provides the scene and setting for some of the deepest reflections on the destiny of man and society. Arjuna's problem is not the quest of mystical absorption or supramental transformation. He is concerned with social cohesion—a legitimate desire of a fighter and political leader.

It is also clear that what was at stake in the battle was power and sovereignty. The parties were not contesting for the splendours of the spirit but for political triumph and social authority. Hence what was to be decided by the outcome of the war was a political issue, and hence the occasion reminds us of the fight between the Greeks and the Persians, or of Athens and Sparta at the time of the Peloponnesian war. This political scene serves to give a poignant meaning to the philosophy of history of the Bhagavadgita.

a. *Avatara*

One of the dominant conceptions of the Gita's philosophy of history is the Avatara theory. Although not easy of credence, this theory has to be understood for getting an insight into what the Gita has to contribute to the understanding of history. Although the supreme spirit is transcendent from the ultimate standpoint, still for the purpose of the establishment of cosmic righteousness, the spirit descends into humanity. The Avatara is the descent of the divine consciousness into the terrestrial manifestation. Whenever some great principle has to be established and stabilised in the universal evolutionary progression, there is a descent of divine consciousness. But the Gita stresses not this great cosmic purpose of the Avatara, but its social and political purpose. Krishna says that although in his supreme essence the absolute spirit is unborn and imperishable, nonetheless it becomes embodied in order to fulfil a purpose. Whenever there is an ascendancy of the unrighteous and unregenerate forces, then the supporters of this crude and evil way of life have to be uprooted. This is the

negative purpose of the Avatara. But it has also a positive purpose. Whenever there is a decline of the righteous and noble forces, then God incarnates himself for upholding the cause of truth and goodness. The conception that in various ages God incarnates himself for the purpose of maintaining the way of truth and goodness provides a profound optimism. The philosophy of history as enunciated in the Gita is thus a gospel of hope and vitality. It does not teach the mere existence of crisis or decline at certain periods in history, but it asserts that in and through periods of decadence, nihilism, gloom and desperation, the final and eventual triumph of the right and the true is certain. The relation between the final triumph of justice in the world and the existence of the spiritual absolute provides a note of vigorous certainty to the seekers of the noble path. The Avatara is the agency who sanctifies the creed and purpose of a Godward existence. Hence it is evident that the purpose of the Avatara is also sociological in its nature. Just as Arjuna's fears at the time of the great battle were due to the impending prospects of social disaster, so here also Krishna stresses that the upholding of the social order is one of the dominant factors responsible for the human embodiment of the divine. Carlyle stressed the role of heroes in history. Hegel pointed out the role of the "world-historical individuals." The conception of the Avatara and his supreme role in human history implies that the Gita does not assert the mere dynamism of autonomous objective forces in history. It does not uphold the view that the fight between the divergent embodiments of diverse forces will propel the historical structure by itself. On the other hand it believes that the Avatara provides the divine element of synthesis amidst the fluent antagonisms of opposed social and historical forces. Although the Avatara is a divine being, still this conception is in line with those philosophies of history which stress the creative and dominant role of the human leader in historical movements. Hence it is that the Hindu mind throughout its long career of historical vicissitudes has always longed for a divine redeemer at the time of crisis. Not the dialectical resolution of the tension of opposed forces but the incorporation of the supreme divine force into the historical body politic is the only real solution according to the traditional Hindu belief. The conception of the Avatara is thus responsible for the chiliastic and futuristic elements in Hindu sociological thinking.

This conception of the Avatara is, according to me, inadequate for the explanation of human history on two grounds. First, it minimises the role of the social and historical objective forces.

Modern researches and investigations point out that only he can become a great man who has the uncommon foresight to decipher the dominant tendencies of his age and the extraordinary capacity to make himself the spokesman of the force which, although apparently and temporarily weak, is potentially stronger and is oriented to the future. If a man fails to take into consideration the forces of his age he can be an idealist, a visionary, a mystic philosopher or an unsuccessful revolutionary. At times he may become the prophet and seer of a great idea that may become important at a remote day. But to become a dynamic maker of the destiny of nations it is essential that one should identify oneself with the dominant forces of the immediate future. This conception of leadership is not glorification of the powers that be, but it only stresses that the creative leader of nations has to become the spokesman of some great force, otherwise his energies will not bear fruit. Napoleon and Lenin became makers of history because they were the executive agents of forces which were powerful. All the great leaders owe their success to dynamic identification with historical forces. Although the Avatara is also supposed to work with the aid of his Prakriti, still in its sociological setting the notion of Avatara appears to imply the incorporation of an alien and unrelated force in the historical process. But if we could say that the terrestrial success of the Avatara is due to his being the spokesman of the forces of goodness and truth, then this view may sound more plausible. The belief that the Avatara in his divine omnipotence can do what he likes by working miracles may have been acceptable to cruder minds, but for the construction of a spiritual philosophy of history it is necessary to integrate the conception of Avatara with the socio-historical structure.

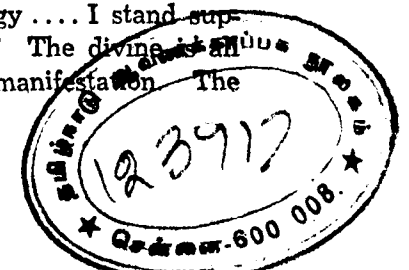
The conception of Avatara is inadequate in another sense also. Empirical investigations of history point out that the historical structure is not the creation of any supernormal agent but of the collective action of billions of human masses in active and dynamic inter-action with the forces of nature. History in other words represents the collective efforts of men to control nature and to organise a more satisfied society planned on rational lines. For an insight into history it is necessary to realise that behind the so-called decisive events there is the cumulative power of human collective agency operating almost with sure and deterministic certainty. Hence for the grasp of historical dynamics it is not only necessary to apotheosize the great event and the great heroic leader, but to stress simultaneously the multiple action of a

vast number of human beings in complex interdependence. The great collective humanity is a mighty galvanizing force and is supremely significant for the historical dynamic. The theory of the Avatara tends to exalt divine omnipotence and neglects the role of human action. If we are to construct a spiritual philosophy of history which will be comprehensive in its scope, we have to acknowledge the significance of cumulative human action along with the force of the divine spirit. If we stress only the latter, we may have a mystical gospel but not a spiritual philosophy of history. In other words, if human beings have behind them spiritual impulsion and themselves are manifestations of the absolute, then a comprehensive spiritual philosophy of history must also accept their creative role.

b. Vibhuti

Another significant element in the Gita's philosophy of history is the conception of Vibhuti. Vibhuti signifies special power or great power. Whatever in the world is mighty, powerful, full of splendour and resplendence is a Vibhuti of God. Although whatever exists in the world owes its ultimate origination to God, still the great and the illustrious and the mighty may be said to manifest the divine power to a greater degree. Hence, according to the Gita, Vishnu, the preserving deity, the sun, the moon, the Sāmaveda, the God Indra, mind, consciousness, Rudra, Kuvera, fire, the mountain Meru, Brihaspati, Skanda, the sea, Bhrigu, the Syllable Om, the sacrifice concentrating on repetition of sacred names, the Himalayas, the tree Asvattha, Narada, Chitraratha, Kapila, the horse Uchchaihsrava, the Airavata elephant, the monarch among men, the fighting weapon Vajra, the divine cow, the god of sex or cupid, Vasuki, Ananta, Varuna, Aryama, Yama, Prahalada, Kala, the lion, the eagle, wind, Rama, the crocodile, Ganges, spiritual metaphysics, the art of argumentation, the letter A, the Dvanda, the protecting deity, death, fame, riches, memory, patience and forgiveness, Brihatsama, Gayatri, Margashirsha, the spring, the game of dice, victory, industry, goodness, Vasudeva, Arjuna, Vyasa, Usana, constraint, diplomacy, silence and knowledge typify the divine Vibhuti among their relevant species. Hence it is clear that the symbols of power and virtues are divine representations. There is no end of the divine Vibhuti, but still it can be said that "whatever thing (there is) of power, of glory, of splendour, know all that to be produced from portions of my energy I stand supporting all this by a single portion of myself." The divine is all and in all, but there are degrees of divine manifestation. The

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philosophy of the Vibhuti is sociologically significant in two ways. First, it simultaneously tends to exalt power and virtue. Thus it provides the philosophy of reconciliation. In human life and history, the element of power indicated by *Tejas* and *Jaya* cannot be negated or minimized. Even the great Mahabharata war itself was fought under the leadership of mighty stalwarts and leaders like Krishna, Bhishma, Drona and Arjuna. But according to the Gita mere *Tejas* and *Jaya* are inadequate. What is needed is their reconciliation with *sattva*. The Gita never prescribes mere efflorescence of the *Rajas*. Action, energy, kinesis and dynamism symbolised by *Rajas* have always to be synthesized with the luminous and virtuous elements. But although the conception of the Vibhuti in the thought-system of the Gita provides a synthesis of vitality and knowledge, still sociologically speaking the element of vitality gets the more ascendant place. In the philosophical systems of India and especially in the Yoga system of Patanjali, Vibhuti signifies supernatural powers attained by penances and Yogic austerities. Hence the selection of a concept primarily signifying power to indicate the terrestrial manifestation of God indirectly stresses the theory of power as a goal. Moreover, from the sociological standpoint, some of the statements in the Vibhuti Yoga chapter of the Gita are socially damaging. For example, the statement "of cheats, I am the game of dice" does not have healthy social connotations. Furthermore, the statements, "I am Rama among those that wield weapons" and "I am the thunderbolt among weapons" may indirectly prepare the foundations of a politics of military power. These latter statements, in any way, will justify our interpretation of at least parts of the Bhagavadgita as incorporating a philosophy of history.

c. *The Visvarupa*

Besides the conceptions of the Avatara and the Vibhuti, the notion that most serves to illustrate the philosophy of history in the Bhagavadgita is the Visvarupa. The Visvarupa is considered by many commentators to be a great theophany. It is regarded as a mystical deep vision capable of being seen and realized by the illuminated eye of the seer and the devotee. From our standpoint, the Visvarupa or the cosmic manifestation in an embodied shape stresses several conceptions which are important for a philosophy of history. First, it emphasizes the aspects of gigantic grandeur, supreme majestic fervour and magnified lustre. It is a fear-inspiring and terror-striking supreme sight. The Cosmic Being shows

terrific powers, almost colossal in their dimensions. This being has multiple hands, countless heads, bellies and feet and big destructive teeth. On all accounts it is a huge being. This aspect of the cosmic being represents static being. But there is also a dynamic aspect of the being. According to the Gita, all the great heroes and leaders are represented as hurling themselves with terrific fury into the mouth of the great being. Bhishma, Drona, Karna and all the mighty protagonists on the side of the Pandavas themselves were rushing into this vast cosmic conflagration. It appears like a gigantic destruction. The Gita says: "And some with their heads smashed are seen (to be) stuck in the spaces between the teeth. As the many rapid currents of a river's waters run towards the sea alone, so do these heroes of the human world enter your mouths blazing all around. As butterflies, with increased velocity, enter a blazing fire to their destruction, so too do these people enter your mouths with increased velocity (only) to their destruction. Swallowing all these people, you are licking them over and over again from all sides, with your blazing mouths. Your fierce splendours, O Vishnu! filling the whole universe with (their) effulgence, are heating it." Thus we see that the cosmic form has both the static and the dynamic aspects. It not only provides the abode and habitation for the great gods and the divine beings and celestial figures, but there is also a ceaseless commotion whereby all the mighty hurl themselves into the mouth of this being. In other words, cosmic death, which is only a symbolic way of representing the element of catastrophic change and mutation, is the dark gloomy inevitable destiny of all. Hence the Gita says that the Godhead is the great force of death and destruction.

The Godhead embodied in human form is Kala, the great destroyer of the worlds. Kala signifies time, the great creator of change and catastrophies. It is the fusion of the past, present and future in an eternal stupendous dynamic simultaneity. It is eternal duration, but with the potentials of the future already actualized in almost a divine realization. Sri Krishna says that even without the agency of Arjuna, those mighty heroes and fighters were going to die. They in a sense were already killed by God. Hence Krishna exhorts Arjuna to get up, fight and enjoy the comforts of a great kingdom. Arjuna is only the agent and the instrument—*Nimitta*. The Godhead had already killed Drona, Bhishma and Jayadratha. Hence there could not be any cause of alarm. Further, Krishna promises sure victory to Arjuna. It is clear from this account that they who try to put a mere mystical or

supramental interpretation on the verses of the Gita are one-sided. Almost all interpreters agree that the *Visvarupa* is the great climatic stage in the entire Gita. The chapter describing the *Visvarupa* is the most inspired and elevated utterance in the entire poem. It is full of seriousness and profundity. This is the great occasion to deliver the supreme message. And the message that is given is that even a great historical and national leader like Arjuna is only an agent and a means for the realization of the great cosmic purpose. The historical reality is gigantic, and in spite of the presence of terrific aspects it is divinely determined in its inward texture. The concept of divine spiritual determinism behind the apparently horrible, grim and tragic aspects of the world implies that even the greatest individual is powerless, too powerless. His greatness lies not in vain and egoistic assertion, but in acting in conformity with the revealed dictates of the divine spirit for the furtherance of its great and supreme world-design. The notion of Kala thus stresses the element of immanent divine teleology in history operating with inevitable and destructive finality.

4. *Social Implications of Spiritual Freedom*

The presence of the immanent divine teleology and the insignificance of human egoistic efforts and claims shows the importance of the Karmayoga in the Bhagavadgita. In the days before the Gita was composed, Karma signified mainly ritualistic actions. The Gita extends the conception of Karma to comprehend all types of action—physical, volitional and mental. When there is the operation of a divine teleology dictating the operative agency of the Prakriti, then the human ego grasping vainly at the consequences of actions does not have much importance. What is necessary is that the human being should not be attached to the fruits following from actions. The human being has a right only to actions, and not to the consequences thereof. The Gita says that creative agency belongs to the three constituent Gunas of Prakriti. The human soul in its inward being is silent and inactive. The realization of the cosmic operativeness of Prakriti generates an attitude of resignation. A man becomes non-attached not only to the consequences, but also to the actions. Behind the actions he traces not the operation of the partial and limited ego, but of the Prakriti which also is a power of God. The human agent therefore refuses to be engrossed in actions. He thinks that he is only one factor in the consummation of Karma. The situational environment as well as the means and the instruments chosen

are not of his creation. He can only to a limited extent make some changes in the allocation of means and ends. Behind all actions and reactions there is the supreme inscrutable force of "Daiva"—the unknown cosmic and supracosmic destiny. I think that to the extent that the Gita stresses the performance of action in a spirit of disinterestedness, surrender to God and for the sake of the benefit of the world, its gospel is of supreme sociological significance. The great social, political and religious leaders were all selfless. Those whose visions are warped by petty passions consume their energies in fruitless work. Only those people who consecrate all their energies on great actions calculated to enhance the good of the world are able to conserve their power and do some great work. Hence in the Indian philosophical and ethical discipline great stress has always been laid on purification, discipline, concentration of energy and on an all-governing faith in the power of the supreme which will guarantee sure and certain victory to the virtuous. According to the Gita, the purification of the will, emotions, affections and sensibilities is necessary. If the passions are let loose they bring havoc. Hence it is extremely essential that there should be a rational governance of the unregenerate elements of man's life. But unlike Kant, the Gita does not teach merely rational universalization of moral conduct. Reason alone cannot provide the universalized categorical imperative. Even reason can be affected by passions. Hence the only necessary antidote to the influence of sensibilities and affections is the power of the spirit. The Gita inculcates the supremacy of the spirit. If spiritual powers are acquired, then the mechanism of nature and the powers of the sensibilities and passions lose their operative vigor. If reliance is placed merely on the egoistic freedom of the will, there is the danger that the lower nature of man may still assert itself. Hence freedom is chimerical unless it is grounded upon the spiritual self. If the powers of the spirit are acquired, then only can the human soul become genuinely transformed and transfigured. Then it can become the real actor, not swayed and dismayed by the actions and affections of the three gunas. Its intellect then becomes stabilized. The Karmayogin becomes almost divine, and he transcends the canons and criteria of conventional mortality. But this transcendence does not amount to a capacity and freedom to trample upon the good and the noble as ordinarily conceived. It does not mean a transgression of the Christian litany of virtues, as was the case with world-historical individuals like Caesar, Frederick and Napoleon. It does not mean a Dionysian transvaluation of values in the sense of the assertion of Antichrist

and a gigantic will-to-power. But it signifies the utter consummation of the good. It means ascent to those heights wherefrom it is not possible to do evil. Going beyond good and evil does not mean the vulgar liberty to engage in evil. If anybody thus interprets the Gita in a grossly sensualistic and vulgar hedonistic sense he fails to grasp the immensity and profundity of the Vedantic teachings. The man of realization of the Gita who has faith in the creative powers of the spirit is acting not in obedience to conventional criteria, but out of the fullness of the spiritual being. It is true that some of the sayings and utterances of the Upanishads and the Gita stress that the man of supreme gnosis is beyond the reach of evil even if he were to do some actions which may seem to contradict the canons of ordinary morality. Some of the Indian ascetic writers also tend to stress this standpoint in order to indicate their superiority to the ethics of the populace. But this type of attitude can be justified only from a metaphorical standpoint. A spiritual metaphysics can never sanction crudeness, vulgarity and the trampling of the good. Hence when the Gita says that if a person, who has conquered the ego-sense and whose intellect is completely unattached, were even to kill the three worlds he would not be stained, it is not sanctioning Machiavellism. For killing the three worlds without suffering the contamination of sin, it is imperative to become totally unattached. But it is not easy to become unattached and disinterested.

Hence it is clear that in the Gita's philosophy of history, supremacy belongs not to the freedom of the egoistic limited will, but to the spiritual will which acts in conformity with the will of the supreme spirit. Therefore the Gita preaches that the human will in its present shape is insignificant and controlled by the necessitarian march of nature, but if it becomes united with the divine force then it can enjoy the power, the vitality, the plenitude, the resplendence, etc., of the divine.

5. *The Social Philosophy of the Bhagavadgita: Caturvarnya*

A problem, important from the standpoint of a philosophy of history, is the connection between spiritual gnosis and the structure of society. The Gita never advocates complete renunciation of action. Such renunciation is neither possible nor desirable. The cosmos is a great sacrifice, designed by the supreme God, and he is immensely interested in its preservation and in the victory of truth and goodness. Hence the embodied Godhead himself performs actions for the enhancement of the good of all living beings

of the world. For the sake of realization, and even after God-realization, the Gita enjoins that people should perform the duties pertaining to their station in life. Krishna says that the four-fold order of society has been created by God in consonance with the criteria of qualities, action and nature. Towards the end of the book there is a list of the various psychological propensities and social actions that fall to the share of the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaisyas and the Sudras. If these actions are performed in a spirit of concentration, dedication and surrender then they lead to the dawn of perfection. Two questions pertaining to the philosophy of history are important here. First, the fourfold social order with all its implications of superiority, subordination, social distance, and the hereditary conferring of status on people appears iniquitous to the modern democratic and equalitarian consciousness. It is true that the Gita is not a gospel teaching socialism and democracy. The attempt to find the germs of modern enlightened and progressive ideologies in the ancient scriptures is methodologically defective. Moreover, it suffers from a queer notion of the acceptance of the superiority of the present mentality and its canons of action and behaviour. Why should the roots of natural right and economic liberty be traced in the Rigveda or the Old Testament or Plato's *Republic*? Those books tried to solve the social, political and economic problems of a different epoch. Our situation is different, and any attempt to incorporate bodily the plans and proposals of the great classics and scriptures, in the contemporary world, can only lead to lamentable disaster. We can only obtain inspiration from their eternal and supremely important principles. The Gita also should be approached in this light, and we can thus see that some of its fundamental insights are still valid today. With regard to the fourfold social order, it is only fair to say that the Gita never sanctions the iniquities associated with the caste system in the era of its stagnation and decadence. Compared with the notions of those days when the book was written, it breathes a liberal spirit to the extent that it sanctions the possibility of divine realization by all, even by the people of the humblest birth and by people following the meanest occupations, provided they are of a pure and humble spirit. The main purpose of the Gita is not to teach social conservatism and reaction, but to inculcate nobility of action and righteousness of intention. It is utterly incorrect to denounce the Gita as the theoretical supporter of a degenerated feudal order. It was not composed in the interests of the Brahmin class. There is plausibility in the statement of the Gita that the Brahmins should con-

centrate on spiritual and intellectual work, the Kshatriyas on military and political activity, the Vaisyas on activities of production, and the Sudras on service. This system has several merits. It minimises hectic competition in the struggle for life. It provides a separation between political power of the Kshatriyas and economic power of the Vaisyas—a principle also stressed by Plato in his *Republic*. But it also raises other issues, for example, the criteria as to the placement of different individuals in the respective social orders. Plato referred to the conception of transposition of ranks, but the practical operation of even this principle is difficult. We may repudiate the idea as preached in the Gita that the fourfold social order has been created by God, as a theological statement not of much consequence, but we are sure that any future programme of socio-economic organization will have to avoid the unification and concentration of the sources of power. At a time when the intellectuals of the world are giving up their traditions of liberty and independence for the sake of security, it is deeply gratifying to find that the Gita in its ideal of the Brahmin and the Yogi places before us a conception of intellectual and moral enhancement which will not yield to worldly power and wealth. The superiority of the Brahmin as to the fears and temptations of the world is one of the noblest of ideals, and in this sense Socrates, Bruno and Galileo, Newton and Kant, were also Brahmins.

But there is a further problem of ethics and sociology in the Gita's philosophy of the fourfold social order. The Gita teaches the supremacy of *Svadharmā* and *Svabhava*. It says that one's own duties should be always performed, constantly and disinterestedly. A man should not try to create social confusion by changing the scheme of his duties. The problem is—do the schemes of duties of the four varnas exhaust the content of *Svabhava*? Some interpreters think that the principal purpose of the Gita is not to teach the efficacy and supremacy of the specific fourfold social order, but that its main principle is that action should be chosen with reference to *Svabhava*. I feel that the Gita is not a text-book on social organization, but its main concern is to teach a fundamental philosophy of the cosmos and a broad spiritual conception of human history. It does not elaborate on the theme of the criteria of the selection of specific actions and duties. But still it stresses that in matters of the specification of social action the authoritative scriptures should be followed. It is possible to construct a list of duties of different social orders, which may vary from the list provided by the Gita as given in the eighteenth chapter. We

can also visualize the possibility of the independent operation of the conception of *Svabhava*, and thus postulate the conception of psychological-rational action as different from the limited conception of social duties prescribed by the Gita or the authoritative *Smritis*. But this alternative visualization of the theme of psychological-rational action is not sanctioned by the text of the Gita. From a textual study of the eighteenth chapter it follows that the specification of the duties of the four varnas has been done with reference to the concept of *Svabhava*.

Hence from the standpoint of the text it is definite that the Gita does not visualize any alternative scheme of *Svadharmā* beyond the duties of the four Varnas. The latter in its conception is supremely important. It does not accept any fundamental natural law, over and against the Varna duties. The latter to it are final and utterly obligatory.

6. *The Gita and Indian Nationalism*

Most historians are now agreed that the Gita was written round about the period from the fifth to the third century B.C. Ancient Indian tradition would ascribe a more remote beginning to it. Since the book was written, it has continued to influence the lives of people and the thought of mystics and intellectuals. In modern India the Gita has been interpreted as a Bible of Indian nationalism. The social and political implications of the book have been stressed by Bankima Chandra, Vivekananda, Lala Lajpat Rai, Lokamanya Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi. Although in his writings as a Yogi Sri Aurobindo interprets the Gita as a luminous spiritual synthesis of *Karmayoga*, *Jñānayoga* and *Bhaktiyoga*—the essence, core and supreme teaching of the *Bhagavadgita* being the devotional surrender of man into the hands of the divine and the total conversion of the human agent into the voluntary agent for the execution of the divine will and action,—still in his career as a teacher, prophet and leader of Indian nationalism, he interpreted the Gita as a gospel of selfless action which sanctions even violence and battle for a righteous cause. The fact that the Gita could serve as the solace to thousands of workers in the cause of the nation and could spur them to the path of selfless action testifies to the inner vitality of this great book. It provided the spiritual strength to thousands in bearing calmly and stoically their sufferings. Modern Indian nationalism has been nurtured not only by the teachings of Burke, Mazzini and Mill and the gospels of the American and French Revolutions, but also to a very great

extent by the teaching of Niskama Karmayoga as inculcated in the Gita. To a prostrate and defeated nation the Gita appeared as the gospel of vitality, strength and power. It helped to increase the capacity to endure deep anguish and profound sorrow. It is interesting to note that some Indian martyrs went to the gallows uttering the famous Slokas in the second chapter of the Gita which preach the imperishable character of the human Atman. Thus the Vedantic metaphysics of the immortality of the Atman was used in modern India to support the theory and practice of political resistance against an alien civilization and imperialistic power. The Gita teaches that without any hesitation one should stick fast to his duties. In the fight against British imperialism the scales were not equal. Hence the Gita-teaching alone could goad the Indian people to heroic efforts and sustain them in the face of misery, starvation and persecution. The Gita provided solace to Lokamanya Tilak in his terrible privations. In the Mandalay Jail where he was undergoing incarceration for six years he wrote the monumental commentary on the Gita which is at the same time a critical work on Hindu ethics. Mahatma Gandhi was a great devotee of the Gita. He regarded his constructive programme of the uplift of the Indian masses as a part of *Yajna*. He made his life a supreme dedication to the cause of the emancipation of India. He thought that what he was doing was only for *Lokasamgraha*. Gandhi stressed the notion of service. Although not explicit in the Gita, it is possible to extend the conceptions of *Yajna*, *Dana* and *Tapas* to include social altruism and social service. The stress on social service is not indicative, necessarily, of the influence of Christianity on modern Indian thought. Buddhist monks were champions of human love, and according to the edicts of Asoka it is clear that Buddhism was the first gospel in the world to preach and practise medical relief not only for human beings but also for animals. The Gita stresses the good of all human beings. It also teaches compassion as a cardinal moral attribute. It is certainly true that the conceptions of altruism and active love can be derived from the Gita. The dominant tendency of the Gita is to teach moral and spiritual enlightenment and illumination. But we can also stress the conception of active love implicitly contained in the concepts of *Sarvabhutahita* and '*Bhutesu Daya*.' Hence we feel that Schweitzer is exaggerating the world-and-life-negation trend in the Gita when he says: "But Hinduism in the Bhagavadgita does not yet take the actual step of demanding ethical deeds. Love to God is for it an end in itself. Hinduism does not make love to God find expression in love to mankind. Because it fails to reach the idea

of active love, the ethic of the Bhagavadgita is like a smoky fire from which no flames flare upward. One must ever bear in mind, that in the Bhagavadgita there is no question of Love."¹ Modern Indian thinkers and leaders have shown in their writings as well as in their conduct that it is possible to deduce sentiments of human love and active compassion from the Gita. Furthermore, when the Gita says that the Brahmin, the Chandala, the elephant and the dog are to be looked on with the eye of equality by the man of knowledge, it is preaching not only a sentiment of reverence for human life but also for the inferior creatures. In modern Indian thought, these social, political and ethical implications of the Bhagavadgita have been greatly emphasized.

7. Critique and Conclusion

The fact that in medieval India, Vedantic mystics and teachers stressed the significance of the teachings of the Gita and the fact that in modern India the Gita has almost been the Bible of Indian nationalism are undying testimonies to the vitality of the thought of this book. The very fact that it has such a persistent appeal shows that there is something in it which is profoundly moving and deeply significant. It is only natural that a great scripture should be interpreted and reinterpreted in different ages. Thus the supreme spiritual essence, as distinguished from statements which have only a temporary significance and were relevant only for the then contemporary humanity and age, becomes stressed and emphasized. Since the European Renaissance, there has been a decline of the theocentric approach to things. Science has tended to substitute for God some impersonal force or man. Auguste Comte was the prophet of scientific positivism and sociology. He felt that once common education was established under the direction of a spiritual power, the tyranny of the capitalist class could be definitely minimized. He stressed the growth of a new social morality as an antidote to modern industrialism. According to Comte, "Our ultimate state will exhibit a classification of society more distinct than any we know in all sides of human life. From High Priest of Humanity, down to the humblest labourer, society will show the same principle at work distributing ranks: Generality of view decreasing as independence of life increases." But the verdict of time has been that the positivistic conception of

1. Albert Schweitzer, *Indian Thought and Its Development* (New York, Henry Holt & Co., 1936), p. 193.

social salvation to be attained by the sociologists who are to be the high priests of this new society has not borne much fruit. The great danger of the present time is the debasement of the human being. Man should not be treated as a mere means, but as the bearer of moral values and the giver of spiritual law for himself. The present perversions of democracy, socialism and communism point out that mere objective rationalization is inadequate. What we need to-day is a new form of divine humanism. Man has forgotten his spiritual nature. The values of the human spirit have to be redeemed. The Gita says that it is *Sraddha* (faith) that constitutes the essence of a man. Hence it is essential that the values which we cherish should be rooted in our being and personality. Unless we can discriminate between the good and the bad we cannot proceed in the right direction. It is the first imperative of noble action that we should have a harmonious, integrated and right-promoting system of values. The Gita preaches a gospel of dynamic vitality. But behind this dynamic vitality there should be the spiritual fervour provided by *Sraddha* in a system of moral and character-building values.

From an empirical and sociological standpoint, however, there are certain weak elements in the Gita's philosophy of history. The Gita preaches the inactivity and the impersonality of the true Self of man. It teaches both natural and spiritual determination. It accepts the Sāṃkhya conception of the Prakriti as the executive power, the Purusha being only a luminous witness-self. Since the Prakriti, however, is in its foundations only the power of the God-head, this naturalistic determinism is not opposed to the all-pervading conception of spiritual determinism. But a rigorous conception of determinism,—whether the determinism be of nature or of spiritual forces,—tends to undermine vigorous action on which the Gita is so insistent. The conception of the impersonality of the human self or the notion that the human being is only an instrument in the hands of God is ultimately a gospel which may enervate the human agent and may degenerate into a cult of fatalism. In other words, the Gita has not been able to reconcile the notion of natural and spiritual determinism and the conception of vigorous action which it inculcates for Arjuna. What is needed is a more comprehensive framework which will stress not merely determinism but also the creative autonomy of collective efforts in building the mighty edifice of human culture and civilization. I feel that the Gita does not stress the role of the creative human subject in the historical context. The medieval Indian com-

mentators have been busy torturing the text to yield the particular meaning which would exalt their own cult, and they have been unmindful of the historical, political and sociological implications and significance of this scripture. Any great scripture which is to be meant for the people and not only for the inspired mystic does, and should, contain sociological and historical teachings and ideas. The Christian Bible has been interpreted and reinterpreted as a social philosophy, and there is no reason why the Bhagavadgita should not be analysed as a philosophy of history and its inadequacies in that field pointed out. The Gita tends to exaggerate the concept of divine determinism. In its quest for exalting the great power of God it tends to play loosely with the law of contra-dualism. When it uses such phrases as 'both fame and ignominy proceed from me,' it prepares the foundations of fatalism and for the development of an ethic which is not mindful of the supreme importance of human action for individual life and historical movement. At times, the tone of the Gita becomes too dogmatic. It repeatedly stresses that this teaching should not be imparted to those who are jealous of or speak ill of Krishna. It says that only the people deficient in intellect disregard Krishna. Even for those who accept a spiritual interpretation of history, this kind of dogmatic doctrine of make-believe sounds rather jarring. The otherwise very serious and earnest tone of the book is impaired in this way.

Another weakness in the Gita's philosophy of history is the absence of a theory of well-worked out universal natural law which could be binding on all human beings. In other words, there is no definite and explicated notion of *Sādharaṇa Dharma* as distinct from the *Svadharmas* of the four Varnas. It is true that in its conceptions of the *Sthitaprajña*, the *Bhakta*, the *Trigunatita* and the *Yogi*, there are references to profound moral conceptions, but most of the attributes refer to internal purification and reflective abstraction, and are not directly relevant to social and historical action. The Gita does not prescribe specifically a criterion for the resolution of a conflict if some of these moral conceptions were to involve a contradiction of the duties of the specific castes. It is possible that in the case of a Vaishya Bhakta, the demands of the price mechanism may come into conflict with his duties as a devotee of God. To succeed in business he may have to accept one type of professional ethics, but this may conflict with the norms of spiritual life as expounded in the scripture. What are to be the decisive criteria of choice if the Brahmin Bhakta or *Sthitaprajña*

has to choose between the compulsive demands of national patriotism and the inexorable canon of *Ahimsā*? But from its general tone and the environmental and historical context wherein the teaching of the Gita is placed, it almost seems definite that in any situation involving a conflict the Gita would sanction the superior obligatory character of the caste duties. A further difficulty is involved here. If according to the Gita the duties of the *Varnas*, regulated according to qualities, action and natural endowments, are of the utmost significance, and if according to this scheme it is the duty of the Kshatriya to lord it over all (*Isvara-bhava*), it is not clear as to why the propensity to seek power is condemned as suited to those who are of *Asuric* dispositions and who are fated for hell.

A similar objection can also be raised about the duties of the Vaisyas. If according to the eighteenth chapter, devotion to economic pursuits is the duty dictated by the *svabhava* of a Vaisya, there is no reason to condemn the acquisition of wealth as the Gita does in the sixteenth chapter. If acquisition of wealth is condemnable and is to be regarded as something fitted for the *Asuras*, it is tantamount to saying that whosoever is engaged in pecuniary pursuits is engaging himself in unspiritual work. Hence either exception has to be made for the wealth-begetting pursuits of the Vaisyas, or the contradiction involved in the simultaneous presence of these two statements in the same book has to be resolved by suppressing one of the statements.

From the sociological and historical standpoint some further weaknesses may be pointed out. But these criticisms do not negate the otherwise profound assertions of a spiritual philosophy of history contained in this book. Just as St. Augustine, Dante, Bossuet and Hegel tried to expand, reinterpret and modify some of the insights of the Bible concerning a spiritual philosophy of history, so also it is possible to construct a comprehensive philosophy of history on the basis of the great and profound lessons of this noble and sublime work.² The construction of such a spiritual philosophy of history is one of the several ways in which the vitality of its message may be brought to the surface and made to influence social and political decisions and so the destinies of nations.

2. V. P. Varma, Introduction to a New Philosophy of History, *The Visvabharati Quarterly*, Fall 1956.

Sextus Empiricus and Indian Logic¹

By

ARAM M. FRENKIAN

A

The problem of philosophical and cultural relations between Greece and the Orient cannot be treated wholesale, as Ritter, Zeller and Burnet have done in the past. The complexity of the relations between the two worlds, with their numerous sections, must be studied in detail, treating of definite points and reduced departments, before we pass on to larger syntheses. Such a synthesis, if not supported by rich factual material, is in danger of being baseless and erroneous.

In this present study, our purpose is to make a contribution to the problem of the relations between the Orient and the Occident. We take as object of our investigation three philosophical topics to be found in the works of a Greek author of the 2nd century A.D., named Sextus Empiricus. Two of his philosophical works have come down to us, with no pretension to originality on his part, but which constitute compendia of the Greek sceptical school of philosophy. The same philosophical topics are to be found in the Indian philosophy and logic.

Here is the first example:

I. *The image of a coiled rope taken for a snake*

Dealing with the method of Carneades of ascertaining the verity of a fact, Sextus Empiricus establishes three sorts of representations which produce in us the conviction that a fact is true.

1. The representation which is worth being trusted (*πιθανή παντασία*).

1. This article, in its first part, is the résumé of a more extensive study written in Rumanian and presented to the scientific session of the University of Bucharest, in June 1955. The second part represents a further development of our researches, with new important results on the ancient influence of Indian thought on Greek philosophy.

I express my thanks to my colleague Mrs. A. Cartianu, who read and amended this English text. For the imperfections of language, I alone am responsible.

2. The unshakable representation (*ἀπερίσπαστος φαντασία*), and 3. The representation put to the test in all its aspects (*περιωδευμένη φαντασία*).² For the illustration of this last method, Sextus gives the example of a coiled rope in a dark room, taken for a snake by him who enters the chamber.³

As far as we know, the example of the rope taken for a snake is to be found in this sense in Greek literature only in the books of Sextus,⁴ with a single exception known to us, and which we are going to discuss in the second part of this study. On the contrary in Indian philosophy, this image is to be found in innumerable cases, to illustrate various philosophical conceptions, and it is typical in its intention of pointing out a special kind of relation between two things, in which the one determines the other. In our more extensive study, we have indicated a number of important Indian texts, where we find this example of the rope which is taken for a snake. In the philosophical system of the *Vedānta* and in the interpretations of Śaṅkara, the image is used to exemplify the relation between the Absolute (*Brahman*) and the empirical world, the second as produced by the first, by means of the cosmical illusion (*māyā*) and ignorance (*avidyā*).⁵ The philosophical activity of Śaṅkara, as the Indians admit, is to be placed between 788 and 820 A.D.

Gauḍapāda, a philosopher who lived at least two generations before Śaṅkara, also uses the image of the rope taken for a snake.⁶

This comparison between the coiled rope and the snake is also to be found in the writings of Rāmānuja, who lived from 1050 to 1137 A.D.⁷

We have found the same image, in an entirely different context, employed by the great Buddhist logician Chandrakīrti, an

2. *Adversus mathematicos*, VII 184 sqq. p. 44/45 ad. Mutschmann.

3. *Adv. math.* VII 187 sq. p. 45 Mutschm. has the wider version. A shorter version is to be found in *Pyrrhoneioi hypotyposeis*, I § 227/8 p. 59 M. It is possible that the example issued from Carneades himself, i.e., from Cleitomachus, who has set down the doctrine of his teacher (2nd century B.C.). Carneades, as Socrates, Pyrrhon and Arcesilaus, has not written any treatise on his philosophy.

4. In two versions indicated in the preceding note.

5. Cp. Śaṅkara, *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā-bhāṣya*, *passim*.

6. Gauḍapāda, *Māṇḍūkya-kārikā*, chap. II, verse 17.

7. Rāmānuja, *Śrī-bhāṣya*, I, 1. 1.

adept of the *Mādhyaṃika* school, who lived in the VIth to VIIth centuries A.D.⁸

We shall finally quote Dignāga (Vth century A.D.), one of the greatest philosophers and logicians of India, who, in his work entitled *Pramāṇa-samuccaya* chapter 1 (only extant in Tibetan translation), says that if a rope be taken for a snake in the dark, we have not a perception but a preconception.⁹

And surely, we have not exhausted all the cases in which the example of a rope taken for a snake is to be met in Indian philosophical and extra-philosophical literature.

The fact that our earliest example belongs to the Vth century A.D., while Sextus lived in the IInd century A.D., is no proof of the Greek author's priority over the Indians. The fact is that the Indians are the people most deprived of chronological sense. Investigators in Indian history well know what difficult, if not insoluble, problems they are faced with concerning the succession and the mutual relations of the Indian philosophical schools; all because of the lack of chronology. Therefore the organic link between Indian thought and the image of the rope taken for a snake compels us to consider the example as being of older standing in Indian philosophy than in Sextus Empiricus, or even in Cleitomachus, the disciple of the latter, who set down the lessons of his master.¹⁰

II. Wherever there is smoke, there is fire

This formula is to be met four times in the works of Sextus Empiricus, and we have no knowledge of its existence in any other Greek author.¹¹ In India, this proposition: "wherever there is smoke, there is fire" is one of the most popular and familiar examples. By means of this formula, the deductive ratiocination (*anumāna*) in Indian logic is exemplified.¹² Nor do chronological considerations, in the case of this example, play a decisive part.

8. Th. Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, Leningrad, 1927, p. 187/188.

9. Résumé by Satis Chandra Vidyabhusana, *A History of Indian Logic*, Calcutta, 1921, p. 277.

10. Diogenes Laërtios, IV, 67.

11. Sext. Emp., *adv. math.*, VIII, 152, p. 136, 31; *ibid.*, VIII, 157, p. 137, 4; *Pyrrh. hypot.*, II, 100, p. 89, 22 and II, 102, p. 90, 3.

12. As in occidental logic: "Man is mortal; Socrates is a man; Socrates is mortal", is the example of a syllogism which occurs incessantly.

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The formula must be at least as old as the *nyāya* system of philosophy, and the origins of this system go back, probably, to the time of the birth of Buddhism (VIth century B.C.).

Before we proceed to our exposition of the third topic, we will give a general outline of the problem of the relations between Greece and India. There are four possibilities:

1. India influenced Greece; or 2. Greece influenced India; or 3. The two civilisations exercised a mutual influence; or 4. The two civilisations have developed independently.

Each of these hypotheses found its supporters. The first possibility was supported by Colebrooke. Gladisch, L.v. Schröder, R. Garbe; the second by Silvain Lévi, Goblet d'Alviella. We incline to the third of these hypotheses. The fourth was supported by E. Zeller and John Burnet, as regards the relations between Greek philosophy and the Orient.

The whole problem of these relations was submitted by us to a minute investigation, viz., we have put the question: what have the Greeks known, from the beginning of their civilisation to the time of the Byzantines, concerning the Indian civilisation? We have based our investigation on the collection of Greek and Latin texts concerning Indian religion, thought and civilisation, edited by Breloer and Bömer.¹³

The final conclusions of our investigation were that the Greeks have known only the external and the most accessible aspects of the Indian civilisation, viz., aspects striking at first sight. We bring here these most characteristic aspects which have struck the Greeks by their strangeness, and which are repeatedly to be found in the texts which came down to us.

1. The burning alive of the wife on the funeral pile of the dead husband (*satī*).
2. Voluntary self-sacrifice by burning on a funeral pile (*agnipraveśa*).
3. Interdiction to eat meat and, in general, to kill any living creature (*ahimsā*).
4. Transmigration of the soul (*saṁsāra*).

13. *Fontes historiae religionum Indicarum* collegerunt Bernardus Breloer et Franziscus Bömer (in *Fontes historiae religionum ex auctoribus Graecis et Latinis collectos* edidit Carolus Clemen, Fasciculus VII), Bonn, 1939.

5. Division into castes (*varṇa, jāti*).
6. Retreat in the forest (*vānaprastha*).¹⁴
7. Eating of parents by children and cannibalism in general.

We find in the Greek texts a few names of localities, of historic personalities, of plants, of animals.

The yogins are known. But their doctrine is unknown to the Greeks. Only the external aspects of their practices are known and their strange character has deeply impressed the Greeks. The name of the Buddha is met about three times in the Greek texts, but we find nothing of the characteristic traits which are to be found in the philosophical doctrine of this great religion. When the Greeks try to expound anything of Indian philosophical ideas, as Philostratus does, in the *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, the confusions and the assimilations with Greek doctrines bring about the deformation of specific Indian thought.

The Quadrilemma

We find in Sextus Empiricus about 14 cases of quadrilemmas, four of which have the strict and classical form. These last four will be presented here by us:

1. "The 'Being', which is the most general of the realities, is either true, or false, or false and true, or neither false nor true."¹⁵
2. "Among the representations (*φαντασίαι*), some are credible, others are incredible, others are at the same time credible and incredible, and lastly there are those which are neither credible nor incredible".¹⁶
3. "Among the representations which are trustworthy, some are true, others are false, others are true and false, others are neither true nor false".¹⁷
4. "The supreme genus of reality (*τοῦ γεννικώτατον τὸν οὐρανόν*) is either true, or false, or at the same time true and false, or neither true nor false".¹⁸

14. The Sanskrit terms, which are given between brackets, are not to be found in Greek texts.

15. *Pyrh. hypot.* II, 86, p. 86, 11 M. We have reestablished the normal succession of the members 3 and 4 of the quadrilemma, which are inverted in the text of Sextus.

16. *Adv. math.* VII, 242, p. 57, 24. Sextus ascribes this example and the following one to the Stoics. We will see in the second part of this study if this attribution is correct.

17. *Adv. math.* VII, 243/244, p. 57, 4.

18. *Adv. math.* VII, 32, p. 110, 27.

With Sextus Empiricus, the quadrilemma has a purely formal character and is destitute of any profound significance. Greek philosophy does not make use of the quadrilemma. Except in Sextus Empiricus, there are very few examples of quadrilemma in Greek literature, as we shall see in the second part of this study.

Conversely, this method of reasoning is very wide-spread in Indian logic,¹⁹ where it has a deep significance.

We have investigated, first of all, a number of texts from Chapter 25 concerning *nirvāṇa*, of the *Mādhyamika-sūtra* by Nagarjuna (2nd century A.D.), with the commentary by Candrakīrti.²⁰

There we find the problem: 1. If *Nirvāṇa* is Ens; 2. If *Nirvāṇa* is not an Ens; 3. If *Nirvāṇa* is both Ens and non-Ens; 4. If *Nirvāṇa* is neither Ens nor non-Ens.²¹ Chapter 25, stanza 17, poses the following question in the form of a quadrilemma; "What is the Buddha after his *Nirvāṇa*? Does he exist, or does he not exist, or both, or neither? We never will conceive it!" And Chapter 25, stanza 18: "What is the Buddha then in life-time? Does he exist, or does he not exist, or both, or neither? We never will conceive it!"

Another example of quadrilemma is to be found in the *Māṇḍūkya-kārika* of Gaudapāda, Chapter IV, 83. Here it is said that the Absolute cannot receive any one of the four kinds of predication: existence, non-existence, existence and non-existence, neither existence nor non-existence. The Commentary of Śaṅkara on this text gives precision and makes the deep significance of the quadrilemma more conspicuous.²² On this occasion, we must remark that with the Indians it was possible to state a predicate and its contrary with reference to the same thing and at the same time, and that is against the law of non-contradiction in Aristotelean logic; Aristotle does not admit that the same predicate

19. Th. Stcherbatsky, *Buddhist Logic I* (*Bibliotheca Buddhica*, XXVI), Leningrad, 1932, p. 477 sq.

20. Sanskrit text, with Tibetan parallels, edited by Louis de la Vallée Poussin, St. Petersburg, 1903. Partial translation by Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, Leningrad, 1927, pp. 63-212.

21. Nagarjuna, *Mādhyamika-sūtra*, Chap. 25, stanzas 6, 7, 11, 16. The translation given by us here and in the following lines is made by Stcherbatsky.

22. *The Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad with Gaudapāda's Kārikās and the Bhāṣya of Śaṅkara*. Translated into English by Manilal N. Dvivedi, Bombay, 1894, p. 128.

can be affirmed and denied at the same time with reference to one and the same thing. With the Indians, this is the third member of the quadrilemma. Concerning the fourth member, we can say that it constitutes absolute negation and that it is not a simple negation of the third member of the quadrilemma.

In the Appendix to Chapter VIII of the *Abhidharmakośa* from Vasubandhu,²³ we have another example of quadrilemma.²⁴

The quadrilemma in Indian thought is very old. It is to be found in the oldest parts of the *Buddhist Canon* of the Pāli language, in parts which are to be dated from the 1st century B.C., and the best scholars²⁵ of Buddhism consider the celebrated Buddhist quadrilemmas, the questioning of which was interdicted by the founder of the Buddhist religion, as being employed by Buddha himself (6th-5th centuries B.C.).

All this seems to point to the undoubted Indian origin of the quadrilemma, which we find used by Sextus Empiricus. This fact makes the Indian origin of the other two images also very probable: *the coiled rope taken for a snake*, and the formula: *wherever there is smoke, there is fire*, which are used by Sextus, the latter in a lesser degree.

We now have to investigate how the Indian quadrilemma and the other examples reached the Greeks. It seems impossible that it was by way of writing. The Greeks knew no Indian languages and the popular character of the examples above mentioned makes it very probable that the Indian philosophers reached the Greeks by means of living speech. Philosophers, gymnosophists, ambassadors, merchants came from India down to Greece. Their number seems to have been great enough, and they made a deep impression on the Greeks by their specific manner of thinking and living. On this point, we have quite a number of informations which have come down to us.

The Roman emperor Augustus speaks of Indian embassies which he had received, a fact, which happened to no Roman leader before him, as he himself says.²⁶ Bardesanes (154-222/3 A.D.), a Persian gnostic author, describes at some length

23. Buddhist philosopher of the *yogācāra* school (4th century A.D.).

24. Th. Stcherbatsky, *The Soul Theory of the Buddhists* 1919, p. 846 sqq.

25. Cp. Hermann Beckh, *Buddhismus* 3, I, 1928, p. 112 (= *Sammlung Götschen* nr. 174).

26. *Res gestae divi Augusti*, chapter 31.

an Indian embassy to the emperor Helagabalus (218-222 A.D.) in Syria.²⁷ Finally, Damascius (5th and 6th centuries A.D.) relates the visit of an embassy of Brahmins to Alexandria, to a Roman emperor Severus, who deeply astonished the Greeks by their stern manner of life.²⁸ Commerce between the Roman empire and India was also very active, as we know.

From these Indian visitors the Greeks probably heard the topics of Indian philosophy which have come down to us in the treatises of sceptical philosophy written by Sextus Empiricus. And we must not neglect the fact that the same influence was exercised on the Greeks who visited India with Alexander the Great and after him, as will be seen in the second part of our study.

Does this mean that no deeper influence was exercised by Indian thought on Greek philosophy? This is not our opinion. After the conquest of Alexander the Great, a profound influence of Indian philosophy was exercised on Greek thought, especially on Neo-platonism, through the mediation of the Gnostic religion. This latter theological and philosophical movement spread very far in the Graeco-Roman *oecumene*, especially in Syria and Palestina and became diffused in Egypt and Mesopotamia, beginning with the 1st century B.C. The Gnostic doctrine has fused together diverse and rich elements taken from the theosophical and cosmological conceptions of the Orient, chiefly the Zoroastrian dualism and the Babylonian astrolatry. The rôle of the Platonic and Stoic philosophy cannot be neglected either. Concerning Indian philosophy, chiefly the *Upaniṣads*, its part is considerable in the formation of the Gnostic systems and of the Neo-platonic philosophy. These problems were dealt with in our previous study, entitled *Puruṣa-Gayōmard-Anthrōpos* and published in 1943.

At this point finishes the first part of our study.

B

We now intend to approach the problem of the relations between Indian thought and Greek philosophy, and to determine the date when the themes treated of in the preceding pages passed from India to Greece.

Concerning the image of the rope taken for a snake, we have mentioned the possibility of its coming from Carneades or his disci-

27. The text is to be found in the above mentioned collection by Brejoer and Bömer, p. 133 sqq.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 194. sq.

ple Cleitomachus. As will be seen further on, Sextus Empiricus does not seem to have created the ideas and the images which we find in his works. A colleague of ours, Mrs. A. Piatkovsky, has pointed out to us a text of Demetrius,²⁹ an author of the first century A.D., in which there is a very short allusion to a strap (not a rope) taken for a snake, and that image is mentioned as being very familiar to the reader, who therefore needs no further explanation for the understanding of the matter.

More important is the problem of the quadrilemma. Two of the quadrilemmas which are quoted³⁰ are given by Sextus as sayings of the Stoics. It is possible that the ideas of these two texts belong to the Stoics; but the form of the quadrilemma has nothing to do with Stoic philosophy, and it is a mere vestment used by the sceptic author to clothe stoic ideas in.

Another very important text, to be found in Eusebius of Caesarea³¹ and taken from Aristocles the peripatetician,³² gives an answer to our questions. It concerns the philosophy of Pyrrhon, and we give it below in English translation, because of its importance: "[1] It is necessary before all things to seek the knowledge of ourselves. If we are not fit by nature to know ourselves, we must give up investigating other things. [2] There were ancient philosophers, who held these opinions and were contradicted by Aristotle. Pyrrhon of Elis was one of those, who had the courage to speak in this sense. He has left no writings, but his disciple, Timon, says that he who would be happy should consider the following three things: 1. How are things by nature? 2. How should we be disposed towards them? and finally, 3. What would be the result of such an attitude? And he answers these three questions as follows: The things appear equally indifferent (*ἀδιάφορα*),

29. Demetrius, *De elocutione* § 159, p. 36, ed. Radermacher. This author precedes Sextus Empiricus by a century.

30. *Adv. math.*, VII, 242-244, p. 57, Mutschmann. Hans von Arnim takes these texts among the fragments belonging to the old Stoics: *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, II, 65, p. 25.

31. *Praeparationes evangelicae* XIV, 18, 1-30. Eusebius lived in the first half of the IVth century A.D. This text is also to be found in the collection *Poetarum philosophorum fragmenta* edited by H. Diels, 1901, pp. 175 sqq.

32. Aristocles of Messena is a not unimportant peripatetician of the second half of the IInd century A.D., coloured by stoicism. He wrote a work, *Περὶ φιλοσοφίας* in ten books, a sort of history of philosophy, after the most important Greek systems. Eusebius has conserved large excerpts of this work. The important fragment which we translate in our text concerns Pyrrhon.

changeable ($\alpha\sigma\alpha\theta\eta\mu\epsilon\tau\alpha$) and uncertain ($\alpha\upsilon\epsilon\pi\iota\kappa\rho\iota\tau\alpha$). For instance, our senses and our opinions are neither true nor false. Therefore, we must not trust them, but must hold no opinion ($\alpha\delta\omicron\zeta\alpha\sigma\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$), must be without inclination ($\alpha\kappa\lambda\iota\nu\epsilon\iota\varsigma$) and unshakable ($\alpha\kappa\rho\alpha\delta\alpha\iota\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$), and must not incline to say about any one thing *that it is, or that it is not, or that it is and is not, neither that it is nor that it is not*. [4] For them who are so disposed, says Timon, the abstinence from speech ($\alpha\varphi\alpha\sigma\iota\alpha$) and an untroubled state ($\alpha\tau\alpha\rho\alpha\zeta\iota\alpha$) shall follow. Aenesidemus says that pleasure ($\eta\delta\omicron\nu\eta$) shall follow. [5] This is the résumé of the sayings of the above-mentioned sceptics." What follows is the refutation of these sceptic theories by Aristocles, and they are of no interest to us.

In the exposé by Aristocles, we find again a quadrilemma, which surely concerns Pyrrhon, as well as Timon of Phlius: 1. it is; 2. it is not; 3. it is and it is not; 4. it neither is, nor is not. On the basis of this text, we may state that Pyrrhon made use of the quadrilemma, and we shall see that his relations with India and the Orient plausibly point to the Indian origin of this logical method of looking at problems, which is the quadrilemma, and which we find in Greece as early as Pyrrhon of Elis. The founder of the ancient school of scepticism in Greece was born about 360 B.C. and died about 270 B.C. The facts most certain about his life are that he took part, with his master, Anaxarchus, in the expedition of Alexander the Great against the Persian empire, which expedition began in 334 B.C., and ended with the death of Alexander, 323 B.C. The Greek authors give us definite information over this great event in the life of Pyrrhon, and of his contact with the *gymnosophistae*, that is, with the yogins of India and with the *magoi*.³³ Pyrrhon surely made the acquaintance of the yogin

33. Diogenes Laërtios IX 58: "Anaxarchus was with Alexander and flourished in the 110th Olympiad". Ibid. IX 61: "Pyrrhon of Elis, was the son of Pleistarchus, as relates Diocles (of Carystos). Apollodorus, in his *Chronicles*, tells us that he was at first a painter, and was the disciple of Bryson or Stilpon, as says Alexander in the *Successions*. Then, Pyrrhon accompanied Anaxarchus everywhere and frequented in India the *gymnosophistae* (sc. the yogins) and the *magoi*. Therefrom, Pyrrhon seems to have taken his philosophy, and to have introduced the ideas of incomprehensibility* ($\alpha\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\lambda\eta\psi\iota\alpha$) and of abstention** ($\epsilon\pi\omicron\chi\eta$), as says Ascanius (Hecataeus?*** Robin) of Abdera."

* of the things.

** of the judgment.

*** Ascanius is otherwise unknown. Hecataeus of Abdera was a disciple of Pyrrhon, as relates Diog. Laërtios, XI 69.

Calanos, whose *agnipraveśa* made so deep an impression on the great Macedonian conqueror and his suite, as well as on the army. It seems well established that Pyrrhon lived for eleven years in the Orient and that he returned home, to Elis, after the death of Alexander. The historians of the Greek sceptical philosophy, such as Brochard and Robin, have insisted on the influence of the Indian way of life on Pyrrhon. To this, we may now add the influence of the theoretical aspect; we may maintain with great probability, that Pyrrhon was the first Greek who adopted this manner of presenting problems in the form of the quadrilemma, introducing it in Greek thought, especially in that of the sceptical school.

We hope that we may also give the internal motive, which made Pyrrhon particularly inclined to adopt the quadrilemma from Indian logic. Pyrrhon maintained that nothing was *this* more than *that*, that all things and their contraries had an equal right to be considered as true, that the reasons for the bias of our judgments in one direction rather than in the contrary direction were thoroughly equal,³⁴ and that this attitude of abstention in our judgment concerning things gives us the firmness, which leads us to happiness. According to his theory, the sceptic was bound to prove the inconsistency of every judgment on things, and in his arguments he strove for a complete enumeration of all possibilities in considering things. Therefore, instead of the two possibilities of affirming and denying a fact, he has been very happy to find in the Indian practice of thought, two other possibilities: the affirming and the denying of the same fact at the same time, and the denying of the affirmation and the negation of a fact. So the quadrilemma came into existence, which affirms a fact, or denies it, then affirms and denies it at the same time, and finally denies the affirmation and negation of the same fact. The fourth member of the quadrilemma is considered, in Indian thought, as the absolute negation.

All this makes the Indian origin of the quadrilemma in Greek thought highly probable and its adoption seems as old as Pyrrhon and the conquest of Alexander the Great, that is the epoch between 334 and 323 B.C. Pyrrhon has probably obtained the knowledge of the quadrilemma by his oral intercourse with Indian philosophers, and not through written sources, which, being ignorant of Indian languages, he had no possibility to consult.

34. $\eta\ \iota\sigma\omicron\omicron\theta\epsilon\nu\epsilon\iota\alpha\ \tau\omega\nu\ \lambda\omicron\gamma\omega\nu$, Diog. Laërt. IX, F4 and 101.

The Indian adventure of Alexander and of Pyrrhon, as his follower, has left lasting traces in anecdotes. E.g., Antigonos of Carystos³⁵ relates that it was Pyrrhon's custom to walk out of town, into isolated places, and sometimes was very rarely to be seen by his friends. And the biographer says that he did this, because an Indian had told Anaxarchus that he could not teach others to be good, while he himself frequented the courts of kings.

In the preceding pages, we hope to have proved, as far as possible, with a probability natural to the solving of all such problems, that Indian thought through its philosophy and its logic exercised an influence on Greek thought as early as the second half of the IVth century B.C., and that this influence was exercised through the channel of the Greek sceptical school of philosophy. Firstly, the image of the coiled rope taken for a snake was used as illustration of the doctrine of Carneades in the IIInd century B.C. Secondly, the quadrilemma seems to have been employed by Pyrrhon, the founder of the Greek sceptical school of philosophy in earlier times, in the second half of the IVth century B.C. Therefore India was not only a receiver, but also a giver, although the gift, in the case of the quadrilemma was of no great extension, as the sceptical school has no very great extension in Greek thought. The influence of Indian thought on Gnosticism and through it on neo-Platonic philosophy is another question, which goes beyond the purpose of our present study.

35. Diog. Laërt. IX 63,

Aesthetic Education

By

DR. PREM NATH

Government Training College, Jullundur

It is a pathetic irony that the world has advanced, and is still advancing, technologically, but the human mind is in the smoke of utter confusion. One had piously hoped that the gifts of technology would bring prosperity to mankind struggling hard against the hazards of poverty. While no doubt there is a visible rise in the level of economic prosperity, the same cannot be affirmed with confidence of world peace or of human happiness in general. Technology seems to be having the better of the infirm human mind; it came in as the servant of man, but is establishing itself as his master. There is a mad race for material things, for armaments, for atomic and hydrogen bombs, and these altogether crowd out the fine achievements of technology in the fields of housing, health, medicine, surgery, travel, education and the rest. For what of palatial buildings, restful hospitals, fast means of communication and travel, if in the bargain the human spirit is ill at ease, if the zest for life is gone, if happiness haunts as a ghost! What of these things again, if the lofty human values that alone give meaning to life are crushed under their mighty weight! Surely something is amiss somewhere. Our elements are out of harmony under acute pressure of a more or less universal mood of purposelessness. Apparently technology, in conspiracy with human ignorance and feeble-mindedness, is outwitting science as a heroic mode of knowledge, wisdom and life.

Even the most optimistic social philosopher, or for that matter any enlightened politician, would turn in despair to education in the hope of finding a solution to the sorry state of affairs in the world. As it is, the educational scene is not very promising either, and this despite some really worthwhile educational reconstruction. By and large there is yet too much of hang over of the scholastic tradition, which in turn has fed itself on Rationalism in philosophy. Too much of reliance on Reason has given an intellectual bias to education; there is more of emphasis on verbal knowledge, on formal logic and on intellect. The two intertwined fallacies in education yet endure: One, that man can be taught Reason as

any factual school subject; two, that formal training of intellect is about all required for his education. As such, education is hardly satisfying to the whole man. It is at best a partial education directed to some elements of human personality. Hence the paradox of the age that the educated man is neither a happy nor a wise man!

Also, no wonder if there is an epidemic of indiscipline and aggression in the student world. The dissatisfied minds are always a source of great danger to themselves and to the society about them. It is more than useless therefore to dole out noble sermons in season and out of season to the youth on the subject of discipline and social service, when in a matter of moments they ridicule in practice the very sermons, when what is needed is a wholly satisfying education. Exhortations have never helped people to either discipline or morality.

What most of our education ignores is that vital reservoir of human life, called emotions. Emotions, to be sure, are the basic element on which is built the whole superstructure of human personality. It is out of them that sentiments, attitudes and philosophies of life arise. Even Reason, the basis of all philosophy, is exposed to the danger of being blown off when the storm of emotions arises. As a matter of fact, for all practical purposes, it is the proper organisation of feelings and emotions that makes us care for reason. Reason and morality, seen in proper perspective, are just the epitome of the culture of feelings and emotions. The destiny of moral and intellectual faculties is indissolubly mixed up with emotions. But for the emotional warmth for humanity and human values, all our acquisitions of science and technology may prove our undoing. The atomic age should therefore quicker realize the rationale of emotional culture vis a vis intellectual education. Elsewhere I have, at length, dealt with the problems of the education of emotions.

It is gratifying and instructive to find how admirably some of the earlier cultures employed fine arts in the service of emotional culture, general education and social reconstruction. Let us hear Plato, in behalf of the classical Greek culture, what he has to say about music: "Can he who is harmoniously constituted ever be unjust? Is not this, Gancon, why musical training is so powerful because rhythm and harmony find their way into the secret places of the soul, bearing grace in their movements and making the soul graceful? Damon tells me — and I can quite believe

it — that when modes of music change, the fundamental laws of state change with them."

What Plato has said in respect of music is more or less true of all fine arts — painting, sculpture, dramatics, dancing and the rest. Art is truly the guardian of public health and morality. And whenever it is relegated to back-waters, there is a serious danger to the health of the individual and society alike. All good art uses up the emotional energy through creative activity, flourishing on the sense of beauty, harmony and rhythm. Spontaneity and self-expression are the first principles of art. They are the dynamisms that move individuals to artistic expression, and thereby register balanced and exuberant life in them. When a painter, for example, has painted a character or a scene, what emerges is not the jumbling of nonsensical lines and chaotic colour, but a highly meaningful glimpse or even interpretation of life; art not only represents life but also interprets it, and even mystifies it, so that ever greater numbers of people are moved to understand life and partake of its joys zestfully and also to bear its sorrows with dignity. Art brings out creativity, engages the whole man, helps self-discovery, spreads harmony and happiness and, not the least, teaches as no teacher can. Bernard Shaw has expressed a vital truth: " fine art is the only teacher except torture." Similarly, any number of thinkers have pronounced themselves on the utility of the contemplation and creation of beauty as anti-dote to many of our social and political ills. Goethe, the great German poet-philosopher, went the whole length to say, "Take care of the beautiful and the good would take care of its own self." For our want of sufficient aesthetic consciousness and activity, we are paying heavily in the form of tantrums, restlessness, neurosis, distrust, jealousy, hatred and aggression! People engaged in artistic activities are calculated to develop integrated, and hence happy and moral, personalities. It is this broad statement which I want to reduce to life in general and education in particular.

The programme of art education in the school should not mean just the academic teaching of various art subjects to a selected few. That does not mean that expertism in art is to be ruled out of court, or aesthetes are not to be trained. But for the generality of students what matters is the overall training of the aesthetic sensibilities, so that whatever their subjects of study or whatever their avocations in future, they bring to bear on their work and day-to-day dealings the finer emotions and coherent designs born out of the sense of beauty. That means that art

must pervade all the subjects of the curriculum so that neither the subjects nor the students who are sought to be trained through them lack in aesthetic elements. As a matter of fact, art in general and various art subjects in particular must minister to life, to the finest of fine arts—the art of living. It is art as a way of life therefore that should be the main concern of education. That approach alone can enrich the curriculum in the real sense. Rightly does M. E. Haggerty observe, “The teachers’ art must be that of the broad and crowded avenues of life, the home, the factory, the market place. It is this conception that must be clarified and dramatised in concrete ways, if art is to take its place in the schools as a major and vital instrument of cultural education.”

Art is not a mere theoretical or abstract adacadabra meant for the dreamy leisure-class as any number of parents and teachers believe. Taught the right way, it has immense potentialities of application to all departments of life. Art courses are already becoming popular where industry needs ever more trained personnel in art. It is also practical in the sense that it improves the taste of the people and thus brings about a revolutionary change in the industrial and social life. Take, for example, the obscene literature and films invading the child and adolescent minds and the state expending all energy and money to check the invasion. Yet the invasion is better checked by the fine taste than by the might of the government. Similarly, where a number of political conferences thriving on diplomacy would fail to bring about international harmony, the missionaries of art would do the trick; art has a universal language, a universal appeal, no matter what the media be.

It follows that it is futile to dismiss art as being unpractical unless we put a perverted construction on the concept of utility. It is equally erroneous to hug the notion that art leads to luxury or corrupts morals. This piece of belief is the outcome of the misapplied statement that art is a-moral or the outcome of the degenerated cult of art. Art is neither mean exhibitionism nor vulgar ostentatiousness. Nor does it mean hard austerity and extreme self-denial. Nor on the other hand should simple living mean inartistic and shabby living as some of the people believe. Indeed art is the simple and spontaneous expression of all that is beautiful in man and the universe. Its avowed aim is to make for beautiful designs in different aspects of life. And “design laws”, as an aesthete has well put, “are divine laws”. Art through its

spontaneity, creativity and emotional culture leads to a highly honoured discipline of life, which institutional religions and authoritarianism have never succeeded in achieving. It is far easier to expect a child to keep himself and his surroundings clean through stimulating his aesthetic sensibilities than through elaborate codes of conduct and dangling before him the swords of fear and punishment for breach of them. The discipline of art—since it engages the whole man, his emotions, intellect and activity—is any time superior to the intellectual discipline or any other brand of discipline known to educationists. It is wholly democratic as it makes for the education of free men.

Art instruction in the school should be broad-based and integrated with the rest of the curriculum covering technical as well as liberal education. It is necessary that the teacher fully takes into consideration the aptitudes of his pupils as well as respects their aesthetic standards. Naturally young children should not be expected to have very high aesthetic standards to begin with. So whether in painting, sculpture, music, dramatics or crafts, they make a mess of things initially, the teacher should not lose patience, and in this way dishearten them and block their impulse to creativity. Spontaneity is the soul of art, and therefore the teacher must allow legitimate expression no matter if the hands that move or the throat that articulates produce rather shabby sketches or dull and depressing tones. Given an invigorating atmosphere, reasonable direction and inspiration, children would of themselves with ease develop a number of skills, for as L. P. Jacks says, “Man by nature is a skill hungry animal”. Too much of formalised and directed instruction in art freezes the creative impulses. The nature of activity in art should be clearly distinguished from the cult of activity popular in the run of general education. The spirit of the Activity method is hardly being applied in the so-called Activity schools. The activities, for the most part formalised and directed, begin and end on the physical plane without in any real way moving the inner depths of mind. The Art-activity on the other hand takes its rise in clear perceptions and subtle emotions, and through various modes of expressions creates new designs, and thereby simultaneously gives expression to emotions as well as transforms them. It moves the body and the mind in unison towards beautiful visions and creations. Much of the craft education in schools, it may be said on the authority of experts, is proving a waste, as the fundamental principles of art are not being applied to it. Mere mechanical production, as much of the craft work in our schools tends to be, robs the pupils

of doing things on spontaneous impulse, robs them as well of recreation and easiness in their educative process. Planning in craft education, while it may well take into consideration the utility and economic factors, should yet be more intimately related to the inner life of the child. To make children full-fledged producers of industrial goods according to a rigid and formal plan is to cut down on their imagery and to dry up their emotions, the very vitals which would have stood them and the society in good stead eventually. The success of the Basic scheme of education in our country, to venture an opinion in this context, largely depends on how in practice creative impulses are released. It is the considered opinion of some of those educationists who should matter that arts and crafts should not be organised as water-tight compartments in the school, but should form an integral part of one parent department so that beauty and utility commingle to our total advantage.

A pupil's inspiration in artistic activity may well up from direct contact with the panorama of life and nature or from the indirect contact such as uplifting paintings and books. In any case the teacher sets the stage and keeps inspiring without making the pupils feel his overwhelming presence. The obvious obligation of the school and the community in this regard is to provide enough of space and varied material for the proper execution of such activities. Most of the progressive schools have their own museums, art galleries, art libraries and the rest, which form a highly congenial environment to which the successive generations of pupils keep on adding the rich wealth of artistic production. Besides, visits to fine arts exhibitions, museums, buildings of superb architectural beauty, musical concerts, dramas, etc., are bound to provide the young minds with a rich fund of experience, the impressions and resources of which may serve as the fly-wheel of art. Art, to be sure, is first of all an intimate experience of Beauty before it enters into the phase of creating the forms of Beauty.

Perhaps it would be true to say that art does not require so much instruction as atmosphere. And the atmosphere should begin with the school first, if it cannot somehow begin with the home. Through the conscious and active participation of students, the school needs to be beautified on the simple principles of cleanliness, orderliness, simplicity and beautiful decorations, which may be cheap or otherwise as the school finances allow. This may form the nucleus of the rest of the activities in the regular and more

advanced branches of art. The school gardening, for example, may prove to be a highly stimulating experience and activity towards realizing the captivating beauties of Nature and of human vision and labour. The aesthetic experiences and activities in the school are bound to broaden into the wider arena of life.

Dramatic activity, which children and the youth take to so easily and in play way, can easily be one of the finest media of self-expression, catharsis and self-realization. It has a singular merit, and it combines most of the arts. If the whole plan of the dramatic activity is executed creatively, the activity does spread over a large number of students and cover a very large area of human emotions. The playlet itself may be written out by students themselves; this will give them training in creative writing. Some may paint beautiful wall-posters to publicise the drama. Others may engage themselves in composing or singing music or in dance or in odds and bits of decorations. A few may yet pen critical reviews of the staged-playlet. And so on. All in all, engagement in dramatics is a completely satisfying and rewarding experience to the participants, besides being an effective instrumentality of evoking co-operation, feeling of fellowship and appreciation of abiding human values in contrast to purely economic and utilitarian values. And if after all, there must survive the demon of aggression or the "death instinct" (Freud) and it must find an outlet, the tragedy may safely be played on the dramatic stage than enacted on the world scene towards human annihilation.

While it is not possible to refer to all the fine arts individually within the space of this article, a little reflection on music may be worthwhile. For ages music has been accepted as a great force in intellectual and emotional discipline and in the formation of character.

The music voted for is not the mechanical, or mechanised, or otherwise inferior music, but that which takes its rise in the deepest throbs of the human heart and sings out the utmost purity and lucidity. It will not therefore be too much to ask for a respectable share for music education in the school and university curricula. It is an unfortunate error—should it still linger in some Quarters—that music is a subject for girls rather than for boys. In a number of international colleges abroad music is one of the major subjects of pursuit, and in result has proved very efficacious in bringing about international harmony. Music therapy and the rest of art therapy, which are being wielded with considerable success, are well proving the soothing and curative power of fine arts.

Folk music which for some time has fallen on evil days needs be revived, as it plays a vital part in cultural renaissance of any nation. As a cumulative expression of the group it needs encouragement at the hands of teachers. As Professor Cherbuliez observes, "Folk music provides the child mind with a valuable opportunity to grasp without abstract, theoretical or erudite explanation, the essence of a work of art". International Folk Music Council has done commendable work in popularising folk music in schools and in the community.

Without disparaging technical or intellectual education, and with a view to investing it with real human meaning, I may venture to say by way of conclusion that a great part of the future of education and of humanity lies in art as a beautiful and righteous way of life; right aesthetic education can provide much needed sanity, peace and zest for life to humanity, lost alas in the grim darkness of depravity!

Book Review

The Cultural Heritage of India, Volume IV: The Religions; Second Edition, Revised and Enlarged, 1956; pp. 775 (double crown octavo); price Rs. 35. Published by The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, 111, Russa Road, Calcutta.

The first edition of *The Cultural Heritage of India*, in three volumes, was published in 1937 to commemorate the Birth Centenary of Sri Ramakrishna Deva (1936). This was the first monumental work on Indian culture. These volumes at once attained wide popularity and the first edition was sold out within a few years of its publication. In view of the pressing demand for the work, the need for a second edition became imperative. But instead of merely reprinting the work, the publishers rightly thought of revising the whole scheme and considerably enlarging the original work. It is now being printed in five volumes. Each volume is sought to be made self-complete in every way with a learned introduction by an eminent authority, an exhaustive index, bibliography, etc. Volume III on 'The Philosophies' has already been published and reviewed in the pages of this Quarterly (Vol. XXVII, No. 3, October 1954). The present volume is exclusively devoted to 'The Religions'. It contains forty-five articles and an *Introduction* as compared to the twenty-six which appeared in Vol. II of the first edition devoted to this topic. Twenty-two articles from the first edition have been retained in this edition. The rest are new and welcome additions. But even the old articles have been revised by the authors themselves before being included in this volume.

The book opens with the *Publisher's Note*. Even this matter-of-fact business-like note seeks to present, at the end, in a nutshell the spirit of India which is religious through and through. It is followed by a *Preface* by Sri Sunitikumar Chatterji. The learned writer of the *Preface*, in the short space of five pages, has successfully explained the attitude of the Hindu mind on religious-philosophical and spiritual matters. Every word of the *Preface* breathes the real spirit of religious India. Here is presented, as it were, the key to the understanding of the pages that are to follow. Indeed, it would be no exaggeration to say that if we have truly imbibed the lesson of these pages the rest of the book will seem to be a mere commentary on and an exemplification of the

highly pregnant and almost aphoristic statements on Indian spiritualism so very rightly emphasized in the Preface. Take for example the following lines:—"That which is one, is one; sages describe it in manifold ways" (*Ekam sad, viprā bahudhā vadanti*—Rg-Veda); "The salutations offered to the various gods reach God alone". (*Sarva-deva-namaskāraḥ Keśavam pratigacchati*); "owing to their diversity in taste, people prefer different ways, straight or crooked; but Thou art the only goal for man, just as the sea is the goal of all waters" (*Rucīnām vaicitryād ṛju-kuṭil-nānā-patha-juṣām; nṛṇām eko gamyas tvam asi payasām arṇava iva*). Now such statements with all that is signified by them are the corner-stone of Indian culture as a whole. This basic attitude finds expression in Indian religion, philosophy, social and political institutions, art and literature, etc. What we get as a result of this, is, in the words of the writer, 'the fabric of Hinduism, in all its wonderful variety', (p. xviii) "Hinduism", rightly says Sri Chatterji, "is not at all a single religion with a creed to which everybody must subscribe. It is rather a federation of different kinds of approach to the Reality that is behind life. That is the unique character of Hinduism, and that character is unfolded in the pages that follow". Attempts have been made previously to present in one place the different systems of Indian philosophy as also the various religious cults of India. But "in the present volume, we have now a formal and authoritative presentation of the subject. This volume particularly displays before us, as it were, the various petals that go to make the lotus as a single flower." (p. xix).

The preface is followed by an *Introduction* by Bhārataratna Sri Bhagwānās. Religion, according to the learned writer, is the pivot of Indian life. The *Introduction* at once begins with the apt remarks of Cramb, "India is not only the Italy of Asia; it is not only the land of romance, of art and beauty. It is in religion earth's central shrine. India is religion." The *Introduction* touches everything that is fundamental to the religious life of India. An interesting feature that we find here is the contribution of different parts of India to its religious life. "Advaita Vedānta", according to the learned writer, "is indeed the culmination of the Sanātana Dharma" (p. 19). But in the very next page we are confronted with the rather surprising statement, "The relations between the infinite and the finite, spirit and matter, eternity and time, are all unsolved problems of philosophy not only in India, but elsewhere also." We disagree with the learned writer in this respect. What worth has any system of philosophy, one may legitimately ask, if it leaves all the important philosophical problems unsolved?

Advaita Vedānta, it seems to us, seeks to offer full solution to all these problems and points out the way to the realization of Ultimate Truth which 'breaks asunder the knot of the heart, dispels all the doubts of the mind and exhausts the potency of all actions' (*Bhidyate hṛdaya granthi chhidante sarva saṁśayaḥ; kṣīyante chāśya karmāni tasmin dṛṣṭe parāvare*). The agnostic note struck in the passage quoted above seems to be somewhat jarring and out of harmony with the rest of the book. Further, it seems to be incongruous with the highly appreciative quotations from Max Müller in praise of Indian Philosophy with which the *Introduction* closes.

The book proper is divided in six parts. Part I is entitled *Religious Sects and Cults* and includes twenty-two articles by scholars of repute on the various cults like Śaivism, Vaiṣṇavism, Tantras, Śakti cult, Yogic schools, Sikhism, etc. The first article of this part by Sri R. C. Majumdar treats of the 'Evolution of Religio-philosophic culture of India'. It is a very systematic and comprehensive outline of the history of Indian Religion beginning from the Mohenjo-daro period right up to Sri Ramkrishna-Vivekananda. The value of this historical outline can hardly be exaggerated. However, we do not agree with the learned writer when he calls the Buddhists 'agnostic'. Perhaps the word is not intended by the writer himself to be taken seriously in the sense in which we find it used in the field of philosophy. Hence we can afford to connive at this slight inaccuracy. Part II deals with 'The Saints and Their Teachings'. Part III is rather interesting dealing as it does with 'Religion in Practice'. Part IV gives an account of "Religions from Beyond the Borders" and these are Zoroastrianism, Christianity, and Islam including Sufism. In Part V we have an account of 'Some Modern Reform Movements' and these are 'The Brāhmo Samāj', 'The Arya Samāj' and Theosophy. Part VI is exclusively devoted to 'Sri Ramkrishna and Spiritual Renaissance'. This last part is particularly illuminating from the religio-spiritual point of view. In it we find summed up, in a few pages, the real spirit of India's spiritualism as represented by the glorious tradition of *Brahma-Vidyā* and its vigorous continuation for the spiritual well-being of the individual and society, and even of the whole world. In the new renaissance we find the harmonious blending of the active and the contemplative sides of religion which seeks to refute effectively the charge of inactivism and world-denial levelled against India's spiritualism. In fact all these activities, even according to Advaita Vedānta, are quite meaningful and also necessary on the empirical plane. What

Advaita Vedānta insists on it that they are means to an ulterior end and not ends in themselves. That end is self-realization. All the Vedas point to this self-same end ('*Sarve vedā yatpadmāmananti*').

Rāmakrishna Deva's life, as Mahātmā Gāndhī has nicely put it, is 'a story of religion in practice'. But God has been differently conceived in different religions. The great beauty of Sri Rāmakrishna's religious practice lies in the fact that he realized God not only through the various indigenous modes of Sādhanā but also through many alien and seemingly conflicting religions. Further, he realized God not only through religious practices, but also through the more rigorous philosophical path of knowledge which is the fulfilment of religion or may itself be called the Great Religion of Truth. This is something unique in the religious history of the world.

The different articles on the various sects and other allied topics treated of in the different parts of this volume do not seek to make a mere mechanical presentation of the subject-matter in hand. They are governed by a common aim which is deliberately kept in view as per specific instructions of the Publication Committee. They seek "to show the hopes and aspirations of the race, the meaning and value of life as the great teachers, saints and propounders of the different schools taught and illustrated in their own lives, and how their respective followers understood these teachings and strove to live up to them in their everyday life and conduct." (Vol. I, First edition, p. iv) Hence it is that 'the realization of the supreme goal of life' is never lost sight of, and the means are not allowed to be confused with the end, Sri Rāmakrishnadeva, as is well-known, was an apostle of Love and Harmony. Hence care is taken to avoid offensive remarks against any person or school of thought. It is the principal aim of this great work "to help forward the promotion of mutual understanding and amity among the followers of different faiths" (*Ibid.*, p. iv).

Let us scrutinize one or two articles included in this volume, and living in Mahārāshtra as we do, let us begin with an article on 'The Mahārāshtra Saints and Their Teachings' by Sri K. V. Gajendragadkar. It is an unpleasant surprise to us to read in this article, which is revised and partly re-written for the second edition, that the famous Mahārāshtra Saint Nāmadeva was a robber in his youth and once killed eighty-four soldiers (p. 357). Now this myth was exploded even so far back as the year 1935 and no major work on this subject has failed to take cognisance of this correction. The reasons for this misunderstanding, too, have been

shown by the scholars in this field, and it is now settled beyond doubt that Nāmadeva, instead of being a robber in the early part of his life, was a child-devotee of a high order. But it seems our writer is unaware of it all. This may be said to be a mistake of commission through negligence to keep oneself abreast with the latest researches in this sphere. A few mistakes of omission may similarly be noted. While writing about the works of Ekanātha, we find a mention of his commentary on four verses of the Bhāgavata. This minor work of Ekanātha is 'famous' according to our writer. But the really famous work—the commentary on the eleventh canto of the Bhāgavata—which is his *magnum opus* is simply ignored and no cognisance of it is taken. The importance of this work can hardly be exaggerated. It exercised profound influence on the subsequent history of the Wārkarī sect. There is still another omission worth noting. Our writer has dealt at some length with the topic of devotion, including the stereotyped consideration of its nine kinds, which is a feature common to almost all the schools of devotion. But the special features of Mahārāshtra school of Devotion are not referred to at all. These may be said to be: (i) the harmonious blending of knowledge and devotion, and more especially; (ii) post-knowledge devotion, *jñānottara Bhakti*. It is also called *Advaita-Bhakti*, i.e., unitive devotion. It seems to be an obvious contradiction. But not so according to Sri Jñāneshwara. According to him, 'here God worships God with God.' "And Jñānadeva does not think this to be impossible: for he tells us that from the same rock are carved the idols of God, the temple, and God's attendants, which seem to be different, and are yet one As the devotee is really God Śiva he, as it were, worships God even when he does not worship; and it is as unnecessary to ask him to worship, as to ask the flame of a lamp to wear the garment of light, or the moon to cover itself with moon-light" (*Mysticism in Maharashtra* by R. D. Ranade, Pp. 163-164). These features are to be seen in all the famous saints of Mahārāshtra like Jñāneshwara, Nāmadeva, Ekanātha, Tukārāma, Rāmadāsa and a host of others. We naturally expect that they ought to have found a place in a detailed consideration of the nature of devotion and its relation to knowledge. Such errors as these could have been easily avoided from an otherwise comprehensive and admirable article had it passed through the hands of another authority in the field like Sri S. V. Dāndekar.

Let us scrutinize, in a similar way, the article on the famous Northern Indian Saint 'Tulasīdāsa and His Teachings' by Srimati Chandra Kumari Handoo. Tulasīdāsa is the author of the famous

'Rāmacharitamānasa', popularly known as 'Tulasī Rāmāyaṇa'. The metaphysics of this really great work is unfortunately a misunderstood subject. The misunderstanding is further enhanced by Tulasīdās's frequent eulogy of devotion, the propagation of which among the masses was his principal aim in writing this work. But devotion is not necessarily antagonistic to knowledge and is perfectly consistent with the Advaitic metaphysics. This is a fact which is testified to by a number of sects and saints treated of in this volume. Sri Ramkrishnadeva himself is an illustrious example of this reconciliation between Advaitic knowledge and devotion. But unfortunately the article under consideration betrays a good deal of misunderstanding on this important subject. Not only this, we find wrong conclusions drawn from premisses which should warrant just the opposite ones. Take, for example, the following passage: "The world as seen through space, time, and causation is Māyā. Māyā is unreal in the sense that the only reality is God; and yet, if Māyā had no reality how could it produce the phenomenal world?" (Pp. 400-401) The author aims at showing through the lines quoted that Tulasīdāsa "did not look upon the world as pure illusion as some Māyāvādins do." But evidently the writer is unaware of the implications of her own statements which justify Advaitism and not any non-Advaitic philosophy. She forgets that this is exactly how the Advaitins argue to prove the 'illusory' character of Māyā and all its products. In Vedānta, too, Māyā is not real in the sense in which Brahman is real. Brahman alone is truly real. Everything else has a dependent reality, and a dependent reality is not reality in the strict sense of the term. This means Māyā is different from the real (*Sad vilakṣaṇa*). Yet it cannot be unreal in the sense in which the imaginary gold-mountain or the barren woman's son is unreal; for as is rightly argued by the author, "if Māyā has no reality, how could it produce the phenomenal world?" That means Māyā is different from the unreal too (*asad vilakṣaṇa*). It is *Sadasadvilakṣaṇa anirvacanīya*. It has an empirical reality only. This, in Advaita Vedānta, is the technical meaning of 'the illusory'.

In a similar way many passages quoted by our author support the Advaitic thesis, though they are intended to serve an opposite purpose. Let us consider the following lines:—

"Knowing all conscious and unconscious beings in the world to be full of (Sita and) Rama,

With folded hands I salute the lotus feet of all." (p. 400).

Here the world is said to be full of Sītā and Rāma. But Rāma invariably stands for Brahman and Sītā stands for His creative power — Māyā, according to Tulasīdāsa. The Sanskrit invocatory verses (No. 5 and 6) in the beginning of 'Bālkāṇḍa' leave us in no doubt about that. Advaita Vedānta explains the whole phenomenal world with the help of these two basic concepts — Brahman which is the substratum and Māyā which is responsible for the illusory creation.

Take again the following lines:—

"He is my best devotee, O Hanumat,

Who firmly believes that all beings, both movable and immovable,

Are the forms of the Lord." (p. 400).

What is non-Advaitic in these lines, we ask? Does not Advaita say 'verily all this is Brahman' (*Sarvam Khalu idam Brahma*)? Names and forms pertain to Māyā, whereas existence, consciousness and bliss pertain to Brahman. Together they explain the whole creation. We fail to understand by what logic can our author derive any non-Advaitic or Vaiṣṇava metaphysics from the lines quoted above.

Further considerations would show that many of the lines quoted by the author in different contexts have a clear and definite Advaitic bearing. In one such line we find it said that there is no difference between the qualified and the unqualified Brahman. Evidently only an Advaitin can say this, for in Advaita Vedānta the unqualified Brahman alone is real and the qualities accrue to it through Māyā, and are therefore illusory. There can be no incompatibility between the real and the illusory. The *Mayic* qualities do not affect the essentially unqualified nature of Brahman. The incompatibility arises if both are taken to be real. That is why the Vaiṣṇava philosophers reject the notion of *Nirguṇa* Brahman altogether, and accept only *Saguṇa* Brahman. The word *Nirguṇa* is interpreted by them to mean 'bereft' of all *undesirable* qualities and not bereft of *all* qualities.

In still another passage the 'world with all its complexity' is declared to be 'based on ignorance' and is said to have no *real* existence. In a similar passage the entire objective realm is reduced to Māyā (Pp. 400-401). This means that for Tulasīdāsa Māyā and Avidyā are synonymous. This is exactly the view of

Sarvajñātma Munī, the famous Advaitic author of Sankṣepa-Śāriraka. This shows, if at all, the proficiency of Tulasīdāsa in the Advaitic lore.

In the *Uttarakāṇḍa*, Tulasīdāsa, while discussing the nature of the bondage of the individual soul (Jīva) refers to the illusory knot formed between the material and the spiritual, which, according to him, is finally broken by the *Mahāvākya*, *Sohamasmi* — 'That am I'. This surely is the language of Advaita and not that of the Vaiṣṇava philosophers.

Lastly, we offer one clinching argument in support of our view. The invocatory verses with which any Sanskrit philosophical work invariably begins supply the clue to the whole philosophy of that work. Following this orthodox tradition, Tulasīdāsa begins his great work in Hindi with invocatory verses in Sanskrit. In the sixth invocatory verse preceding the *Bālkāṇḍa* we find the whole phenomenal world compared to the illusory snake appearing on its substratum — the rope. The substratum of the world-illusion is the Transcendental Lord bearing the name Rāma. Let it be noted that analogies like rope-snake or nacre-silver are used only by the Advaitins in justification of their thesis of *Vivartavāda*, and these are taboo to the Vaiṣṇava philosophers. But references to such analogies are to be found galore throughout the *Rāmāyaṇa*. This leaves us in no doubt about the metaphysics of Tulasīdāsa.

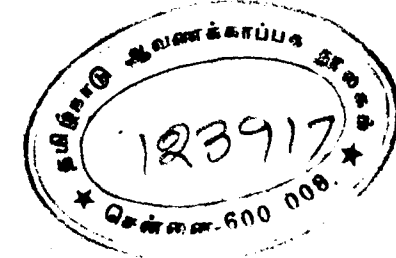
The irony of the whole situation is that whereas the Westerners could clearly see the Advaitic character of Tulasīdāsa's theological and metaphysical views, it is our own countrymen that have misunderstood the same, and even now continue to do so. F. S. Growse translated the *Rāmāyaṇa* so far back as the year 1914 A.D. and in the introduction of his translation he has made this point quite clear (p. xiii). Seven years later Sir Charles Eliot in his *Hinduism and Buddhism* endorsed the view of Growse by quoting him with approval (Vol. II, Pp. 246-47).

Space forbids us to consider other articles which, however, may be subjected to a similar scrutiny by the authorities in the field. We have only tried to draw attention to an important need with regard to this really great work. Let it be made clear that we are writing all this with the best of intentions and not at all in a spirit of carping criticism. We have shown some flaws in order that these and such other flaws may be removed in a subsequent edition, and that similar flaws may not find place in

the volumes that are still in the process of preparation. This need seems to be all the more imperative in view of the remark made in the preface, "And in the present work we have now a formal and authoritative presentation of the subject" (p. xix). In these circumstances some leaven of genuine criticism which is wholly governed by a consideration of truth may do more good than uncritical admiration. Barring this we ourselves are not behind any one in our high appreciation of this monumental work. This is the first and at present the only systematic, and so far as it goes, authoritative encyclopaedia of Indian culture. The printing and the get-up are simply superb. The printing is so scrupulously correct that one hardly comes across any mistake throughout the vast length of this work. This surely is an ideal to be emulated by other Indian publishers.

Institute of Philosophy
Amalner

S. M. CHINGLE



Printed by G. Srinivasachari, B.A., at the G. S. Press, 21, Narasingapuram Street, Mount Road, Madras and published by the Indian Institute of Philosophy at Amalner, E. Khandesh.

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