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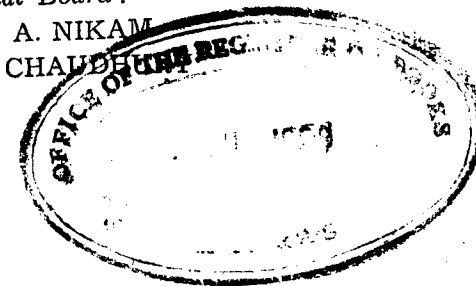
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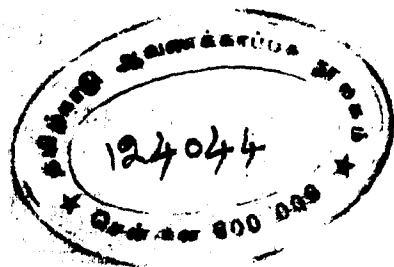
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THE PHILOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY

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Knowledge and Ordinary Language

by

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Philosophers have asked and attempted to answer the question 'what is knowledge?', though they have not only answered but also construed the question differently. Locke and the classical British empiricists, in spite of their interest in what Prof. Carnap calls the rational reconstruction of human thinking, did not carefully distinguish between an empirical and a non-empirical study of knowledge, and so took the question as not unlike the definitional questions that were asked in empirical sciences and depended for their answer on the successful application of the inductive method. Kant and the transcendental idealists took the question as one that could be answered only by a careful application of the transcendental method. The contemporary analysts who think that philosophy stands either above or below but not beside the natural sciences, and accordingly is an analytic clarification of ordinary language, take the question to be non-empirical and assert that the only method of answering it is to analyse the logical behaviour of the verb 'to know' as used in ordinary language. The object of this paper is to make a critical study of the construction put upon the question by the contemporary analysts and also of the answer that they give to it.

I

The contemporary analysts are analysts with a difference. They do not practise same level analysis precisely because this form of analysis is philosophically uninteresting. Neither do they practise

they do not stand for such acts. They are not dispositional words. They are episodic. But then they are achievement words. They stand not for acts but for the fact that certain acts have certain results. The perception verbs though episodic do not stand for mental acts, for an eccentric sort of states or processes.

However 'know' is a determinable dispositional word, and the logic of a dispositional sentence is analogous to the logic of a law sentence. That is, a law sentence is an open hypothetical statement, and a dispositional sentence resembles a law sentence in being partly open. To say that sugar is soluble is to say that it would dissolve, if put in water. Similarly, "to say that this sleeper knows French, is to say that if, for example, he is addressed in French, or shown any French newspaper, he responds pertinently in French, acts appropriately or translates it correctly into his own tongue".⁵ Knowledge is not the name of a mental act or state. Being a mental state or being in a special mental state is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition of knowledge.

This is the negative part of the ordinary language philosopher's thesis on the nature of knowledge. This has some resemblance with the thesis of the earlier epistemologists who could not accept the view of Kant, Gentile and Alexander that knowledge was an activity. But this resemblance is superficial. For these thinkers were not reluctant to admit that knowledge was a mental state. What they fought for was that it should not be categorised as an activity. The contemporary analysts, on the other hand, deny that knowledge is a mental state, and consider it pointless to consult a psychologist like Titchener to categorise knowledge properly. If they are to be compared at all, they should be compared with the Behaviourists; though it should not be overlooked that they are stating a non-empirical proposition. Similarly, they differ from Holt and the other philosophical exponents of the Behaviouristic theory of mind in that they do not take knowledge to be a term with a descriptive use. However, the negative part of their thesis on knowledge is that it is not a mental state.

The positive part of their thesis may be introduced in the manner of the traditional epistemologists by asking the question, how should knowledge be distinguished from belief? The earlier

5. *Op. Cit.*, p. 123.

writers on knowledge took both knowledge and belief to be terms descriptive of mental occurrences, and accordingly came to hold that they differed by virtue of some introspectible ingredient which is present in knowledge but absent from belief. But this was an unfortunate way of distinguishing between knowledge and belief, not only because they are not mental occurrences but also because no one knew what this introspective ingredient was. Knowledge and belief differ. And the difference lies precisely in this that though 'know' and 'believe' are dispositional verbs, they are of quite disparate types. Whereas 'know' is a capacity verb, 'believe' is a tendency verb. A capacity verb is a verb of success, of reasonable success in bringing something off in normal situations. To say that a man knows something is to say that he can bring it off or get it right. But this is not the case with belief. To say that a man believes so and so is not to say that anything is brought off or got right. 'Believe' and 'know' operate in the same field. Yet 'know' belongs to the family of skill verbs, 'belief' to that of motive verbs. The logical behaviour of these two words is different. "To know is to be equipped to get something right and not to tend to act or react in certain manners".⁶

This is, in brief, Prof. Ryle's analysis of knowledge. The essence of Prof. Ryle's theory is that knowledge is not a mental act but a way of behaving. Prof. Austin does not deny mental acts⁷ and does not think that knowing is a form of behaving. But then he admits that the expression 'I know' does not function in language as psychologically descriptive, but signals the speaker's guarantee that the statement prefaced by it has the best evidential conditions in its favour. His reasons for opining thus are as follows: One may know and one may believe, and one's knowledge or belief may be challenged. But there is a singular difference between these challenges. A challenge of knowledge takes the form 'how do you know?', whereas that of belief is of the form 'why do you believe?', and when the challenges are pointed challenges the suggestions are that 'you do not know it' and that 'you ought not to believe it', and not that 'you ought not to know' or that 'you do not believe'. To challenge a belief is not to challenge its 'existence' but its reasons, but to challenge knowledge is to challenge its existence; and this is probably due to the fact that reasons for knowing are of a different sort from those for

6. *Op. Cit.*, p. 134.

7. *Other Minds, Logic and Language*, (ed. Flew), Second Series, p. 125.

believing. Thus, we give our reasons for knowing by stating how we came to be in a position to know, but normally we give our reasons for believing 'by a recital of symptoms, arguments in support and so forth'. To answer the question 'how do you know?', we may say that we have been strictly brought up, and that 'we have exerted a certain kind of acumen'. This explains the frequent 'know-sentence' 'if I know, I can't be wrong'. "Whenever I say I know, I am always liable to be taken to claim that, in a certain sense appropriate to the kind of statement (and to present intents and purposes) I am able to prove it".⁸ To say that I know it is to give the undertaking to prove it. What is known should be true. This should not be construed as a sceptic would like to construe it. It should not be said that as we are fallible human being we can never say that we know. For we are inherently fallible and it is futile to embark on a theory of knowledge by denying this. But we are not by any means inveterately so. We can rightly say that we know when there is no concrete reason to suppose that we may be mistaken in this case. The logic of 'I know' is not unlike that of 'I promise'. When I say 'I know' I am denied the right of adding 'but I may be wrong', just as when I say 'I promise' I am denied the right of saying 'but I may fail'. When I say 'I promise' I not merely announce my intention, but bind myself to others, and stake my reputation. Similarly 'when I say "I know", I give others my word: I give others my authority for saying' what I have said. As in the case of promise so in the case of knowledge things may turn out badly. But I am justified in saying that I know or that I promise 'as the conditions which must be satisfied if I am to show that a thing is within my cognizance or within my power are conditions not about the future but about the *present and the past*: it is not demanded that I do more than *believe* about the future'.⁹ However, 'I know' is not a descriptive expression. When I say that I know it, I do not describe a mental state of mine, but give others my authority for saying it.

Prof. Urmson's views do not differ substantially from those of Prof. Austin. He also does not accept Prof. Ryle's construction of 'know' and 'belief' as dispositional verbs and recognises that the traditionalists have a good point against the dispositional analysis.¹⁰ According to him verbs like 'know' and 'believe' are

8. *Op. Cit.*, p. 131.

9. *Logic and Language*, Second Series, p. 145.

10. *Conceptual Analysis*, (ed. Flew), p. 203.

parenthetical verbs. They occur in the present perfect and lack a present continuous tense, and are not psychologically descriptive. "They function rather like a certain class of adverbs to orient the hearer aright towards the statements with which they are associated".¹¹ As *Read with Care* functions in relation to the notice prefaced by it, so do 'I know' and 'I believe' with regard to the statements conjoined. Thus, 'I know' signals 'complete trustworthiness for a statement made in the best evidential conditions', while 'I believe' modifies the truth claim. They are not parts of the statement made, they are not additional statements, they are orienting signals; and when the verbs are not in the first person 'they report the statement-cum-signal rather than making it'.

Lastly, Prof. Ayer. He also does not deny mental acts; and considers that Prof. Ryle's argument that to use a verb like 'see' to stand for a mental act is to abuse it, is inconclusive. But it is not clear if he will hold with Prof. Urmson that the traditionalists have a good point against the dispositional analysis. Indeed, he quotes with approval Prof. Ryle's observation that 'know' is a determinable, dispositional, capacity verb to repudiate the view that being in a special mental state is either a sufficient or a necessary condition of knowledge. He thinks that if it were the case that when someone thought that he knew something when he did not really know it, he was not only mistaken about the facts he claimed to know but also about his mental state which he took to be a state of knowledge. Being in a special kind of mental state would be a sufficient condition for having knowledge. And it would be both necessary and sufficient, if it were not possible to know anything to be true without being in such a state. But as 'know' is a capacity verb, the possibility of affirming the protases of the above hypotheticals is ruled out, and so also is ruled out the possibility of affirming the proposition that being in a special kind of mental state is either a necessary or a sufficient condition of knowledge. The expression 'I know' has a performative rather than a descriptive use. "To say that I know that something is the case, though it does imply that I am sure of it, is not so much to report my state of mind as to vouch for the truth of whatever it may be. In saying that I know it I engage myself to answer for its truth: and I let it be understood that I am in a position to give the undertaking. If my credentials do not meet the usual

11. *Ibid.*, p. 205.

standard, you have the right to reproach me".¹² What is known should be true. This is the first condition that should be fulfilled if there is to be knowledge. Then, one must be completely sure of what one knows. And thirdly, one must have the right to be sure. So "the necessary and sufficient condition for knowing that something is the case are first that what one is said to know be true, secondly that one be sure of it, and thirdly that one should have the right to be sure".¹³

This is the brief sketch of the position of the ordinary language philosophers. The following propositions record the reactions of these philosophers to the question 'what is knowledge?', even though all of them may not be accepted by them all:

- (a) The question on the nature of knowledge is a question on the use of the verb 'know' in ordinary language.
- (b) There is no such thing as a mental act, and knowledge is not a word descriptive of some inner occurrence.
- (c) Being in a special mental state is neither a sufficient nor a necessary condition of knowing.
- (d) Knowing is having the right to be sure.

II

An examination of the case of the contemporary analysts should be an examination of the four propositions given above and should proceed in the order in which they are given. But as the first proposition is essentially a proposition on the nature of philosophy and may rightly be regarded as a record of the crisis in contemporary philosophy, this paper cannot attempt at any thorough examination of it. It can only discuss it briefly.

The contemporary cult of ordinary language forces the analytic movement to its logical conclusion and so exposes, though in a Pickwickian manner, the inadequacy of the method of analysis. Thus, the change-over to the method of analysis had for its contributing causes a belief and a disbelief—a belief in the perfect language, and a disbelief in speculative metaphysics. But subsequent development in philosophical analysis has made it clear that if one is not unusually obstinate one cannot keep up the belief in perfect language. Thus, the perfect language was supposed to be a language modelled on the calculus of *Principia*

12. *The Problem of Knowledge*, p. 17.

13. *Op. Cit.*, p. 35.

Mathematica, and the belief that it was identical in structure with reality rested upon another belief that the symbolism of *Principia Mathematica* was well-constructed and so capable of offering clues to the structure of reality. But the invention of alternative calculi has shattered this belief, and has made it clear that the attempt at constructing a language a glance at which will make the structure of reality evident should be given up. Similarly, the assumption that ' $\sim$ ', ' $\cdot$ ', ' $\supset$ ' and ' $\vee$ ' of Russellian logic corresponded to 'not', 'and', 'if-then' and 'or' of ordinary language has been seen to be indefensible, and so the attempt at reducing ordinary language to something like a perfect language has been judged to be futile. Indeed, reductive analysis, the successful use of which in the philosophy of mathematics encouraged Russell and others to ally mathematics with its traditional enemy empiricism, has been seen to be inadequate and accordingly the old analysis of analysis has been given up. But philosophical analysis had also a disbelief as one of its contributing causes. Phenomenal progress in the sciences had persuaded many philosophers to believe that philosophy should give up the pretence of discovering otherwise undiscoverable secrets about the universe, and so if it is not to remain content with 'untested generalities recommended only by a certain appeal to imagination' it should admit that not facts but meanings constitute its subject-matter. And as meanings are not objects of the Platonic type, the locus of meaning is language, the analysis of which is the proper province of philosophy. So disbelief in speculative philosophy had been a contributing cause of the change-over to the method of analysis, and it is this disbelief that has kept the cult of analysis alive today. That is, the belief in perfect language has been given up. Similarly, it is no longer believed that reductive analysis is a good philosophical method. Again, no one now subscribes to the view that ordinary language is reducible to something like a perfect language. Still it is contended that philosophical questions are questions on meaning, or requests for analysis—for an analysis of ordinary language, not to arrive at a perfect language, but to find out how the expressions that are interesting to a philosopher are used in it. Philosophical problems are linguistic problems, or problems on the use of expressions in everyday discourse.

Thus, it is obvious that the contemporary cult of ordinary language merely forces the movement of philosophical analysis to its logical conclusion, and so it will not be inappropriate to observe that it signals the dead end at which philosophical

analysis has arrived. Thus, a question on usage is not necessarily philosophical. It might be taken as an empirical question. It can be called philosophical only when it is asked in a philosophical spirit, only when it is construed in a particular way. But what is the distinctive philosophical construction? The answer of Prof. Ayer is that a philosophical inquiry into the use of words may be equally regarded as an inquiry into the nature of the facts they describe.¹⁴ And it is worth noting that this was also the answer of Prof. Cook Wilson who, to check effectively the expanding idealism of the Oxford philosophers, had analysed usage long ago. He had also opined that "in such investigations we are sometimes examining the nature of a name and sometimes the nature of reality".¹⁵ Obviously, the tabooed word 'fact' does not stand for such things as are studied in the natural sciences. Nor does it stand for meanings in Husserl's sense. So it seems that objects, things, events, states of affairs—whatever be the appropriate expression—for which the words, at least those among them that are not incomplete symbols, stand, are classified, grouped, sorted, and every group is given a name, and the word 'fact' stands for that which is common (taking the word 'common' as used in ordinary speech, and not in the sophisticated theories of universals) to the objects called by the same name. So a philosophical inquiry into the use of words is an inquiry into the common characteristics of the objects called by a word, or rather into what is common to the various actual and possible uses of a word. This appears to be the position of Prof. Ayer though he thinks that "there is no very close resemblance between the different instances which are correctly described as instances of knowing".^{15a} And it might be mentioned that Prof. Cook Wilson had also thought that it was a search for a universal, and had insisted that "the unity of the activities of thinking is not to be found in a common universal of which they are species".¹⁶ However it may be said that a philosophical inquiry into the use of a word is a search for universals or assimilation formulae. But should a philosopher inquire into the use of humble words like 'rat', 'cat' and 'mat'? There is no earthly reason why he should. He should study only those words that are philosophically interesting. Now, waiving the discussion if it is possible to label some

14. *Op. Cit.*, p. 29.

15. *Statement and Inference*, Vol. I, p. 41.

15a. *Op. Cit.*, p. 26.

16. *Op. Cit.*, p. 5.

words as philosophically interesting if philosophy be not anything more than an analysis of language, let it be said that a word may be philosophically interesting in many ways. Thus, it may be philosophically interesting (i) if it is used by some outstanding philosopher, (ii) if imprecise use of it creates philosophical difficulties, (iii) if an improper construction of its meaning hampers the progress of the sciences, (iv) if it is sufficiently abstract and is abundantly used in everyday discourse, so that, when unanalysed, social and moral life becomes chaotic and confusing, and (v) if it stands for the sort of facts that a philosopher studies. When a word is of the first kind it is pointless to inquire into its use in ordinary language. Words like *māyā*, *prakṛti*, *noumenon*, *elan vital* etc. are philosophically interesting as outstanding philosophers used them, and though they may have a place in ordinary language their use is governed neither by the rules of ordinary language nor by a misunderstanding of these rules. That they are metaphysical is beside the point in that a study in usage is competent neither to solve nor to dissolve the problems that cannot be tackled without using these words. When a word is of the second sort, an analysis of usage may be of some help, though it is doubtful if it can be confirmatory or evidentiary, and not merely clarificatory or explanatory. When a word is of the third sort, it demands analysis, philosophical analysis, but by a scientist turned philosopher, and not by a philosopher whose acquaintance with science is hardly better than Shakespeare's acquaintance with Greek and Latin, and so analysis of usage is hardly the thing demanded. Again the pursuit of meaning is in this case constructive and prescriptive, and not a search for an assimilation formula. This also is true of the words of the fourth sort. When a word is of the fifth sort usage may sometimes be profitably consulted. But it cannot be denied that 'usage' like 'common sense' admits of diverse interpretations, and the habit of appealing to it as an oracle cannot be esteemed highly; or to quote the Kantian stricture on common sense, 'so long as there is a small remnant of insight left one will be hesitant to use this crutch'. Analysis of usage cannot be the principle task of the philosopher. The contemporary cult of ordinary language makes it quite clear that the smouldering embers of philosophical analysis are at the point of being extinguished.

With these observations on the first proposition we may proceed to examine the second. It has two parts viz. (i) mental acts are mythical, and (ii) 'knowledge' is not a word descriptive

of some inner occurrence. The relation between the two parts, for purposes of examination, may be construed as follows: The assertion of the second part depends on the assertion of the first part. That is, if 'knowledge' is or is not a word with descriptive use is not a question for the lexicographer. It is a philosophical question. Accordingly, if mental acts be not mythical, there must be some words to stand for them, and 'knowledge' must be one such word. The rules of the English language may not permit its descriptive use. But this is irrelevant. The assertion or denial of the first part is presupposed in the assertion or denial of the second part. It is not possible to hold the second part without holding the first part also. So it is the analysis of the first part that is specially important. If it be seen on analysis that mental acts are not mythical, we shall ask the philosopher who denies that mental words are descriptive to find out from the vocabulary of the lay man words descriptive of them, and if he fails to find such words we shall be justified in holding that he has misconstructed the genius of ordinary language.

That mental acts are mythical, was asserted categorically by Prof. Ryle, and we have already stated his reasons for such an assertion. But other analysts are not so categorical. Indeed Prof. Austin admits them. This is also the case with Prof. Urmson. Prof. Ayer is also unwilling to deny mental acts. This suggests that the case of Prof. Ryle against mental acts is not a good one. Indeed, as Mr. Geach has observed 'the existence of mental acts ought not to be a matter of controversy':¹⁷ It is impossible not to admit them, or to give a consistent account of mental life by denying them. Prof. Ryle proposed to lay the ghost in the machine. But he could not carry out this programme consistently. He has, though in a highly depreciatory manner, left some reports of mental acts standing. 'Itches', 'tingles', 'tweaks', 'agitations' etc. have been taken as categorical reports on mental acts, and no attempt has been made to reduce them to semi-hypothetical statements about overt behaviour. The case against mental acts is not a good one.

But then Prof. Ryle is perfectly intelligible. The proposition that 'know' is a capacity verb can be confidently asserted if there be no mental acts. Admission of mental acts does not fit well with the view that 'know' is a capacity verb. True, expressions

17. *Mental Acts*, p. 2.

like 'I know French' suggest that the verb is dispositional, and there may be other considerations for holding it to be a determinable dispositional verb. But this cannot rule out the view that 'know' has a descriptive use. For if mental acts be not mythical there must be some words to stand for them, and in view of the fact that the denial of mental acts is a highly sophisticated philosophy these words must form a part of the vocabulary of the lay man. 'Know' may stand for a capacity, but it also should stand for some occurrence. It should have some descriptive sense. Prof. Ryle is intelligible. But this can hardly be said of the other analysts. Admission of mental acts is not consistent with the view that 'know' is a capacity verb only. The statement that it has a performative rather than a descriptive use is an admission of this inconsistency.

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The point is not merely verbal. To denounce it as verbal would be to concede more uncongenial points. Thus, we may call it verbal if we accept either of the following propositions: (i) 'know' has hardly any descriptive use, and (ii) only its performative use is philosophically interesting—and these propositions are unwholesome. To assert the first proposition is to obliterate the distinction between philosophy and lexicography. And the second proposition can be asserted only if the case against a philosophical study of its descriptive use be settled beyond reasonable doubt. The contention that if 'know' be a descriptive word, a statement like 'He knows x' becomes a report on some unwitnessable private occurrent and so untestable and meaningless is highly objectionable. Thus, it assumes the verification theory of meaning in some form which is not unobjectionable. Secondly, the admission that mental states are private does not preclude the possibility of knowing other minds unless it be admitted further that what is not directly known is not known. X may not introspect the emotion of fear as experienced by Y, but he may follow Y when he says that he was afraid, and may understand not only that Y had quickened heart-beats, trembling-lips, shallow-breathing and similar things but also that he had an emotion of a certain sort, though it is possible for Y alone to introspect upon it. The point is not verbal. The inconsistency is there, and this probably explains Prof. Austin and Prof. Urmson's reluctance to call 'know' a performatory verb.

We may now examine the third proposition. But as Prof. Ayer's defence of it assumes the fourth proposition we should examine them together. The fourth proposition analyses the

meaning of the expression 'I know' when attached to a statement and should not be taken as an answer to the question on the nature of knowledge construed traditionally. In other words, the question of the old philosophers on the nature of knowledge was a question on the proper categorial analysis of it. But the question of the contemporary analysts is a different one. This is too obvious a point and should not have been mentioned. But there is the chance of missing it and of creating a confusion that is not merely verbal. That is, it may be the case that one says 'I know' only when one is sure and has the right to be sure, and this may be the necessary and sufficient condition of using the expression 'I know'. So having the right to be sure may define the word 'know' in its performative use. But 'know' has, or should have, a descriptive use also, and there is the chance of taking it to be the definition of knowledge as a descriptive word, and so of discarding the definition that knowledge is a special state of mind. The definition that knowledge is a special state of mind may not be a good definition. It may be vague and too wide. It may be necessary to replace the word 'special' by a definite word, and this replacement may be effected in various ways and may depend on how the relation between knowledge and truth is construed. But this is off the point. What is in point is that it is a definition of 'know' in its descriptive use and a different yardstick should be used for its measurement.

However, having the right to be sure defines the word 'know' in its performative use. I can say 'I know' only when I can vouch for what I say. This is asserted by all the analysts. Prof. Cook Wilson also had made a similar assertion. So it would be to behave like an ass to question the validity of the analysis that yields this result. Yet one cannot give up the qualm that something not properly clean is being palmed off. The information that analysis of the French and the German languages confirms this is not assuring.¹⁸ For there is the fact of error that seems to remain unaccounted for in this theory. That is, to preface a statement with 'I know' is to take a decision. It is a decision on the evidential conditions for making the statement. When the evidential conditions are not sufficient, 'I know' is not used in parenthesis. It is so used only when the evidences are sufficient. Now, there is a distinction between evidences that are sufficient and the evidences that are taken to be sufficient. 'I know' should not signalise the

18. Urmson *Op. Cit.*, p. 210.

first sort of evidence. For then the contention that it behaves like 'I promise' would become meaningless. We do not say in parenthesis 'I promise', when the deed is done. So we should not say 'I know' in parenthesis, when the statement is confirmed. The second sort of evidence should be signalised by it. The decision is on evidence taken to be sufficient. But evidences taken to be sufficient may not be so. One may be mistaken in the appraisal of evidences. True, the doubt that one may be mistaken in weighing the evidences, if a doubt and not an obsession, may be allayed. There are recognised procedures, standard methods for doing this. And if one is strictly brought up, one says 'I know' only when one has made use of the standard methods. But this is beside the point. For the standard methods should be appropriate to the type of doubt they are used to allay. What is competent to overcome one sort of doubt may not be competent to overcome a doubt of a different sort. The application of the standard methods is preceded by some concrete doubt. When no doubt is present, the prefacing of a statement by 'I know' need not be preceded by the use of any such method. Such an occasion is decidedly rare. One or other doubt takes hold of us whenever we try to make an assertion. And the more experienced we are, the more we learn the art of looking at a situation from different points of view, and the number of the assailing doubts increase. But however widely experienced we may be, or however strict may be our bringing up, we may yield to our essentially credulous nature, may fail to overcome some important doubt precisely because it did not assail us. This is not scepticism. It is simply an analysis of the case that we are often mistaken about the evidences, and decidedly has not the implication that all decisions on the sufficiency of evidence should be looked with suspicion. However, we may misjudge evidences without knowing that we are misjudging. And the question is, what should be the parenthetical verb in such a case? It cannot be 'suspect', or 'opine', or 'guess', or 'think', or 'believe' or any other verb that makes a modified truth claim. For a decision on crippled evidence is not a crippled decision on evidence.* When we decide on adequate evidence and when again we decide on inadequate evidence, we are in the same frame of mind. So the parenthetical verb should be 'know'. But we do not really know. When the statement will be challenged and the insufficiency of the evidence will be shown, we would say we thought we knew. But this means that we did not know. There should be a parenthetical verb. But what is it? As knowing is having the right to

be sure, and as again the right has its sanction not from the person but from the evidences, it cannot be 'know'. But as again we are not aware that we are deciding on improper evidence, it should not be any other verb. It should not be said that ordinary language has no parenthetical verb appropriate to the case under consideration. For that would provoke the critic of ordinary language to quote Touchstone "Truly, shepherd, in respect of itself it is a good life; but in respect that it is a shepherd's life, it is naught". Indeed, it cannot be true—and this can be said on apriori grounds. The case of error is frequent, and there must be some word in ordinary language appropriate to the case under consideration. If we fail to find it we are moving on a wrong track. However, if a lay man be asked to give his opinion, he will say that 'know' is the verb. So long as evidences are not seen to be insufficient and the statement is not disconfirmed, 'know' will be used in parenthesis. The man who has wrongly weighed the evidences without being aware that he has weighed them wrongly will say that he knows that so and so is the case. This use of 'know' is not illegitimate. Considered as an index to the truth-value of the statement attached, it fails. But it succeeds in doing something else, in informing that the person making the statement considers the evidences to be sufficient. And as lay men believe in mental acts, we may proceed further and say that it describes some mental state of his. That is, lay men believe in mental acts. They also distinguish between being sure and being not sure. They also know that one may be sure when one ought not to be. But then as the mental state of being sure caused by adequate evidence does not differ from that caused by inadequate evidence, and as again 'know' has a descriptive use (or should have one), they use it to describe the mental state of being sure without taking into account if it has been caused by adequate or by inadequate evidence. It is because we are not taking into account the descriptive use of 'know' that we are at a loss to find out the proper parenthetical verb. It is true that when one believes and knows that one believes (that is, knows that one knows not) one may be completely sure, and this may be indistinguishable from the state of being sure that accompanies knowledge. But it would be an objection if knowledge be defined in terms of being completely sure, and also if it be thought that knowledge is necessarily or intrinsically true. And this is a completely different matter. The point at issue is, if 'know' stands only for signalling the truth claim of some statement, and the case of decision on insufficient evidence suggests that this is not the case, it also stands for the state of being sure. True, if mental

states were mythical, it would have been impossible to assert this. But mental acts are not mythical. 'Know' should have a descriptive use. That it has a performative use, that it often behaves like 'promise', that it stands for dispositions—these and similar statements are unconvincing. That its use is performative rather than descriptive, that it may stand also for the state of being sure—these and similar statements, if not a virtual surrender of the thesis, are indefensible compromises. What the contemporary analysts say about 'I know' or 'knowledge' might be the peculiarities of a particular language, and should not be generalised. In Sanskrit 'know' has a descriptive use. The Sanskrit sentence of which 'I know a table' is regarded as a standard translation is said to be the verbal expression of the knowledge that knows the knowledge of a table. There is undoubtedly something queer about knowledge of knowledge. But do we not know that we know? Moreover, when the insufficiency of the evidences is brought home to us we may say that 'I know that I did not know'. This is a perfectly legitimate statement, and though there is something Socratic about it, it is quite ordinary. But how is it to be analysed? I guarantee that this is not (or was not) the case is not its proper analysis. For here 'I did not know' intends to cancel the portion in parenthesis, and not (or only indirectly) the portion attached to it in the previous statement. I guarantee that I did not know, is also not its proper analysis. For 'that I did not know' is the negative of 'I know' that had been said parenthetically. And as 'I know' was not a statement, it also is not and has no truth claim. So the 'I know' that is used to signalise it should be superfluous. I guarantee that I did not guarantee—this also is not its analysis. For 'that I did not guarantee' is not a statement, and besides it is not a fact that I did not guarantee. I guarantee that the evidences are (or were?) not sufficient—this too is not its proper analysis. For the sufficiency of the evidences was guaranteed parenthetically and so non-propositionally. And if the guarantee is a propositional guarantee, 'I know that this is so and so' might be rewritten as: 'that this is so and so' follows from some proposition not clearly stated; and accordingly one might be justified in saying that 'I know' states the epistemic conditions, and licences the constitutive ones without stating them for inferring the statement attached. Is it then a different way of stating that I admit or realise that the evidences are insufficient? No, for if the verbs parenthetically used make modified truth claim, the translation is false, and it is doubtful if we gain anything by replacing 'know'.

Another point should be made in this connection. Philosophical psychologists like Prof. Stout speak of the cognitive attitudes and hold that there are different forms of it. But they do not say that knowing is such a form. This is important. This suggests that all these forms are forms of knowing, and not that there is no such thing as knowing. It is in keeping with the use of the Sanskrit verb *jñā*. Similarly, I may not ordinarily use the verb 'know' and use verbs like 'see' and 'hear'. I may use it only to signalise the truth claim of a conjoined statement. But from this we should not draw the conclusion that knowing is having the right to be sure. For 'know' is quite competent to replace 'see' and 'hear'.

Having the right to be sure cannot be the sufficient condition of knowing, if the rightness in question be not self-sanctioned rightness. True, when one joins 'I know' to a statement, one orients appropriately the hearer to the truth-claim of the statement. But this is not an interesting proposition. It is almost trivial, and the triviality is not that of a philosophical proposition, in that it does not make us see the logical or category mistakes that we make when we philosophise on knowledge. It should not be said that scepticism concerning other minds results from the failure to see this. For such a scepticism has its source in giving an impossible construction to the statement that 'knowledge' is descriptive of some inner occurrence, and it is obvious that the failure to see that 'know' in its parenthetical use is performative rather than descriptive has not been responsible for this construction. Besides, to see this is not to cancel that construction. Similarly, if the theory that knowledge is a mental act had, as its putative premise, tacitly assumed that 'know' in its parenthetical use is psychologically descriptive, it would have helped us in seeing our mistake (assuming that this view is a mistaken view). But the theory of mental acts does not stand on such an unsure foundation. It is evidenced by evidences of a different sort. Indeed it seems that the contemporary analysts are aware of Prof. Ryle's failure to eliminate mental acts, but are in sympathy with him, and so instead of construing the question 'what is knowledge?' in the old sense of 'what should be the proper categorial analysis of knowledge' construe it as 'what does "I know" when used parenthetically signify?' This question, it may be admitted, is a philosophical question, if it be taken philosophically, as a question on the relation between knowledge and truth. The analysts take it to be such a question. But as

the question cannot be satisfactorily answered by a linguistic analysis, philosophical and lexicographical lines of thought cross and recross and make them unsure and difficult reading. Again, this question may be philosophical but that does not make the old question non-philosophical, and it may be pertinently asked if it may be tackled satisfactorily without tackling the first question. Prof. Ryle is justified in treating the old question as spurious. But the other analysts are not. They recognise mental acts. So it is proper that they should attempt to categorise them. But they do not. Probably because they do not like doing metaphysics. But do they not do it? Bradley had once observed that metaphysics was the finding of bad reasons for what we believed on instinct. This may not be a happy observation. But it brings out the character of that sort of metaphysics that one cannot avoid if one does not do metaphysics consciously.

Ultimate Reality

by

G. R. MALKANI

Is the notion of 'ultimate reality' at all significant? If it is significant, is it necessary? It appears that it should suffice to speak of 'reality' only. When we know a thing for what it is, we know reality. We know things around us, books, chairs, etc., for what they are. Shall we not call them *real*? Any problem about reality is closed there. There is no need to ask, what is 'ultimate reality'?

This argument would be all right, if there were no problem about reality itself or if all our knowledge were true knowledge. The fact of false knowledge has to be admitted. We often make errors in knowledge. We perceive erroneously or one thing for another. Unless all error is completely eliminated from knowledge, the problem of reality cannot be laid to rest. It may be all-right for common-sense to regard certain pieces of knowledge or certain perceptions to be true. But they are true for practical purposes only. They are not theoretically true. We often demand their verification through some other piece of knowledge,—a process which can be carried on indefinitely without completely settling the theoretical question. All we can attain is a psychological settlement,—we are mentally convinced that what we perceive is true. The logical settlement remains open. Even when we do not demand verification, our perceptual knowledge remains open to correction or modification. The theoretical question can only be said to have been finally closed, when there is a piece of knowledge (not purely formal) which is self-evidently true, so that there is simply no scope for doubt or error. If anybody could point to such a piece of knowledge, the question of ultimate truth or of ultimate reality would not arise. But there is simply no piece of knowledge of objective fact, which is self-evidently true in this sense. If that is so, all our knowledge is under a question-mark. It is condemned at the very start. How can we avoid the question of reality? If what we ordinarily call reality is only an appearance of reality that can be sublated, the question of ultimate reality as contrasted with the appearance becomes inevi-

table. Unless we have falsity, we have no meaning for ultimate truth or ultimate reality.

Let us now take for granted, for the sake of argument, that true knowledge of an objective reality is literally possible. In that case, the object of that knowledge becomes quite real. Something is real, when it exists not only independently of all knowledge, but also independently of all other things. It is literally *in-itself*. Dependent existence is no real existence at all. Only the illusory is said to have a dependent existence. The real can depend on nothing beside itself. If a real depends upon another real, what does the latter depend on? We shall have either mutual dependence, or circular dependence, or an infinite regress. The real may be a brick of the universe, but each brick must have its own reality, not dependent reality. And yet we find dependence of various kinds entering into the very being of things we know. Everything is relative in various ways.

(a) All things we know are born. What is born has a cause beyond it. This is called dependent origination or *pratitya-samutpāda* by the Buddhists. A world that consists of things that are born cannot be a real world. (b) Everything that we know is relative in its nature to things that are different from it and are quite opposed to it in nature. To say that something is a goat is to distinguish it from what is not-goat, eg. elephant, camel, etc. This distinction is fundamental to it. *Without it, no positive character can be given to it.* Everything thus derives its nature from its own negation. 'Other things' may be said to enter into its very being. What is it *in-itself*? Buddhists said, it was *śūnya*. The world of relative things was called by them *samvrti-satya*. (c) Advaita Vedanta points out one more relativity. That is most important for it and saves it from *śūnya-vāda*. All objects of knowledge are necessarily related to the subject. Take away this relation, and the object collapses completely. We cannot even conceive an object to exist in itself. Inconceivability may be a purely human deficiency and not a criterion of non-reality. But what about meaning? Can anything not related to intelligence have any meaning for us? The relation to intelligence is fundamental to every form of objective being. It is not only the physical objects, but even the mental objects, that are included in this relativity. This means that the intelligence to which *all* objects are relative is, in the ultimate analysis, a non-mental reality or a pure intelligence beyond the mind.

If our argument is correct, reality assumes the form of ultimate reality when it is the underlying ground of what is an illusory appearance only. The whole world of things which we know is, by our analysis, such an appearance. This appearance demands an underlying substance or reality. We shall call it the ultimate reality. It must be qualitatively different from the world. It must be truly metaphysical. All things of the world are knowable as objects; the metaphysical cannot be known as an object. All things of the world constitute a manifold; the metaphysical cannot form part of any manifold. It is rather the underlying unity of the manifold which is the world in time and in space. Ultimate reality may thus briefly be described as the one in the many. Everybody knows the many, few know the one. To know the One is the central problem of all philosophy. He indeed is a true philosopher who sees the one in the many.

It may now be said that there may be such a thing as ultimate reality in the sense indicated by us. But if it is the one in the many, it need not be *the only reality*; and it need not be *the negation of the many*. It is no doubt the common-ground; but the common-ground also requires the many of which it is the common-ground. If it pervades the many or enters into them, the many must in some sense *be*. It is like the thread binding together different beads into a rosary or garland. The world is similarly resting upon a transcendental unity underlying it. We do not readily see the latter because of the things, as we do not readily see the thread because of the beads. In the end, both are real,—the unity and the manifold together make up the ultimate reality. There should be no one-sidedness and abstractness in ultimate reality. The unity should be concrete.

This argument ignores the whole metaphysical status of appearance. The appearance is essentially illusory. What is illusory cannot be included with the real in any real whole. The real can only be reached through the rejection and the negation of the illusory. Let us take the analogy literally. If a real world must rest upon something else as its ground, what does the latter rest upon? The real cannot rest upon the real, the illusory can. It is only an illusory world that can require a ground without self-contradiction. In the case of the garland, the unity stands outside the many and is quite external to them. In what sense is it *their* unity? The thread is only one extra piece just like the other pieces. We might as well ask, what is the unity underlying the thread together with the other pieces? If every manifold

requires a unity, here is a new manifold inclusive of the thread which too requires a unity. What is the thread binding it together? That will lead to a *regressus ad infinitum*, not to a real unity.

It may now be said that the unity is pervasive, substantial and internal. It does not stand in an external relation to the differences, as the thread does to the beads. The differences have simply no independent existence. They are differences only in the unity or *within* the unity. Substantively, the unity alone is real, the differences are nothing apart from it. The differences are not ontologically real, but real only in a speaking way or a subjective way. Here we have the well-known instances of clay and 'pots made of clay', wood and 'toys made of wood', gold and 'ornaments made of gold', etc. The different toys, for example, are only different names of the self-same substance, i.e., wood, running through its different modifications. The unity is here ontologically real, while the differences are real only in name.

This representation of the relation of the one to the many comes nearer to the truth, for it recognises a higher ontological status for the unity; but it is not fully appropriate. (a) One can argue that the mass of clay that goes to make one pot is not the mass of clay that goes to make another pot. There is already substantial difference. The unity has reference merely to the *essential nature* of clay which is the same in all the pots, or what is called *jāti* or universal clay. The ultimate ontological unity which we are seeking must not be open even to this objection. If it is a *real unity*, it cannot tolerate even the least amount of difference, substantial or any other. It must be literally and absolutely one. Otherwise, the same old objections which we advanced against the reality of the world would come up. It can be really one, only if it is essentially, and in its own nature, indivisible (*niravayavi*). When we say that the ultimate unity is *here* or *there*, we mean that it is here in its wholeness, or it is there in its wholeness. It has simply no parts which it can distribute in different places or different things. It is the places and the things that are introduced into it from outside or superimposed upon it by the subject; and that creates an illusion for us in the reverse direction. The unity is not itself differentiated in places and things. It is unlike any material unity that we know.

(b) A second objection would be as follows. Clay has always some form. It is therefore open to *modification*. It can change one form for another. *The form always and necessarily*

belongs to it. The form is what we have deprecated as not real. What is it then without the form? Take away the form, and what is left of the clay? Absolutely nothing. If all forms are subjective, accidental and matters of speaking only, nothing will be left for knowledge when they are negated. If we are to avoid this objection, the ultimate unity must be literally formless (*nirākāra*) and not open to any change or modification (*avyabhichārī*). The material unities which we know do not possess this character.

(c) A third objection will be that in the material unities listed above, the underlying substance is not hidden or mysterious. It is known directly and immediately in all its various forms. There is no ignorance of the unity. This is not so when we know the different things which constitute our world. We do not *readily recognise* the underlying unity of substance. The unity is a problem for us. It is mysterious. Now, it may not be as mysterious as we, in our ignorance, suppose it to be; but it is certainly not quite obvious and it is not readily recognised. This, however, only shows that we have here a case of a fundamental error, and not of a speaking error only. That which is essentially formless is confused with forms which are opposed to it in nature. Clay, for instance, is not opposed to its various forms. It has a natural form, the crudest being the unformed mass (*pinda*). The underlying unity of the world as a whole, however, is qualitatively different from the world. Such, in fact, is the nature of the opposition between the two that to know the unity is not to know the world, and vice-versa. It is a case of a transcendental illusion or *adhyāsa*. The ultimate substance is hidden by the empirical appearances. We simply cannot know the two together or at the same time. The only relation between them is that of false identity (*adhyāsic tādātmya*), which is the relation between the real and the illusory.

The ultimate unity is intolerant of all differences. We can therefore reach the unity only through the negation of the differences. There is for us no such thing as "unity in difference". It is a simple ontological question,—is the unity real or the differences? It can never be both. Where we try to combine them together, the unity is bound to be spurious or teleological only, such as a work of art. Ontologically no compromise is possible.

The question now arises, how shall we seek the unity? It is natural to suppose that the unity underlies the differences and must be found where the differences are found. The differences are given to us in a world which is differentiated through time, space and causality. If now the unity which we are seeking lies

below this world, we have a world super-posed upon another world. The underlying unity becomes objective to us like the world which we actually know and which we have pronounced to be illusory. It must therefore have some of the limitations of time, space and causality like the latter. It is not different in principle or different in quality. It is simply an underlying part of the world which we know. We are therefore obliged to conclude that the unity is nothing objective. It is not where the world appears. It is nowhere in time and space. It is just in itself or in its own nature (*své mahimnā tiṣṭati*). It is the world, with its time, space and causality, that appears in the unity, not vice-versa. The question to ask is not, where is the unity? The unity is where it is and in its own nature. The question to ask is, what is the nature of the ground in which the world appears, if that ground cannot be located in time or space and if it is nothing objective to us?

The only thing within our experience that is no kind of object and that is absolutely opposed in nature to everything objective is the intelligent self or *I*. Indeed, here there will be differences of opinion. Most philosophers objectify the self itself and seek to apprehend it in relation to, or in contrast with, the not-self. But we can show that this objective self or the empirical self is not our real intelligent self, but an unintelligent self only or a self that can be *meant*. Anything objective is essentially unintelligent, and demands a higher self that is non-objective and that is the only real knower. It is this self which is *never* our object that is our true self. Our ordinary intuition of the self is a mixed intuition. We need to discriminate the true in it from the false. The false is what can be known in the objective attitude. The true is what cannot be thus known and what is self-evidencing and self-revealing (*svaprakāṣa*). The light that reveals all things does not require another light to reveal it. Who can know the knower? This ultimate knower, this light of the spirit in us, is our true intelligent self.

Here we have in the intuition of the self the kind of reality which will satisfy all our requirements of an ultimate unity that is at the same time the ground of the world. Instead therefore of looking outside for the unity (*tattva*), we must look within. We must look not superficially, but in a deeply introspective attitude; for, looking within, we may find only another set of objects, the mental objects. These are no less part of the empirical world, which we are seeking to transcend, than the objects outside. There

is no difference in principle. There is only this difference that while the objects outside are known to be non-intelligent, mental acts and states are in some sense intelligent. The latter are directly related to intelligence and identified with it, while the former are related to intelligence only through the acts of cognition. A second difference may also be noted. Any possible unity behind the world outside appears, on analysis, to be fictitious, but the unity behind the mental life does not appear fictitious. It is found there directly. Where in fact could we seek the unity of the intelligent self except behind our mental life? The mind and its acts are known. They can only be known, in the last analysis, by a pure intelligence which has nothing of the mind in it. Pure introspection is bound to reveal to us an intelligence, which is incorruptible, immutable and pure. That is the real self.

We contend that the self thus understood will be found to be the ultimate unity we are seeking and the ground of the world. Since it can never be known in an objective attitude, it can only be known in some other way. Once we touch this self with our thought, it transmutes our thought to its own pure subjectivity. We cannot contemplate the self from outside or enjoy it from inside. We have to give up both these attitudes. There is a third way. As soon as we begin to apprehend the self, our mind is raised or exalted, so that it partakes of the reality of the self and becomes the self itself. It is the self that impresses its own nature upon thought and makes it after its own image, not vice-versa. In all other knowledge, thought dominates and determines reality and assimilates reality to its own concepts and categories. That is why this kind of knowledge is delusive. But in the knowledge of the self, it is just the other way. It is reality that dominates and determines thought and impresses its own image upon it. It is therefore rightly called knowledge that is determined by reality itself or substance itself (*vastū-tantra*). This is our definition of knowledge, and it is the only true knowledge.

The knower of Brahman becomes Brahman. This is a new species of knowledge altogether. Ordinarily, all our knowledge is dualistic. There is a knower and there is a known. The knower never becomes the known. But how shall we know the Self. It takes us up into its own nature with the added resplendence of the Absolute. When we realize that the Self is not *an* entity, but *the* entity that is the ultimate unity and the ground of the world, and that the world is only an illusion, we can no longer keep ourselves separate from it, contemplating it or enjoying it. We so to

say give up the ghost of separate existence and enter into the truth. We have life in the truth, if that term is permissible. It is permissible only in a limited sense as a *human* realization, necessarily *temporal* in character, but the *gateway* to eternity. In the end, we *are* the truth, we do not *become* it. All our *human* realizations are, from this point of view, *māyic* in character or illusory. The eternal alone is, was, and shall be.

The problem of ultimate reality cannot be ignored. It is the problem of problems. It is the same as the problem of the one and the many in European philosophy. In Indian philosophy, it is knowledge of the truth, the knowledge that saves. It is a real problem, not a fictitious one. Unless it is resolved, and resolved completely, philosophy has failed of its task, and all its theoretical pretensions are without value. We must have the higher knowledge. That is the only proper answer to empiricists and sceptics, not a theoretical metaphysical construction of doubtful value, which is open to all kinds of criticism.

What we have said in a round-about way, through arguments of reason, about ultimate reality, is stated more directly by Advaita Vedanta. That explains the appeal of this great system of philosophy to the Hindu mind. It begins by pointing out the importance of the knowledge of ultimate reality to man. "Knowing That (Brahman) only, he crosses death and becomes immortal." Death is supposed to symbolise empirical existence (*samsāra*) and all the evil that is implicit in it. To be free from death is therefore to achieve the highest goal of life, which is called in Indian philosophy *mokṣa* or Absolute Freedom.

What now is the nature of ultimate reality which we should seek to know? The nature of ultimate reality may be known in three progressive stages: (a) Brahman is the transcendental or metaphysical cause of the world. It is that from which the world is born, by which it stays, and into which it goes back. The instance is that of clay and its pots. In the same way, Brahman in the form of its *sat*-attribute or attribute of *being* is the substantial cause of all things and is known immediately in those things, even as clay is known immediately in all pots. Nothing can fall outside being, or die anywhere except in *being*. A may change into B, B may change into C, etc., but *being* does not change and remains permanent through them all.

(b) This substantial ground of the world has a nature of its own that is directly opposed to the nature of the world. It is pri-

marily *pure being* or *sat*. Being does not attach to Brahman, as it attaches to things like pots, pens, etc. We say a pot exists. We cannot say that Brahman is or exists. Brahman and being are one and the same thing. Only these two terms distinguish ultimate reality from two different sets of facts. Brahman distinguishes it from every form of limitation or of finitude, and Being distinguishes it from every form of illusory appearance. This *being*-attribute of Brahman is not a mere abstraction, like the *idea* of being. It is *intelligent being*. Intelligence then is the second attribute of Brahman. This intelligent being which is Brahman is not neutral as to value. It represents in its own fundamental nature the highest value which intelligent being is capable of, and that is joy or bliss which cannot be exceeded. This joy or *ānanda* is the third principal attribute of Brahman. It makes being still more concrete, for it embodies the highest value in it. Brahman is to be known in its own nature as *sat-ctt-ānanda*.

(c) The last stage in knowledge is reached when we know Brahman as our own immediate self (*pratyagātman*). The great reality or the ultimate reality is not far and distant, or transcendent to us. It is our very Self that reveals itself directly to us and is therefore called *svaprakāśa*. The consummating knowledge only comes with the great statement, "Thou art that" (*tattvamasi*).

We have seen the importance of knowledge of the Truth, and we have also seen the different forms and stages of this knowledge. We need further only see the emphatic way in which Advaita Vedanta regards Brahman as the only reality of the world. It is just like clay and pots. Pots are only matters of speech ontologically speaking, but clay is not. Clay is real substance. In the same way, Brahman in its *sat*-aspect is the real thing, while the things of the world that we know are matters of speech only. Again it says, "all these things are Brahman only", which means that there is nothing *apart from Brahman*. Lastly, the whole matter is further clarified by the negative statement, "The many do not exist here in Brahman", which clearly means that the world is negated in Brahman. The world is neither *different from* Brahman, nor is it *identical with* Brahman. It is different from Brahman for practical purposes; but all we can say ontologically is that it cannot exist apart from Brahman, which means that it can only exist in false identity with Brahman; or what is the same thing, it can only exist illusorily in Brahman. Our reason and the statements of the revealed word thus lead to the same Truth.

this philosophy Man is not the ordinary man, it is Man as existent-Man in his biological and psychological situations. Indian philosophical outlook, however, conceives man not as the existent, but as something spiritual. For K. C. Bhattacharya also real man is not the psychological man; it is the spiritual Self or the Subject. Now, if in the philosophy of Existentialism we go on substituting this 'Spiritual Self or the Subject' in place of 'Man', we shall at once find that Existentialism has given place to Bhattacharya's philosophy.

For establishing this thesis of mine I shall have to follow a particular process. I shall have to deal with the common features of all existentialistic philosophies one by one. The term 'Existentialism', as I have said, stands for those common features. I shall try to point out that each of these common features, after the above-mentioned substitution, will give out one important feature of Bhattacharya's Philosophy. It would be shown throughout this paper that the basic statements of both these philosophies are the same — with the difference that in Existentialism the statements are about the 'Existential Man' and in Bhattacharya's philosophy they are about the spiritual 'Self'. That is to say, I shall try to point out, throughout my article, that every important aspect of Existentialism has a counterpart in Bhattacharya's philosophy — the only difference being in the fact that in the former Man is the 'Existential Man' and in the latter it is the pure 'Subject'. Of course we cannot eliminate this difference. It is only on account of this that the two philosophies are entirely different. But that would not affect my contention. It would be shown that this great difference between the two philosophies is ultimately on account of just one fact — the difference between 'Man' and 'Subject'.

The first statement that all Existentialists make and with regard to which there is perfect agreement amongst them all is that philosophic thought must affirm the priority and primacy of 'Existence' over 'Essence'. They have taken great pains to clarify the distinction between these two metaphysical 'principles'. Every individual object coming under a particular class has certain characteristics in common with other members of that class. All men, for example, have certain qualities common to them. These common qualities constitute the essence of the class man. When we give a definition of a particular thing we are, in fact, determining its essence. The human essence, for example, is the definition of man and as such includes, in it, those qualities without which

a man cannot be a man. Now, it is clear that essence is a possibility to be realized. In itself it is not a realized existent entity. Again, it does not imply that there must remain individuals in which this essence has been realized. The idea or the essence of a myriagon¹ is very much there in spite of the fact that there is no actual illustration of it. And so, even in the absence of any actual realization of essence, essence remains an essence, a possibility yet to be realized. This possibility is realized by existence. Existence actualizes essence. The human essence gets realization in the existence of individual men. What exists is the individual. And so, 'Existence' is a unique fact; Essence a general concept. Most philosophies of the world are thoughts about essences and hence essentialistic. Existentialism, on the other hand, tries to shift emphasis from the abstract to the concrete, from Essence to Existence. And hence the statement 'Existence precedes Essence'.

But what does this statement mean? Usually it is the essence that precedes existence. The idea of a thing produced always precedes the existence of that thing. How can we, then, demonstrate the precedence of existence over essence? Can any single instance of such precedence be discovered? All Existentialists are at one in saying that there is at least one instance where existence has a very clear priority over essence — and that instance is 'man'. Sartre says, "There is at least one being—who exists before he can be defined by any concept—and that being is Man".¹ "First of all Man exists, turns up, appears on the scene and only afterwards defines himself."² As such 'Man, as the existent' becomes the centre of philosophic thought. Heidegger points out that the aim of philosophy is to find out Being-in-itself as revealed in Man; it is to analyse the nature of 'Dasein' which refers to the mode of human existence. In this way, the emphasis on existence has led the Existentialist to study the nature of human existence as determined by concrete situations of life. The statement 'Existence precedes Essence' has come to mean that the subjectmatter of philosophy is Man — man as he lives, moves and has his being. To exist, for Kierkegaard, is not merely to be; it is to exist with the full consciousness of one's existence. And therefore Kierkegaard uses the term 'Existence' in the special sense of being of man.

K. C. Bhattacharya also maintains the primacy of Existence over Essence. A little insight into his philosophy will make it

1. Existentialism.

2. Existentialism.

clear. His reality is no essence. No epithet, no quality can be ascribed to it. It cannot be characterised either as objective or as subjective; it cannot be described even as reality. All these descriptions of the reality are really inadequate. The metaphysical controversy about the reality or about the Subject is only about the reality or the Subject viewed as object. Metaphysics treats reality as an essence; and therefore there cannot be a metaphysics at all. "There is properly no metaphysics of the Subject if by metaphysics is understood an enquiry into the reality conceived as meanable". "The apparent problems about the existence of the Subject and its relation to the object are really illegitimate. The question if the Subject is unreal is unmeaning for the Subject as *I is not a meaning*."³ And so reality is and is no essence. No essentialistic explanation of the reality can be given. The nearest symbolic representation of the reality is the Subject as 'I', and as such this Subject is the centre of philosophic thought. This Subject, again, cannot be known through any concept or essence. Bhattacharya very clearly points out that the reality of the Subject is known not by any understanding of its meaning, not even by any intuition into its nature; it is known directly by the word 'I' as used by a speaker. While analysing the psychic fact and enumerating the various grades of consciousness, Bhattacharya has said that philosophy is not concerned with the empirical facts as sciences describe them; it is concerned with the subjective; and that the only way to know it is to know it "directly as self-expressing in the spoken word 'I' without being meant by it."⁴ Thus we see that Bhattacharya's philosophy tries to know the 'I'—the Subject. This Subject is no essence. It is encountered just as directly as the existent Man is encountered according to the Existentialist. The only fact to be remembered is that this Subject is not the Existential Man; it is the transcendental and spiritual man. Thus we find that we have not really altered the statements of the Existentialist in order to arrive at those of Bhattacharya; we have merely substituted 'Subject' for the 'Existential Man'.

Another important aspect of the existential attitude of life is, what is called, 'Subjectivity'. This Subjectivity is not a thought-relationship with reality. The principle of Subjectivity, here, is linked up with the special meaning of the term 'Existence'. To exist is not just to be; it is the special quality of living and acting

3. Subject as Freedom.

4. Subject as Freedom.

as a man in the self-consciousness of one's destiny. And this consciousness of existence is Subjectivity. Subjectivity is not taken by these thinkers in its usual metaphysical or essentialistic sense. Existential approach to life is Subjectivity itself, because the concern of the Existentialist is MAN quite conscious of his needs, responsibilities and destiny. So Subjectivity consists in the realization that man alone is existent—that man has a greater dignity than material objects, in so far as he has an awareness of his own existence, whereas material objects have no such awareness.

Subjectivity is the central point in Bhattacharya's philosophy also. According to him, too, Subjectivity consists in the realization of the Subject's difference from the object. According to him, too, Subjectivity gives the Subject a greater dignity than material objects. Bhattacharya, in course of his analysis of the notion of Subjectivity, points out that objectivity cannot be a determinant belonging to the Subject. "...In the subjective attitude...the relatedness of the object to the Subject...its objectivity...appears as constructed, as not belonging to the object in the sense change belongs to it..."⁵ The reality of the object can always be doubted; because it is 'what is meant'; and therefore the object is not known with the same assurance as the Subject. And that makes the Subject distinct from the object. The Subject has a consciousness of itself; it is known in itself and felt to be free or dissociated from the object; and as such the Subject is known in its subjectivity. Subjectivity, then, consists in the realization of the independence of the Subject from the objective. This Subjectivity, however, is a spiritual Subjectivity and not a human subjectivity like that of the Existentialist; in so far as it does not stop at the realization of the distinction of man from the object, it takes man towards spiritual progress.

This notion of Subjectivity has a definite connection with the Existentialist's notion of man's freedom and responsibility. Heidegger has pointed out that true being involves not only consciousness, but also responsibility, decision and choice. Man is not readyman. "Man is, at the start, a plan aware of himself",⁶ and he becomes what he wills himself to be after his 'thrust towards existence'. He is always in the process of making himself. He creates himself freely. This freedom carries, with itself, a responsibility; and somehow he is responsible not only to himself

5. Subject as Freedom.

6. Existentialism-Sartre.

but to others also. "...Man being condemned to be free carries the weight of the whole world on his shoulders; he is responsible for the world and for himself as a way of being."⁷ An example will make it clear. Let us take one of Sartre's examples, i.e. 'Monogamy'. I, as a man, am free either to practise and preach it or to go against it. This freedom carries, for me, a responsibility to myself as well as to others. In practising it I am not merely affecting myself; I am showing a way of life to others. Thus the existential Man is creating the man he wants to be. His action fixes up an ideal or a type for others also. In creating himself he is creating others too. In fact, his every action, somehow, involves the whole of humanity. This idea of 'man-involving-the whole of humanity' is reflected in Heidegger's 'Togetherness' and Jaspers' 'Communion'.

The idea of freedom and responsibility is an essential aspect of Bhattacharya's philosophy also; of course the freedom and responsibility, here, are not human and worldly; they are spiritual. For him spiritual progress means the realization of the Subject as free. The existential Man is free because he is different from material objects, and also because he is all the time making himself. The Subject of K. C. Bhattacharya is free because it is also different from the object, and also because it is making itself. It is making itself in the sense that its aim is to gradually realize its freedom which is its real nature. This freedom is realized through a series of denials. Each one of these denials constitutes one stage of Subjectivity, and through these the Subject makes its progress towards the realization of its spiritual freedom. In the first stage of Subjectivity the Subject identifies itself with the body perceivable from outside. In the second stage Subject withdraws from this, and identifies itself with the body felt from within. In the third stage attention is withdrawn from the second, and the Subject identifies itself with the psychic life of presentation, i.e. with the mental life. In the fourth stage this identification with the mental life is also negated; the Subject frees itself from the psychic life and a state of spiritual freedom—which is complete freedom from the objective—is reached. Initially this freedom is merely a possibility and a future prospect. But then, the true nature of the Subject is this spiritual freedom. Now, what are the Subject's responsibilities? For the Existentialist man's responsibilities are to himself and to others. For

7. Being and Nothingness.

him every man is different from every other man, and as such each man is responsible to every other man. But the Indian spiritual man does not admit plurality in its concept. It is the spiritual transcendental unity. Therefore, Subject's responsibilities have to be interpreted in the same terms. The Subject, then, is responsible to the Subject, the Universal Subject, and this responsibility is nothing but the urge to turn the possibility of freedom into an actuality. An introspection into our ordinary consciousness would reveal that we have a consciousness of other selves as related to us, i.e. a consciousness of social self. Our responsibility lies in the fact that we have to go beyond that consciousness into a state of realization of freedom. This is possible through our capacities; and we are free either to exercise our capacities or not to do so. Therein lies our responsibility. Thus we find that concepts of freedom and responsibility are present in Bhattacharya's philosophy—although in a different context—in a spiritual set-up.

The Existentialist believes that the feeling of total and deep responsibility produces in man an 'anguish'. Heidegger says that the awareness of authentic existence, the awareness of just being in the world arouses a 'Dread'. Kierkegaard calls it 'the sickness unto death'. He says that the Dread can arise only in man because he alone has an awareness of his existence. This Dread, according to Kierkegaard, is a kind of 'horror at an undefined possibility'; it is a sort of a 'fearful apprehension of the uncertain future'. "Dread is the reality of freedom as possibility anterior to possibility."⁸ Sartre says that man is 'anguish', and this anguish, according to him, is nothing but the realization of responsibilities which man is condemned to undertake, together with the consequent feeling of anxiety. He sometimes calls it a general feeling of 'nausea'. Every man must have this feeling. One, who says that he has no such feeling, is merely concealing it. This feeling, then, results from man's just being in the world. For example, man knows that death is inevitable. He has to accept this phenomenon of death and to live in its presence. That is authentic existence. The awareness of this existence produces a dread. This 'anguish' or 'dread' does not lead to inactivity; it is, most often, the very condition of action. At this point Theistic Existentialism differs slightly from the Atheistic Existentialism. Karl Jaspers, Gabriel Marcel and even Kierkegaard, who are the representatives of the former, would say that this Dread leads

8. Concept of Dread.

man to transcend his limitedness. Jaspers says that man has unlimited potentialities; because of which, even in the midst of insecurity, conflict, despair, suffering, violence and death, he is trying to transcend all these and to achieve 'Being-in-itself'. Representatives of the Atheistic Existentialism, for example Heidegger and Sartre would say that in face of the fact that there is no God, man does not find any excuse or justification for his acts and that, therefore, he is forlorn. But at least this much is common to both the parties that consciousness of one's responsibilities produces an anxiety in man, which anxiety, in its turn, causes an anguish and a dread. In fact this Dread is an experience of nothing. Heidegger says that in Dread our 'Dasein' is projected into nothing and it is there that our true being is revealed. An insight into a common experience of dread would reveal that it is, in fact, an experience of nothing. When we have got over our dread and we are trying to retrospect, we say that what we were afraid of was actually nothing. And yet this Dread is there; and yet in and through this Dread Man's true being is realized.

The phenomenon of 'Dread' is very much present in Bhattacharya's philosophy also. According to him, too, the feeling of Dread is a consequence of man's being in the world. Of course it is not the worldly dread of the Existentialist; it is a sort of a spiritual Dread. Man is somehow limited. The objective limits the subjective. He has an urge to realize the state of freedom from the objective. He tries to aspire for it and yet he is not in a position to conceive of that state. This produces the spiritual 'anguish'. He is told that his real nature is pure freedom from the objective, and yet he finds that there is the limitation of the objective. While interpreting the Vedantic philosophy in his own terms Bhattacharya says, "Yet, after all, it may be asked, why this limitation of darkness at all? Why this limitation of an Individuality at all?"⁹ Such questions are raised by the restless man. It is true that from a higher point of view such questions are meaningless, because when the "individuality is transcended, not only is it felt to be an illusion, 'even its having been illusorily present in the past, is felt to be so'."¹⁰ But then, so long as the individuality has not been transcended, such questions are raised. And it is because of these puzzling questions that man develops an anxiety. In order to win over this anxiety the indi-

9. *Studies in Vedantism*.

10. *Studies in Vedantism*.

vidual wills and asserts himself against the world, Nature and Society. The world also reacts and recoils on him; and he grows apprehensive and fearful; a sort of a dread develops in him. It is because of asserting of one's will and the consequent hitting back by the world, that man has to suffer and to face miseries. Hence the Dread. In fact Bhattacharya has used the expression 'Dread' in his 'Studies in Vedantism'.¹¹ He says that this Dread is there because the individual tends to lapse into total unconsciousness. "...The misery that follows drags the sinner lower and lower, instead of chastening his soul—there is an increasing helplessness—till the struggle between Sattva and Rajas ceases, Sattva getting involved in one dull cloud of unconsciousness."¹² I admit that all this would appear as illusory when the Subject would attain its goal, i.e. when the Subject would realize its true nature. And this would show that this Dread, in fact, is an experience of nothing. As every thing ultimately would appear as false, there is, in fact, 'nothing' to cause this Dread. But, so long as this state of freedom has not been reached—so long as man is suffering—so long as man has not risen above his finitude, he is having a Dread. This Dread is obviously not the existential Dread. It is, like the existential Dread, caused by an anxiety; but the anxiety, here, is not merely to be 'MAN' in the world; it is to realize the spiritual freedom. The existential Dread is almost psychological, Bhattacharya's Dread is spiritual.

All Existentialists repudiate, in a sense, the distinction between the subject and the object; and this repudiation is based on a consideration typically existential in character. In order to live the existential Man must have an understanding of the existential situation. But he cannot understand or know this by any intellectual deliberation. He cannot know it by maintaining the duality of the knowing subject and the known object. He must be the situation; he must actively participate in the situation. True knowledge is had not by any intellectual apprehension, but by an experience—an existential experience—in which the distinction between the subjective and the objective has been negated, and in which there is an active participation by Man in the life-situations. The Existentialist says that this experience is ultimately caused by a Dread with which man is conscious of his being in the world; and it is because of this Dread that this

11. Refer page 41.

12. *Studies in Vedantism*.

experience is an activity—a life being lived. The situation is no more alien to Man; Man becomes his situation. And that is existential living.

According to K. C. Bhattacharya, when the Subject attains pure freedom, there does not remain any distinction between the subjective and the objective. Reality, in fact, transcends this distinction. Initially of course Bhattacharya has laid great emphasis on this distinction. He says that the Subject, on his way to the realization of his true nature, must begin withdrawing itself from the objective. But in its true nature the Subject is Subject as pure freedom—and this Subject as pure freedom is neither the objective nor the subjective in the ordinary sense; it is complete freedom from both. This Subject transcends all such distinctions. In higher stages of Subjectivity there is no knowledge of freedom from the object; there is just a feeling of it; and this also shows that gradually the distinction between the subjective and the objective is being negated. Moreover, that the distinction between the subject and the object is ultimately repudiated, can be shown also on another consideration. The object, according to Bhattacharya, is destroyed by the self-withdrawing activity of the Subject; and therefore the object can be a symbol of the Subject just as shadow is the symbol of light. When light withdraws itself, shadow vanishes; and just like that, when the subject withdraws itself, object is destroyed. Now, since shadow can represent light, object can be a symbol of the Subject. This also shows that the distinction between the subject and the object is ultimately rejected.

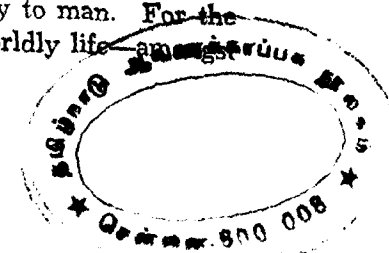
Thus, according to both—the Existentialist and K. C. Bhattacharya—the object appears as a challenge to man, and according to both again, man accepts the challenge. This acceptance enables man to rise above the distinction between himself and the object. Now, according to the Existentialist, this rising above is an aspect in the worldly life of man; according to him, this rejection of the distinction between the subject and the object has a psychological meaning—a special meaning for the life of Man. According to Bhattacharya, this rejection has a spiritual significance; it has a transcendental import which we, with our present capacities, cannot fully grasp.

Then again, the Existentialist claims that his theory gives a dignity to man. He would justify his claim on two grounds. Firstly, this is the only theory that does not reduce man to an

object. A material object is nothing but a bundle of reactions. It would behave as we want it to behave. It has no initiative—no action of its own. Most thinkers have treated man as a material object. But for the Existentialist man is the 'ensemble of values distinct from the material'. Man's existence is not merely 'is'; it becomes; it is actualistic as it is freely creating itself, and in creating itself it is creating others too. Moreover, man is all the time aware of his existence, whereas material objects have no such awareness. Secondly, this theory gives a dignity to man because this theory enables man to realize that he is the master of the situation, and that it is upto him either to control it or to be overawed by it. Again the realization that in doing any thing man is not only making himself, but also fixing up an ideal for others too, would give man a dignity.

Bhattacharya's philosophy also gives a dignity to man—of course a spiritual dignity. His philosophy does not reduce man to the status of an object. Subject can, at best, be a 'significant speakable' as distinguished from the object which is a 'meant content'. The term 'this' may be taken as a symbol of the object or of 'what is meant'. Let 'I' be the symbol of the Subject. Now, I use the term 'this' for an object that I perceive. Others can also use the same 'this' for the same object. Now, I use the term 'I' for myself; if anybody else uses the term 'I', he would mean himself and not me. That is to say, when the object-consciousness of a speaker is conveyed, the object and not the speaking of the object is what is understood; but when the self-consciousness of the speaker is communicated, it is not the self only, but the self as speaking that is understood. His self-consciousness, in this sense, is incarnated in the spoken word 'I'. And that makes the Subject different from the object. In this difference lies the dignity of the Subject. The difference is so great that the Subject can never be made an object. Even Introspection can never make Subject its object. What is known through Introspection is just a certain symbolic representation of the Subject and not the real Subject itself. This difference is the reason for the dignity that is Man. Bhattacharya's philosophy gives a dignity to man also because man has to realize his true nature—a state of spiritual freedom. The very realization that the true nature of the Subject is a state of transcendental, spiritual and free Subjectivity, would give man a dignity.

Thus, both these philosophies give a dignity to man. For the Existentialist, this dignity is a dignity in the worldly life—



the concrete situations of life; for Bhattacharya, it is a spiritual dignity.

In this way, we find that all the basic statements of Existentialism are somehow present in the philosophy of K. C. Bhattacharya—with the difference that in the latter these statements are coloured with spirituality. It is because of this 'colour' that Bhattacharya's philosophy is entirely different from Existentialism.

Yes, the two philosophies are entirely different; but this great difference is ultimately because of just one difference—the difference between the Existentialist's 'Man' and Bhattacharya's 'Subject'.

The Self and the Body

by

KALYAN CHANDRA GUPTA

A note on Sankara's view of the relation between the two

Sankara, in the introduction to his famous commentary on the Brahma-sutras, refers to a possible objection to his theory of super-imposition (*adhyāsa*), which, if valid, would render the entire Advaitic philosophy of reality and life untenable and useless. Sankara's exposition of the natures of Brahman, the Jiva or finite individual, *moksha* or liberation and the means of liberation starts with the initial presupposition that the self falsely identifies itself with the not-self or imposes the not-self on itself. The objection referred to says that this presupposition is quite illegitimate. Such false identification or super-imposition which is supposed to lead to various mistakes and other evil consequences is quite inconceivable and therefore impossible. The self which is referred to by the I-consciousness (*asmatpratyayagocara*) and the not-self which is referred to by the you-consciousness (*jusmatpratyayagocara*) are utterly opposed to each other in the same way as light and darkness. The essence of the self is pure consciousness which illuminates everything and the essence of the not-self consists in being revealed by something other than itself. Since the self and the not-self are essentially opposed to each other in nature the characteristics of the former and those of the latter must also be similarly opposed to each other. One thing may be taken for another only when there is some similarity between the two. Hence it is inconceivable how the self can take itself to be something which is essentially opposed to it in nature and invest itself with the characteristics of some such thing, or how the self can take something whose essence is not constituted by consciousness as itself and invest it with its own characteristics. In the case of the self and the not-self the very possibility of making a false identification is not there.

Sankara asserts, however, that though such an objection seems plausible yet as a matter of fact the self identifies itself with the not-self investing the self with the characteristics of the not-self and the not-self with those of the self. This mutual super-impo-

sition of the self and the not-self is due to false knowledge (*mithyājnāna*) which is at the root of all our troubles (*anarthahetu*), and this root-cause of all our troubles can be destroyed once and for all by the knowledge of the identity of the finite self and the Absolute Self which is the only reality (*atmaikatvavidyā*).

Sankara thinks that this illusory knowledge or false superimposition of the self on the not-self and vice versa is a matter of common experience (*sarvalokapratyaksa*). Though a man may be intellectually convinced of the distinction between the self and the not-self and may understand that the two cannot and should not be identified, yet as a matter of fact he seldom distinguishes the two and in actual practice (*lok-vyāvahāra*) invariably assumes his self to be identical with his body, his near and dear ones, his material possessions etc. Thus when a man feels happy or miserable because his wife, children and friends are happy or miserable respectively, when he says, "I am fat", "I am lean", "I am fair-complexioned", "I am sitting still", "I am walking", etc., when he says "I am blind or deaf or lame", when he experiences himself as desiring, resolving, persevering and so on, he is in fact super-imposing the characteristics of certain external things or of his own body or of his sense-organs or of his mind on his self. A man cannot in practice shake off the belief that the joys and sorrows of his relatives are his own, that the qualities or defects of his body or his sense-organs are his own qualities or defects, that the activities of his mind are his own activities, since such beliefs are based on indubitable immediate experience. This being granted, the most important problem for us is to find out how this illusion can be destroyed.

Now, when one or more actual facts of experience come into conflict with a general rule there are several courses open to us. We may try to show that what are taken as facts of experience are not really facts, or may try to describe or explain the facts in such a way as to show that they do not really violate the general rule, or we may cast doubt on the general rule itself and try to modify it in such a way as to accommodate the facts of experience. If we succeed in doing one or all of these things we may reasonably suppose that we have solved the problem. In the case under consideration the general rule which may be supposed to be universally valid is that two things which are entirely opposed to each other in nature cannot be perceived as identical with each other; and the facts which come into conflict with this general rule are that we have an immediate sense of

identity between ourselves and our belongings and relatives, and we actually experience ourselves to possess the properties of our physical bodies, sense-organs and minds, and also experience these things to possess the properties of the self. The first question which we have to answer is whether a man really ever has a sense of identity between his own self and anything which is not his self and is posited against his self. In this connection we must draw a clear line of demarcation between a man's body and things other than his body. The body occupies a unique place among the things which a man knows, and the relation in which he stands to his body is fundamentally different from any relation in which he may stand to anything else, however intimate that relation may be. The distinction between the experience which a man has of his body and that which he has of any other thing is always quite clear. Whereas a man has the feeling of 'I' towards his own body, the feeling which he has towards his relatives and material goods is that of 'mine'. I may feel happy when a friend or relative of mine is prosperous, or feel miserable when my house is burnt by fire, but I never have an actual sense of identity with my friend or relative or house. My attitude towards a man—even my son—may change and I may cease to take an interest in his fortune. I may feel indifferent to a house which has become old, and may not feel any pain when it is destroyed. This however does not happen in the case of my own body. Whatever my attitude towards the body may be, I always have a sense of identity with my body excepting parts such as hair, nails etc. which are not connected with the brain by means of the nervous system. When on seeing the death of a relative or the damage caused to my house I exclaim that I am ruined, this is merely an elliptical way of saying that what has happened to my relative or to my house has affected me or produced a certain change in me. Any and every relation is not a relation of identity, and to experience something as related to me and to feel the consequences of this relation is not to have a sense of identity with that thing. A man's sense of kinship with another man or a feeling of attachment towards a thing cannot be taken as an instance of the identification of the self and the not-self.

It is only in the case of the body that it can be said with any plausibility that such identification takes place. I do not merely think but actually feel that I am the body and behave in every field of activity as if this identity between the self and the body were an absolute truth. With regard to the body, however, it

is of utmost importance to note that I know my body in two different ways. I perceive it as an object among other objects and I have an experience of it from within. When I see my hand or touch my head my relation to these parts of my body is exactly of the same nature as the relation between myself and a book or a tree. When I say "I am fat" or "I am lean" I am stating something about my body as an object with which I am intimately related but from which I distinguish myself. "I" in such cases indirectly means the body, though literally it stands for the conscious subject and agent who owns and controls the body.

Vācaspati Misra, the author of *Bhāmati*, asserts that when a man uses such an expression as "I am inside the room", his utterance is to be taken in a direct sense and not in an indirect sense, that is, he must be taken to mean exactly what he says. It is true that when we say about a man that he is a lion, we make the statement not in a direct but in an indirect sense. "That man is a lion" means that the man has the qualities of a lion. In the case of such a statement the man who makes it and the man who hears it both understand the difference between a man and a lion, but in the case of such a statement as "I am inside the room" neither the speaker nor the hearer understands the difference between the 'I' and the body. Vācaspati Misra's argument, however, simply prejudices the issue without really proving anything. No man has a sense of identity between his self and his body as such. This becomes clear when we note that nobody identifies himself with his hair or nails or a paralysed limb. Hence the pre-condition for the interpretation of a statement in an indirect sense is present in the cases of such statements as "I am fat", "I am lean", "I am inside the room" etc.

In fact, it is not with the body as such that I identify myself but with the body as it is experienced from inside—with the mass of the organic sensations that come from different parts of the body. In a similar way I identify myself with the feelings, emotions, desires, resolutions etc. which arise in my mind. But the point to be emphasised here is that in this case the identification of the self with these organic sensations, feelings, desires etc. does not come in conflict with the general principle that two things utterly opposed in nature cannot be identified even by mistake, simply because the organic sensations, feelings etc. do not belong to the not-self which may be opposed to the self. They are objects of my knowledge no doubt but they do not stand in any external relation to me. They are experiences or modes

of consciousness which are lived through by me, and therefore as much subjective as objective. The distinction between the unity of consciousness and these experiences is not a distinction between the self and the not-self, but a distinction which falls within the self. As regards the Advaitin's objection that feelings of pain, pleasure, desire, aversion etc. cannot be regarded as parts of the self since they are objects of consciousness, all that we can say is that it is based on a presupposition, viz. that the subject cannot make itself the object (*kartr karma virodha*), which does not bear logical scrutiny. It may be true that a knife cannot cut itself or a piece of stone cannot hit itself, but there is no reason whatsoever why the self which is a conscious subject living through diverse experiences should not be able to know itself or a part of itself. On the other hand, since I apprehend these feelings, desires etc. not simply as objects but as experiences without which myself will lose all positive content, I have good reason for thinking that they are genuine parts or elements of myself.

It is not therefore an actual fact of experience that we identify ourselves with things which are opposed to ourselves or with the properties of things which are different from ourselves. The fact that we identify ourselves with masses of organic sensations, feelings, emotions, desires etc. does not really come in conflict with the general rule that things opposed in their nature cannot be identified; while the fact that we sometimes speak as if we identify ourselves with certain things outside our bodies does not also militate against this rule, since in such cases what we actually feel is not an identity between ourselves and those things but only an intimate relationship between them. Two things may be entirely opposed to each other in nature and yet nothing can prevent them from standing in relation to each other. Darkness is opposed to light, it can never be light, but it can be dispelled by light. Hence the feeling of a relationship between the self and things other than the self is not necessarily of an illusory nature.

If, however, it is urged by the Advaitin that even in the experiences referred to above we have a sense of identity between the self and the not-self, then we may find it necessary to re-examine in the light of these very experiences the presupposition that the self, the essence of which is consciousness, and the not-self, which comprises objects known, are opposed to each other in nature. We may argue, for instance, that since consciousness

identifies itself with things which are objects of consciousness, the two, viz. consciousness and its object, cannot be opposed in nature, and there is no reason why such an argument will not be legitimate. If the very essence of consciousness consists in its reference to objects, and if the very existence of anything whatsoever presupposes consciousness which refers to it as its object, then the two cannot be regarded as opposed to each other. It is only by a false abstraction, it may be argued, that we separate consciousness and object from each other, and find the being of consciousness in itself alone and the being of object in itself alone. If neither the subject by itself nor the object by itself but the subject-object is the fundamental reality, then it is not at all inconceivable that the self should identify itself with the object or stand in various degrees of intimacy with it.

If then there are no grounds for thinking that the sense of our identity or unity with objects other than pure consciousness is inherently of an illusory nature, the removal of the illusion (*adhyāsa*) supposed to be involved in such experiences cannot be regarded as the main objective of philosophical speculation. There may be other kinds of illusion which it may be the task of philosophy to dispel, but this is certainly not one of them.

The Nature of an Appearance

by

S. K. CHATTOPADHYAYA

An appearance has been variously described and explained. We are tempted to ask therefore if a definite and clear-cut statement can be made in respect of its nature. Is there appearance of one determinate type, or are there appearances of several forms and types, and yet all are appearances in some determinable meaning? It seems that no decisive answer can be given to such questions without a prior determination as to what we should mean by an appearance. When we call something an appearance and not a reality, we are evidently guided by some reason. We shall try to settle what precisely this reason can be. Knowing an appearance to be an appearance is not similar to knowing a tree as a tree. A tree is known and described as what is; an appearance, on the other hand, is evaluated or estimated. A certain distinction from reality seems to be an integral part of the meaning of appearance. Opinions, of course, differ as to the precise import of this distinction. But everybody accepts that a certain distinction exists.

There should be some initial agreement as to the procedure to be followed in this attempted determination of the meaning of appearance. Experience furnishes the 'occasion' of our estimation of something as an appearance, but the estimate is an affair of the reflective mind. If instead of taking A as the nature or quality of B, we take it as an appearance of the latter, we do so for a reason which is outside the given experience. Either a sense of contradiction, or of baffled effort, or something else prompts us to dub one of them as the appearance of the other. Knowledge of an appearance as appearance thus involves relating the given experience to some other experience. Of the two facts—reality and its appearance—only one can be given at a time; there can be no simultaneous given-ness of both. If one is given, the other is remembered; the two cannot be perceived together. It seems to be a basic condition for an appearance to appear that reality must not appear at the same time. The latter may be an already

known fact which is not *now* given but is remembered only. In such a case, an appearance will *merely appear* without being believed—the straight stick appearing bent in water, the one moon appearing double. Or it may be that reality is *now* known and given, while its appearance stands cancelled, and so is only remembered now. In this case, an appearance does no longer appear, and is no more believed. This is the case of illusory appearance—the snake proving to be only a rope. Why of two experiences one is regarded more fundamental than the other cannot be decided without reference to the apperceiving mind.

From the fact of alternative given-ness of reality and its appearance we may note a distinction between the *nature* of a thing and its *appearance*. The thing and its nature must be given together; the thing and its appearance can only be given successively. The nature of a thing cannot be apprehended without the thing, and the thing without its nature. But an appearance can only be apprehended *without* the thing itself, and *in lieu of it*, and the same is true of the real thing also. Moreover, a nature is never known as a substantive fact, but an appearance to appear must appear as a substantive fact. Between a thing and its nature there cannot be any disjunction, while disjunction seems to be vital for an appearance. This being the case, it follows that while a nature can be predicated of a thing, an appearance cannot be so predicated.

Of a thing we can say that it is white, but of reality we cannot say that it is its appearance, that is, it is as it appears. An appearance therefore gives no clue to our understanding a reality. Reality has to be known separately, if it is to be known at all. An appearance, on the other hand, to be known as an appearance must be reviewed in the light of, and with reference to, a reality. With no prior knowledge of reality there can be no 'mere' appearance, and with no subsequent reality-experience there can be no illusory appearance. A 'mere' appearance is that which is not a believed content but which simply 'appears' or floats. An illusory appearance, on the other hand, is the once-believed and now-rejected content. In both the cases, there seems to be a certain dependence on the reality-experience. Without such a reality-experience, an appearance, if known at all, is known as a reality, and *not* as an appearance. If there is no prior reality-experience, the 'mere' appearance, instead of floating on reality, would settle upon it, and concealing the reality, would pass for it,

Without a subsequent reality-experience to cancel it, the illusory appearance would never prove to be so.

Our explanation of the 'mere' appearance and the illusory appearance is somewhat unorthodox, but instead of stating simply how various appearances may appear, as Prof. Alexander does, we have sought to explain how these appearances come to be regarded as appearances. Our treatment precludes the possibility of any such thing as *real appearance*.

There seems to be something frivolous in the very idea of a real appearance. A real appearance is not taken to mean that which is *really* or *significantly* an appearance. It is taken to mean that which, though an appearance (in Alexander's opinion), is not *merely* an appearance, is not an *illusory* appearance either, but is real in the sense that it is an integral part of that mysterious unity which stands for the 'thing'. It is not clear how Prof. Alexander gets at his idea of the real, of which the real appearance is to be a partial manifestation. He, to be sure, not being an angel himself, could not have secured the angelic view-point. His view of the real must have been always a perspective view of it. But a perspective view could not be known as a perspective or partial view without a knowledge of the whole. The whole, in this case, can at best be a logical construction. The various perspectives are to shade into one another and give rise to the idea of the whole which cannot be a simple aggregate of the perspectives, a mere 'and-summation'. If such a whole is real, the perspectives do not give *real* parts of that whole, cannot give real appearance. These can give only the 'mere' appearances of the whole. There can be no sense in regarding those appearances as real appearances which *as themselves*, that is, without being transmuted or modified, cannot fit into the whole. Moreover, it seems that the real of Alexander's conception, when considered in itself, is *not* a whole, it only *appears* to be a whole when regarded in the context of its diverse perspectives. The perspective views do not give 'parts' of the real; each of these gives the 'whole' real from a particular angle, and each is a distortion of that whole. This shows them as mere appearances, and not as real appearances. It cannot be said that while a real appearance is a partial distortion, a mere appearance is a complete distortion. For every distortion, if it is a distortion, is complete. There is another fact which leads up to the same conclusion. When a tall tree appears short from a great distance, do we really take it as short, do we actually perceive a short tree? It seems that we no more take

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it as a short tree than we take the straight stick as bent when perceived through the medium of some liquid. If the short tree perceived through the medium of intervening space or other can be taken as a real appearance of the tall tree, the bent stick may as well be a real appearance of the straight stick perceived through the medium of water. But we no more believe that the tree is *really* short than we believe that the stick is bent. We *already know* that the tree is tall and the stick is straight, either by direct knowledge, or inferentially through a cogent interpretation of the given appearance. In the absence of any such knowledge of the 'real' tree or stick, we cannot regard the short tree or the bent stick as appearances. The fact is: as we already know in some way what the tree or the stick is or can be, we do not believe the given appearances as true, but regard both as *mere* appearances: the tree and the stick are *not* what they appear to be, they *merely* appear to be so.

From the above, two conclusions may be drawn: (1) an appearance to be *known* as an appearance there must be some knowledge of the real; (2) an appearance even to appear, there must be a percipient mind to whom it is to appear. If these conclusions are true, it follows further that appearances do not *exist*, they are merely perceived or experienced, their *esse* is their *percipi*. Things are *not* their appearances. There are no real appearances, since the real is *not* as it 'appears', though the real is as it is known to be, when we are not in illusion.

What then is an appearance? Can we describe it as that which appears? Is it a substantive or something adjectival, a fact or a mode of regarding a fact, a content known or a mere mode of speech? Since an appearance cannot be known as an appearance without the real being known, since the detection of an appearance is consequent upon the discovery of the real, since the detected appearance seems to move away releasing the real into the view, and the undetected appearance to conceal it, we mentally relate the two together and speak as if one of them, that is, the appearance, is 'of' the other. Knowledge of the real dislodges the appearance, and that which *was* a substantive fact, a stable content heretofore, now either floats as a mere appearance, or vanishes altogether. Although it then loses its anchorage in reality, the associative process of memory connects it with the real with the result that it is conceived as 'of' the real and described as that. But such connection is a mere thought-connection, an 'as if' connection. The fact remains that as that which is

incompatible with the real and incapable of being 'given' together with it, it is not really 'of' the real, nor does it appear *in* the real when it appears. That an appearance is 'of' reality is nothing more than a mere form of description, a certain way of speaking. An 'of' relation cannot obtain between entities one of which cannot be sensibly predicated of the other. Take the mere appearance. It is a floating something without attachment to reality.

So far as the illusory appearance is concerned the description that it is 'of' reality is even more misleading. The real is not illusory, the illusory is not real. The description that the rope illusorily appeared as the snake is equivalent to saying that the rope *did not* figure or appear in the snake and the snake was no rope. An illusory appearance is no appearance of anything. Were it an appearance of anything it could not be illusory. Moreover, the illusory appearance can appear only so long as the real is not known. With the discovery of the real, illusion ceases, and the illusory appearance either remains floating as a mere appearance or melts away. In no case, it can hold *in* the real or belong to it.

An appearance then is not 'of' reality, nor does it appear 'in' it. The connection between it and reality is nothing objective. It is the product of mental association. Without reference to that subjective factor, its seeming relation to reality cannot be explained. So an appearance has to be traced to some subjective factor or condition.

But what precisely is its relation to the mind of the percipient? To be sure, it does not appear to be anything subjective or mental. It is felt to be something 'given', something objective, something that seems to be 'out there'. All this is true. But the patent fact about appearance is that it is *not* what it seems to be. This is its inherent contradiction. 'What seems to be may not be so in reality'. The truth of this maxim is testified in the case of an appearance.

Is it then a construction? It is difficult to answer this question since the appearance does not seem to be a construction. It seems to be something 'given' or intuited. That is a mere construction which is not known in the literal sense, and is not taken as a fact. It is some sort of a fabrication, a manipulated content which has no claim to existence. It is not 'given', not presented as a content, but is only 'thought' or 'spoken'. It is the unreal. An appearance is not a species of the unreal. The unreal is not

known positively — it is known negatively as a no-fact. This is why it is described as that which is not literally known, since in knowledge in the literal sense, the content is an intuitable content, a *given* something. The sky-lotus or horned-hare is imaginable but not intuitable. The barren-mother or the square-circle is not even imaginable, it is merely speakable. The barren-mother or the square-circle is a known absurdity, the sky-lotus and horned-hare are fictitious constructs. None of these is knowable in the literal sense of knowing, although all are intelligible in some sense, and the fictitious constructs, besides being intelligible, are imaginable or imagable. It seems that the limit of knowability is not the limit of imaginability or intelligibility. The absurd is the merely intelligible, it is not even a content; it is the *suggestion* of the impossible, a something speakable but not picturable. Its *esse* is its speakability; it is no content either given or imaginary. It is deliberately constructed not only to be a no-fact but also to be a no-content. While mentioning the absurd we use this no-content as a content. The fictitious, however, is a content. It also is a deliberate construction, and is intended to suggest the unactual, a no-fact. This no-fact is spoken of as a content when we speak of the fictitious constructs. But an appearance is not only a content, it is also a fact in some sense, since it is experienced and, in that sense, known. It is not the unreal; firstly, because it is experienced; and secondly, because it is not the product of a conscious and deliberate process of construction. The unreal is never given, never intuitable, never knowable in the literal sense — it is a fabrication, a human construction intended to suggest the impossible or the absurd. The unactual, and in that sense, impossible sky-lotus is a content which is no given content. Constructive imagination takes its clue from given experience and deliberately manipulates a content to suggest that which by its very nature is not only not given but can never be a given content. The absurd is not even the construction of imagination. It is a deliberate construction of the understanding, and it is intended to suggest that which can never be a content either to sensibility or to imagination. It is not an unintelligible content like a riddle or a puzzle; it is an intelligible and so understandable absurdity. It is not the insoluble 'given' or 'imagined'; it is the conscious suggestion of nonsense.

It can be seen that in the experience of an appearance no *conscious construction intervenes*. Were it not so, it could not be at times believed to be real. We do not believe in that which is merely constructed or what we know to be impossible or absurd.

The unreal is not believed in. The appearance then *does not seem* to be a construction. But is it 'given' really? This also seems improbable. Were it given really, it would not disappear, it would be independent of the faculty or conditions through which it is felt to be given. But its *esse* seems to be its *percipi*. It thus seems to be a fact that is 'given', but is detected to be that which is not really given — not a fact that is real. If the absurd is a no-content spoken of as a content, and the fictitious a content not believed to be a fact, an appearance is a no-fact experienced as a fact. It is the seemingly given which is constituted by its given-ness and is not independent of it.

What then is an appearance? It is that which is not real, yet is believed to be real, prior to its detection. It is that which seems to be given, yet cannot be taken as really given. It is a fact that proves to be a no-fact, or it is a no-fact that is taken at times to be a fact. It is the product of an *unconscious construction* which is not felt or known as a construction. In short, it is not what it seems to be. As distinguished from the absurd which is consciously designed to be self-contradictory, something which is not knowable, or representable, but yet intelligible, the appearance is a 'given' absurdity, a given self-contradiction which is both knowable and representable, but not intelligible or determinable by means of any fixed logical category. In respect of it no absolute determination is possible and in this sense it is unintelligible. But it is not wholly unintelligible, because that would be some sort of a definite determination of it. It is intelligible as the unintelligible, as a fact which is not a fact. It is something given which is not really given, a construction but not apprehended as that. The illusory appearance and the mere appearance are not two distinct classes of appearances. These are two stages in the life of an appearance wherein it is known, first, as what it is *not*, that is, as reality; and next, as what it *is*, that is, a *mere* appearance, a something merely seeming to be what it is not.

Bradley on Thought and Reality

by

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While "the great historical importance of Bradley's achievements in ethics, psychology, and logic has", observes Dr. Rudolph Metz, "met with a large measure of agreement and quickly became part of the patrimony of British thought", his metaphysical views, "as developed in his chief work *Appearance and Reality*, have provoked far more controversy. The work has been an apple of discord in modern British philosophy. Opinions about it show every variation from unmeasured praise through stupid indifference to bitter ridicule and downright contempt."¹

Of all the puzzling doctrines of Bradley, the most puzzling, perhaps, to his critics has been his doctrine about the relation between thought and reality, discussed in chapter XV of his *Appearance and Reality*, and which according to Bradley himself "contains the main thesis of this work".² In view of the central importance of the topic in Bradley, it is necessary to get a clear idea of what precisely according to Bradley is the relation of thought to reality, and the function, status and destiny of thought according to him. This paper is an attempt towards this clarification.

Many who read Bradley gather the impression that Bradley disparages thought and even despairs of thought altogether and strikes an agnostic note. It appears initially desirable to show that this impression is mistaken. "If there is to be philosophy", writes Bradley, "its proper business is to satisfy the intellect, and the other sides of our nature have, if so, no right to speak directly. They must make their appeal not only to, but also through, the intelligence. In life it is otherwise, but there is a difference between philosophy and life. And in philosophy my need for beauty and practical goodness may have a voice, but, for all that, they have not a vote. They cannot address the intellect and insist. 'We are not satisfied'. They must be content to ask and to repeat, 'Are

1. Metz: *A Hundred Years of British Philosophy*, p. 234.

2. *Appearance and Reality*, Appendix, Intro., p. 494.

you in fact satisfied with yourself as long as we remain unsatisfied? It is for you to decide, and we can only suggest.' Hence, I conclude, I can philosophize with my whole nature, but I cannot do this directly."³ Again, "if you ask what is truth, you are led to answer that it is that which satisfies the intellect. The contradictory and the meaningless fail to be true because in a certain way they do not satisfy."⁴ For Bradley, metaphysics is "a refuge for the man who burns to think consistently";⁵ and it was Bradley who said that "with certain persons, the intellectual effort to understand the universe is a principal way of thus experiencing the Deity."⁶ Could you call that man agnostic who wrote: "To say the reality is such that our knowledge cannot reach it, is a claim to know reality; to urge that our knowledge is of a kind which must fail to transcend appearance, itself implies the transcendence. For, if we had no idea of a beyond, we should assuredly not know how to talk about success or failure"?⁷ Let us, then, never approach Bradley prepossessed with the idea that he is prone to undervalue thought, though it is his settled doctrine that thought in its discursive and relational character can never be adequate to ultimate reality and must, therefore, eventually shed this character and be absorbed in a higher and fuller experience — absorbed, *not annihilated*, if Bradley's position, *on the whole*, be taken into account, and not an undue emphasis put on his statement about thought's suicide; for, he tells us that in the absolute experience "The entire reality will be merely the object thought out, but thought out in such a way that mere thinking is absorbed."⁸ Again, "Thought would be present as a higher intuition."⁹ We shall be misconstruing, I may add here, the precise position of Bradley regarding the ultimate destiny of thought, if we took his wellknown statements about thought's 'suicide' in too literal a sense, that is, in the sense of complete annihilation or termination of thought's being. By thought's suicide Bradley must be understood to mean the suicide of thought's *discursive and relational form*, for, in the ultimate experience, he tells us, nothing is lost but everything is restored with interest. "In its direct experience", to quote Bradley himself, "we get restored with interest every fea-

3. *Essays on Truth and Reality*, p. 221.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

5. *App. & Reality*, p. 4.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 5.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 160.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 152.

ture lost by the disruption of our primitive felt whole. We possess the immediacy and the strength of simple apprehension, no longer forced by its own inconsistencies to pass into the infinite process. And again volition, if willed out, becomes our Absolute. For we reach there the identity of idea and reality, not too poor but too rich for division of its elements. Feeling, thought, and volition have all defects which suggest something higher. *But in that higher unity no fraction of anything is lost. For each one-sided aspect, to gain itself blends with that which seemed opposite, and the product of this fusion keeps the riches of all.*"¹⁰ (*Ita-lics Ours*).

It is in consonance with Bradley's general principle that nothing is lost in the Absolute that I am inclined to think it truer to his position to give more weight to his statements about thought's continuity and *presence* in the Absolute than to those other statements which *prima facie* suggest thought's annihilation, such as "in that consummation thought has certainly been so transformed, that to go on calling it thought seems indefensible" and "thought ends in a reality which swallows up its character",¹¹ and so on. I would have preferred a clear-cut statement by Bradley to the effect "Thought yields place to a higher intuition" to his statement that "Thought is present as a higher intuition." Anyway, his very doubt shows Bradley's solicitousness about thought and his fear of readily yielding to any kind of irrationalism. All that I am concerned with here is to point out that *according to Bradley* thought is present in the Absolute harmoniously blended with the other elements. There are difficulties, to my mind, in Bradley's conception of the ultimate Unity, to which I am not referring here.

After these preliminary remarks, I now come to Bradley's doctrine of thought and reality. Thought in its completed form, says Bradley, is judgment, and therefore, it is by a close scrutiny of the judgment that we come to understand the nature of thought as it is. Now, in judgment an idea is predicated of a reality, a 'what' of a 'that', a content of an existence. The 'what' is a mere idea. The 'that', on the other hand, is a fact, an existence. Fact cannot be idea, and idea cannot be fact. The two are different. If they were not different, there would be no point in making the judgment. But though different, they are inseparable. There is

10. *Ibid.*, p. 161.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 152.

no 'what' without a 'that' and *vice versa*. It may be remarked here that just as the 'what' is never a floating idea, so also the 'that' is "never bare reality, or existence without character."¹² Bradley's point is to emphasize the provisional estrangement or alienation of the two aspects, the 'what' and the 'that' which judgment seeks to re-unite. "In judgment we find always the distinction of fact and truth, of idea and reality. Truth and thought are not the thing itself, but are of it and about it. Thought predicates an ideal content of a subject, which idea is not the same as fact, for in its existence and meaning are necessarily divorced."¹³

Here it would be pertinent to consider a criticism which Prof. A. C. Mukerji has urged against Bradley's doctrine of thought and existence. "That reality must reveal itself to systematic thought," writes Prof. Mukerji, "and that unreality can be detected only in so far as it fails to meet the demand of consistent thinking, are in a sense beyond the region of proof or disproof, because they are presupposed by every attempt to prove or disprove a thesis. It would, therefore, be a preposterous proposition to hold that thought and fact are not the same; the proposition is preposterous because the distinction made here implies the false assumption that thought and fact are two items, confronting each other, so that one can be contrasted with the other, or related in the same way in which one object is related to another object. The absurdity of the assumption may be exposed in another way. Thought being the universal background of all items that are thought about, we cannot place it by the side of the items and yet retain its universality. When it is said, for instance by F. H. Bradley, that reality appears to be an 'other' different from truth yet not able to be truly taken as different, confusion is created by a fictitious dilemma arising out of the dislocation of reality alongside of reality short of its presupposition."¹⁴

Now, Prof. Mukerji's contention in the first line of the passage quoted above is endorsed by Bradley himself, almost in the very same words: "I have assumed that the object of metaphysics is to find a general view which will satisfy the intellect, and I have assumed that whatever succeeds in doing this is real and true, and whatever fails is neither. This is a doctrine which, so far as I can see, can neither be proved nor questioned. The proof or the ques-

12. *Ibid.*, p. 145.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 148.

14. *Self, Thought and Reality* (2nd Ed.), p. 306.

tion, it seems to me, must imply the truth of the doctrine, and, if that is not assumed, both vanish."¹⁵

Granted that thought is the presupposition of fact, it is a *non sequitur* from this to infer that they are the same. How can that which is a presupposition of something be the same as that thing? To say that thought is the same as fact is to deny that thought is the presupposition of fact, to deny that the former is the universal background of the latter.

In Bradley's words, "can thought, however complete, be the same as reality, the same altogether, I mean, and with no difference between them? This is a question to which I could never give an affirmative reply. It is useless here to seek to prove that the real involves thought as its *sine qua non*, for that much when proved, does not carry the conclusion."¹⁶

It is rather disconcerting to me to find Prof. Mukerji saying that *thought* is the universal background of everything. Is not thought also *given* as a correlate of fact to a consciousness or experience which is the presupposition or foundation of both alike? To call this foundational consciousness 'thought' appears to me, as Bradley says, unduly extending the meaning of thought and making it so completely universal that every variety of experience turned out to be a mode of thought. "And it is useless again to urge", writes Bradley, "that thought is so inseparable from every mode of experience that in the end it may be said to cover all the ground. That is, it seems to me, once more merely the inconclusive argument from the *sine qua non*, or else the conclusion is vitiated from another side by the undue extension of thought's meaning. Thought has now been taken, that is, to include so much more than truth, that the old question as to how truth in this sense stands to reality, must break out more or less within thought itself. Nor again does it seem clear why we must term this whole 'thought', and not 'feeling', or 'will', unless we can show that these really are modes of thought while thought cannot fall under them."¹⁷

The universal background of all reality, then, cannot be thought but Knowledge (with a capital K) or, as Bradley would say, "experience" in the widest sense of the term or what he has also called "immediate experience." If Prof. A. C. Mukerji means

15. *Appearance and Reality*, Appendix, pp. 491-92.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 492.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 492.

this foundational principle by thought, his choice of the term has not been happy. Bradley has employed the term thought, and rightly so, in the narrower sense of the discursive and relational activity of the mind. Prof. Mukerji's own *magnum opus*, *The Nature of the Self*, is nothing but a masterly vindication of that Self which "is the subject in relation even to the mental states, and so must be essentially Consciousness which being blended with every one of the mental states, is indicated by them." According to him, this foundational knowledge "does not itself come into existence or go out of existence with the origin and disappearance of the particular knowledges."¹⁸ He has brought to his support the whole "bulk of the advaita literature" which is "exclusively devoted to the discovery of the foundational consciousness transcending what is given through the discursive intellect."¹⁹

Bradley has not failed to posit the reality of a foundational principle which is the basis of all reality, of all that is an object to it, and with which it cannot be equated, nay, not even related, much less put alongside. He calls this foundational principal "immediate experience," *not thought*. "The entire relational consciousness, in short," writes Bradley, "is experienced as falling within a direct awareness. This direct awareness is itself non-relational. It escapes from all attempts to exhibit it by analysis as one or more elements in a relational scheme, or as that scheme itself, or as a relation or relations, or as the sum or collection of any of these abstractions. And immediate experience not only escapes, but it serves as the basis on which the analysis is made. Itself is the vital element with which every analysis still moves, while, and so far as, and however much, that analysis transcends immediacy. . . . We cannot speak of a relation, between immediate experience and that which transcends it, except by a licence."²⁰

To resume now our discussion about thought's ideality, Bradley is uncompromising on the point. It seems to me incontrovertible that judgment can never bridge the gulf between idea and fact. That is an inevitable consequence of thought's ideality. The limitation of thought becomes clear in another way also. Is the predicate in the judgment adequate to the subject? This question also Bradley answers in the negative. The subject extends indefinitely in its relations with other facts. "It has always edges which

18. A. C. Mukerji: *The Nature of Self*, pp. 175-76.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 223.

20. *Essays on Truth and Reality*, p. 176.

are ragged in such a way as to imply another existence from which it has been torn, and without which it really does not exist. Thus the content of the subject strives, we may say, unsuccessfully towards an all-inclusive whole."²¹ The predicate is likewise "not free from endlessness," for its content also being "abstract and finite, necessarily depends on relation to what is beyond." The subject can become a self-subsistent reality only in an immediate, non-relational, all-inclusive experience where the 'what' is no longer the adjective of the 'that'; and "in reaching this perfection, and in the act of reaching it, thought would lose its own character,"²² its character of mere ideality. For Bradley, immediate experience is the primordial and ultimate nature of Reality. "That on which my view rests," he tells us, "is the immediate unity which comes in feeling, and in a sense this unity is ultimate."²³ Again, "Nothing in the end is real but what is felt."²⁴ "The relational form is a compromise on which thought stands, and which it develops. It is an attempt to unite differences which have broken out of the felt totality."²⁵

Bradley's position, then, precisely stated, is not one of agnosticism, placing reality beyond knowledge and reducing it to a thing-in-itself or an Unknowable. "If the Unknowable," he says, "actually were not knowable, we could not know that such a thing even existed."²⁶ "The assertion of a reality falling outside knowledge, is quite nonsensical."²⁷ For Bradley there is no reality *behind and beyond* what he calls the appearances, the appearances themselves being the stuff reality is made of, though each in its isolation and fragmentariness is not 'self-subsistent' and self-complete. Bradley's position, correctly understood, is one of hierarchical relativism, "the view for which all things finite in different degrees are real and true, and for which, at the same time, not one of them is ultimate."²⁸

Bradley, then, does not deny the *given-ness* of reality to thought, but what he does deny is that reality as *given to thought* is ultimate, self-subsistent, immediate and an all-inclusive individual. This

21. *App. & Reality*, p. 156.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 158.

23. *Essays on Truth & Reality*, pp. 130-31.

24. *Ibid.*, p. 190.

25. *App. and Reality*, p. 159.

26. *Ibid.*, p. 111.

27. *Ibid.*, p. 114.

28. *Ibid.*, p. 372.

latter aspect of reality is an experience higher and richer than thought, where thought's demand for complete harmony and complete absence of discord is met. Not only thought, but feeling and will also find satisfaction in this experience. "Our whole being" finds satisfaction therein. And why should it not? Where all is harmony and no discord, there could be no dissatisfaction to any side of our nature. There is nothing derogatory for thought in this, as Prof. A. C. Mukerji thinks.²⁹ Bradley does not contradict himself when he says that metaphysics is the business of thought and also that ultimate reality is such that feeling and will also find satisfaction therein. True, Bradley has said that metaphysics is the business of thought, and other sides of our nature cannot dictate to it in this matter. But this does not preclude thought, unaided and undictated to by other sides of our nature, from formulating a metaphysical theory about the nature of ultimate reality which promises satisfaction to our whole being. This is precisely what Bradley has done. He has not allowed the "non-intellectual elements" to usurp the function of philosophizing and to dictate to thought.

To conclude, that thought is the *sine qua non* of all reality, Bradley has never disavowed, as any idealist would not; but that thought, *by itself and as it is*, can cover all the ground including the Absolute-Experience, is what he will not accept in common with most of them. Bradley in himself has furnished an example of that metaphysician who, to use his own words, by his "intellectual effort to understand the universe" is "led beyond the region of ordinary facts.....to touch and have communion with what is beyond the visible world."³⁰

29. Vide his essay on British Idealism in *History of Philosophy: East and West*, Vol. II. p. 306.

30. *App. & Reality, Intro.*, p. 5.

The Organicistic Point of View as Evidenced from Studies in Learning and the Phenomenon of Transfer

by

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The Organicistic point of view in Modern Psychology has been found to be a useful hypothesis in explaining satisfactorily the various psychological processes. The phenomena of learning and transfer of training were rather ill explained by the traditional Mechanistic Associationism. It is proposed to present here an examination of these phenomena and to show that the theory of Organicism has been successfully applied in explaining these phenomena.

The term Association and the notion conveyed by the term had blinded the philosopher psychologists of the past and also its modern advocates who advocated the notion of the 'Conditioned Reflex', to a fact of rather basic importance that learning as a performance is a dynamogenesis, very different from what the mechanical connexionist supposes it to be. The principle of 'Association by Similarity' contained in substance an entirely new principle of explanation for the organisation of behaviour. Efforts had been made from the days of Hartley to those of Mill, and in modern days by the students of the Reflex and its conditioning, to reduce every connection to a mere matter of contiguity leading to the hypothesis of the 'fixed pathway'. Hamilton's principle of 'Redintegration' and later Thorndike's principle of 'belongingness' hint at the difficulty of the Associationist in accepting mere contiguity as the operating variable in the establishment of a connection. It is difficult to believe that two absolutely heterogeneous elements come together in learning, or that learning instead of being a total reorganisation of the organism's behaviour stock is only a mechanical hitching together of S-R bonds. The correlated nature of the reflex function does not necessarily mean that behavior organisation is only putting together of the reflexes. Experimental studies as those of Sherrington have gone to show that the inherent organisation of behaviour and learning only

means a reorganisation, and not a mere chaining of reflexes. That behaviour is never chaotic and that it is fundamentally organised and directed are statements, which are now asserted repeatedly by various investigators. The view is held, and not without sufficient experimental support, that the whole organism, by virtue of its inherent organisation, is so built that it must behave pattern-wise. This conception has, in fact, led to the annihilation of the old cleavage between a stimulus on the one hand impinging upon a receptor, and on the other hand a response produced by an effector. In strict consistency with this theoretical position, behaviour is taken not as a response to a situation but, as already pointed out, as a part of the total situation-response complex, a total action-unit, not a reflex-arc. The concept of the 'Organism-environment Complex' stands for the essential correlation and unity of the organism and the environment, and consequently learning or modification of the organism through its own activities in the environment becomes rather a postulate and an inevitable result of the organism-environment inter-relationship, and, therefore, needs no definition. Thus Ogden, a champion of this movement, writes that the basic facts for Psychology (or for any other science for that matter) are not "isolated, self-sufficient entities, but dynamic patterns, the very existence of which involves form". This is what the Functionalists had also asserted to be the state of affairs in organic behaviour. The essence of all these assertions is that from organisation alone comes organisation; organisation is, in fact, only reorganisation. Facts of any kind simply are not independent items, each existing in its own right, quite apart from every thing else. Organisation is not something outside the organised; it is not something imposed on isolated and independent items of facts. Accordingly, the so-called correlated observable behaviour items known as reflexes are not strictly speaking items of behaviour, independent of and unrelated to the total structure and function of the organism. It is rather ridiculous to think of facts of life and organic behaviour as independent and isolated entities when even Physics refuses to give an independent status to facts of the physical and inorganic world. The distinction between the organic and the inorganic vanishes at this point. The neurological researches of Cannon, Herrick, Coghill and Child buttress this conclusion, which appears rather incomprehensible or even mystical to many. Thus Child wrote:—

Summing up, the reflex, strictly speaking, is a specialised behaviour pattern depending on the presence of certain morphological mechanisms; but it is physiologically a development

from the primary organismic behaviour mechanism, the excitation-gradient.

A gradient is certainly a reciprocal dynamic relation between at least two areas of high or low potential (metabolic activity) respectively. The reflex is itself a derived mode of reaction and, therefore, it is obvious that the attempt to derive intelligent behaviour, and higher mental faculties in general, from reflexes or habits or from any other fixed or determinate behaviour is futile. Just as the reflexes are the specifications from a broader matrix of behaviour, so also the fixated responses, known as habits, emerge also from total responses, whose intrinsic wholeness has a voluntary character. The volitional process is a comprehensive adjustment of the entire organism to all the phases of the situation confronting it, and consequently is more variable and less stereotyped than a segmental habit, which is an isolated behaviour fragment. Habits, as learned, are thus specifications out of the total behaviour of the organism. The basic point of view, asserted by Coghill, is in keeping with this principle. Coghill, as a student of behaviour-development in lower organisms, has aptly expressed this point of view in the following lines:—

In so far as the development of behaviour is known in vertebrates, all reflexes emerge as partial or local patterns with an expanding or growing total pattern that normally is from the beginning perfectly integrated. They become partial or local only overtly. They are inherently components of the total pattern or they are under its dominance. An instinctive reaction, on the other hand, is the total pattern overtly in action. The process of individuation of the partial pattern consists in progressive restriction of the zone of stimulation adequate for the response and in progressive reduction of the extent of muscular reaction. Since the reflex and the instinct develop according to the same law and serve the same purpose, they cannot be regarded as two distinct categories of behaviour. Their apparent difference with reference to the magnitude of the pattern is simply a function of growth.

Thus, as stated above, learning as modification of behaviour involves the process of individuation of "partial or local patterns with an expanding or growing total pattern that normally is from the beginning perfectly integrated".

Ogden in listing the laws of learning talks of the law of association, not, of course, of the traditional connectionist version of the law. His interpretation of association is from the Configu-

rationistic point of view; association means, according to him, pattern forming. Thus he writes:—

When a number of more or less discrete perceptions enter into a configuration, they become joined by virtue of their membership in a whole; the members are, therefore, held together not by the external agency of an associative glue but by the transformation, which they have undergone in losing something of their individuality and becoming the members of a single pattern".

This restatement and reinterpretation of the law of association resembles the law of 'redintegration' of Hamilton and Hollingworth and the notion of belongingness, later formulated by Thorndike. Individual experiences are integrated; and in the process of their integration, they lose their individuality in an integrated whole. In serial learning, for example, as Ogden has aptly pointed out, "it is only when the series becomes an unified whole with a certain articulatory progression, or with beat, measure and melody, that the series can be memorised at all. A pattern is formed, which suggests its own completion and presupposes the inter-sensory functioning and, in fact, the function of the whole organism".

The facts and principles of learning are closely related to those of the allied phenomenon, namely the phenomenon of 'transfer of training'; and the organismic character of learning is nowhere so well illustrated as it is in the phenomenon of 'bilateral transfer'. The phenomenon of transfer has also been attacked from different points of view; and each systematic view-point has its own explanation for this rather educationally and practically important phenomenon. But at present it is certain from the facts and principles available, that this controversial question is nearing a final solution, and very soon the controversies may disappear altogether. There has been unanimity as to the nature of the phenomenon and as to what exactly is transferred from one situation to another.

The connectionist view-point that transfer from one situation to another occurs only when there are 'identical elements' in either the stimuli or the responses may be formally a correct proposition, but the identification of these identical elements is, without doubt, an elusive task. No proportionate transfer, as implied in the theory, ever occurs; on the contrary, perceptibly more transfer effect has been noted in many dissimilar than in similar data. The amount and the nature of transfer does not always depend on the number of identical elements. On the contrary, it is fully

proved, that transfer occurs when learning is generalised. Much of the transfer effect is due to the subject's own alertness and how he observes the similarity between one situation, in which a response was acquired, and another in which the response is to be applied in a modified form. The fact that one can use any learning outside the original situation, where it was acquired, shows that some transfer exists. That learning is a function of the whole organism, or that development or modification by learning is a modification of the whole, is presupposed in the phenomenon of transfer. The crucial experiments of Lashley conclusively proved this assertion. The phenomenon of complete bilateral transfer is one of common experience. Animal psychologists have studied the phenomenon experimentally also. In discrimination studies on white rats and other animals the investigators bandaged one eye of the experimental animal; and then after the discrimination response was established with one eye, after a few days, presented the same situation and bandaged the eye with which the discrimination was learned, in order to see if the animal would make the discrimination with the eye which was apparently not trained in doing the discrimination. The result can be well imagined. Lashley made a more thorough-going experiment on a monkey in a motor learning task by reversing the use of the arms. He cauterised the motor area in the right hemisphere, and as a result of the operation the left hand was paralysed and the animal learned the task of opening three latch boxes with the right hand. Later, the same operation was reversed to see if the animal would be able to perform the task by the left hand without any difficulty. The animal had no difficulty in solving the problem with the originally incapacitated organ. The transfer of the skill from one bodily member to another was complete. Not only were the limbs and their innervations shown to be non-specific in their action upon the learned performance, but apparently neither the left nor the right motor region was indispensable to the task or the locus of the neural change.

These facts of tremendous, though of elemental, significance for the transfer theory show the essential organismic character of learning and transfer. Apparently it is not the eyes alone that do the discrimination or the hands alone that solve the puzzle, it is the total organism that functions in learning. It is the individual organism that is modified as a whole, though the specific organs manifest the modification. We learn to write not only with our hands and fingers but with the legs, the head, in fact, the whole body.

Discussion

by

SIBAPADA CHAKRAVARTI

"Philosophy, Philosophers and Philosophical Analysis" by
A. Lakshmana Rao (Department of Philosophy, Andhra
University).

The Philosophical Quarterly Vol. XXX No. 4., January, 1958.

Prof. Rao takes the contemporary philosopher to be a 'criminal' and Bertrand Russell to be the abettor of the crime (p. 212). The crime, according to him, is the destruction of traditional philosophy or metaphysics "which concerned itself with the world and our relations to it" (p. 212). Now if he is ready to call the present-day thinkers "philosophers" what, according to him, such thinkers are doing to deserve that title? Is their work merely negative? Prof. Rao's remark that contemporary philosophical analysis is not constructive in any way (p. 212) seems to be too sweeping. G. Ryle's "Concept of Mind", one of the acknowledged examples of philosophical analysis, works out a positive theory of "mind" and "mental" that is behaviouristic. This may be controversial but we cannot say that the book merely explodes the "ghost in the machine" myth.

It seems that Prof. Rao takes all contemporary analytic philosophy to be positivistic, but this identification does not hold. Thinkers who do not share the convictions of a logical positivist also take recourse to analysis of ordinary language to tackle philosophical problems. Analysis of the usage of expressions laden with important philosophical concepts like 'knowledge', 'belief', 'self', 'mental', 'good', 'true', 'freedom', etc., is practically the universal method of philosophical investigation in contemporary England and America. Even those who reject the conclusions of the positivist, do so by taking help of an *alternative* analysis of the expressions themselves. When it is the problem of meaning and not of facts, analysis is the only instrument of its solution. Scientific problems are the problems of 'facts' having necessary connection with sense-perception. If philosophy is to know 'facts', such facts must be supersensible; for otherwise philosophy cannot be distinguished from science. A knowledge of "ontological

facts" was denied by Kant, for such knowledge is not possible through *a priori* reasoning. We must have some direct experience of super-sensible facts, if any, but man has no faculty of 'intellectual intuition'. Thus if there be any 'philosophical' problem, it cannot but be a problem of meaning. Even traditional philosophy, in a sense, was interested in the imprecise concepts of ordinary and scientific vocabulary. These can possibly be made precise and non-misleading by a study of the various uses of expressions conveying these troublesome concepts. How can I know, for example, what do we mean by knowledge unless I understand sentences in which the word 'knowledge' occurs? Prof. Rao is right in holding that analysis in the sense of discrimination and selection of facts relevant to a problem and eliminating the irrelevant, is the analysis of the data and not of the problem itself (p. 213). But he is right only because he takes the problem to be one of facts and not of meaning. He is perhaps confusing 'scientific' analysis and 'philosophical' analysis.

Prof. Rao has nothing to say against analysis as a method, but he seems to be much concerned with the misuse of analysis in contemporary philosophy. The misuse of analytic method has reduced "philosophy" to triviality, according to him. In this context, we may mean by 'philosophy' either the speculation of the traditional metaphysician or the contribution of the analytic philosopher himself. If we take the first alternative, may we not hold that to show clearly a 'serious' problem of traditional metaphysics to be not serious at all, but only too obvious and trivial, is very important and outstanding work? If, on the other hand, we take the second alternative then, of course, a tiny contribution of the philosophical analyst will appear to be trivial to a massive system-builder. The present-day analyst is not a system-builder; he believes more in microscopic reflection than in macrocosmic bluff. And if he has infused the spirit of clear thinking and removed much intellectual muddle by concentrating on little problems with utmost penetration, I cannot but take his work to be very important. Democracy cannot flourish without opposition. Speculative philosophy will run amuck without the effective check imposed by the analyst.

Can we say *a priori* that all problems of traditional philosophy are genuine and none are pseudo-problems? Are even all scientific problems so? An analytic investigation of the problem itself is necessary to decide the issue. It is always possible that some problems are pseudo-problems and when the analyst proves it

to be so, he solves or rather dissolves the problem. Dissolving is also a kind of solving for it is setting doubts at rest.

Present-day analysis, according to Prof. Rao, is 'nonsensical' as distinguished from genuine analysis as found in Socrates, Plato or the Upanisads. Paradoxically enough he seems to reject all analysis, genuine or otherwise, from philosophy, as, philosophy deals with 'genuine wholes' that are not merely combination of units (p. 214). The method of analysis, adopted by Descartes, was barren, as rightly maintained by Prof. Rao; but this is only because Descartes wanted "metaphysical knowledge" through such analysis. Analysis is really a method of exposition and clarification. It is not an accredited method of knowing facts, like perception or inference. Prof. Rao himself admits this. "Analysis and synthesis are only steps in the process of definition which help only in the clarification of the problem; and the clarification of the problem is not the same thing as its solution (p. 216)". But if definition of expressions be the main problem of philosophy, analysis alone, I think, will solve the problem.

Prof. Rao seems to admit the importance of critical philosophy which replaces a vague belief by a clear and analysed one and such analysis is stated to have a constructive (i.e., positive) side. Such critical philosophy will analyse the concepts that we daily use in common life and science and thus determine their precise meanings. Prof. Rao quotes from C. D. Broad (p. 216) which gives nothing but the programme of recent linguistic analysis. Yet he says in page 217 "Is the philosopher's primary concern with words and their meanings or with things and their properties? If the former, then God help philosophy!" This makes critical philosophy secondary; but I do not know what will then be the distinction between a metaphysics of things and properties and a science or a superscience.

Books Received

1. "What makes Acts Right" by Archie J. Bahm, Ph.D., published by the Christopher Publishing House, Boston, price \$ 4/00 net.
2. Paramahansa Yogananda (In memoriam), Publishers—Self-Realization Fellowship, Los Angeles, California.

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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