

CONCEPT  
OF  
SELF IN INDIAN THOUGHT

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of the  
Graduate School, Marquette University, in  
Partial Fulfillment of the Re-  
quirements for the Degree  
of Master of Arts

Milwaukee, Wisconsin  
May, 1975

## PREFACE

In the following pages I have tried to trace the evolution of the concept of self in Indian philosophy. In doing so, I have attempted to show the differences between the Indian concept of self and that of the West. In the concluding part of this paper, I have tried to indicate how useful it could be to the modern West to know the significance of Indian philosophy's stress the idea of the self. A balance is needed between man's knowledge of the external world and his knowledge of his inner world. An understanding of the meaning and significance of the Indian concept of the self will help very much toward attaining this balance.

## CONTENTS

- I. INTRODUCTION: THE UNIQUENESS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY'S INTEREST IN THE NATURE OF THE SELF . . . . .
- II. SOURCES: THE VEDAS, THE BRAHMANAS, THE ARANYAKAS, THE UPANISHADS, AND THE TWO GREAT INDIAN EPICS . . . . .
- III. THE CONCEPT OF THE SELF IN THE VEDAS AND THE UPANISHADS . . . . .
- IV. THE CONCEPT OF THE SELF IN JAINISM AND BUDDHISM . . . . .
- V. THE CONCEPT OF THE SELF IN THE EPICS . . . . .
- VI. THE CONCEPT OF THE SELF IN THE SIX SYSTEMS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY: . . . . .
  1. Samkhy
  2. Yoga
  3. Purva Mimamsa
  4. Nyaya and Vaisesika
  5. Vedanta
    - a. Samkara: Advaita or Absolute Monism
    - b. Ramanuja: Qualified Dualism
    - c. Madhava: Unqualified Dualism
- VII. COMPARISON AND CONTRAST BETWEEN INDIAN AND WESTERN CONCEPTS OF THE SELF . . . . .
- VIII. WHAT THE WEST CAN LEARN FROM INDIA . . . . .

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Indian philosophy is one of the oldest in the world. It began about two thousand years before Christ, and it has had a continuity of about four thousand years. What distinguishes Indian thought from Western thought is its inwardness. Generally speaking, it may be said that Western philosophy, beginning with the Greeks, has laid much more stress on external phenomena than on the internal. On the other hand, the "I" or the self has been the topic of Indian philosophy right from the beginning. In Western philosophy, the study of the self as a separate entity is a comparatively modern phenomenon. In no other philosophy is the concept of the self so central as in Indian philosophy.

It should, therefore, be both interesting and instructive to investigate the nature of the self as understood in Indian philosophy. It will also be useful to note the similarities and differences between the Indian concept of the self and the idea of the self in the Western thought. This is especially so because of the great need in our time for a greater understanding of man's inner world. Today, man, with his advanced technology, has conquered the surface of the earth, and he is all set for his greater adventure into outer space. But

the sad truth is that man's knowledge of himself has not kept pace with the great growth in his knowledge of the outer world. This discrepancy is at the root of all his troubles today.

The great interest that has been taken in the nature of the human self by modern psychology shows modern man's awareness of the need to fill the gap between his knowledge of his inner world and his knowledge of the outer world. It is my purpose, in this paper, to show that some of the insights of modern Western psychology on the nature of the human self are truths which the thinkers of India had discovered in ancient times. I shall also point out the relevance of ancient India's knowledge of the nature of the self to the problems that trouble modern man.

## 11. SOURCES

The source books of Indian philosophy are, mainly, the Vedas, the Brahmanas, the Aranyakas, the Upanishads, and the two great Indian epics - the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.

Scholars generally agree that the beginning of Vedic literature goes back to 2000 B.C. or even 2500 B.C. The word Veda (from the root "vid" meaning "to know" as in Latin "videre") in the widest sense is not the name of any particular book, but the literature of a particular epoch ranging over a long period. There are four Vedas. They are: the Rg Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Sama Veda, and the Atharva Veda.

The Rg Veda is mostly in the form of hymns addressed to the dieties who are personifications of natural forces such as the sun, the moon, the wind, the sky, the sea, etc. The Aryan religion was a form of nature worship which blended, in course of time, with the religion of the pre-Aryan people of India. The Yajur, Sama, and Atharva Vedas came after the Rg Veda, and they bear evidence of the interaction between the Aryan and pre-Aryan religions. Later the Brahmanas were composed as guidelines to the ritual of Vedic sacrifice. Still later the ritual and sacrifice became discredited as people became more and more reflective. The Aranyakas contain the thoughts produced during this reflective period. The Upanishads which represent the highest achievement of Vedic thought as

well as Vedic religion, embody these thoughts in their maturest form.

The hymns of the Rg Veda are filled with intense religious consciousness of the people who wrote them. These people seem to be intoxicated with the idea of the holy within and beyond natural phenomena. These hymns are filled with delight, wonder, and excitement at the splendor of nature and the joy and riddle of being. The authors of these hymns have not yet begun the inward looking search which came to be the main feature of the Upanishads and which has been the chief characteristic of Indian thought ever since.

The Upanishads are of vital importance to Indian philosophy. They are philosophical interpretations of the Vedas. Radhakrishnan says, "Though in some sense the Upanishads are the continuation of the Vedic religion, they are in another sense a strong philosophical protest against the religion of the Brahmanas. It is in the Upanishads that the tendency to spiritual monism, which, in one form or another, characterizes much of Indian philosophy, was first established whose intuition rather than reason was first recognized as the true guide of ultimate truth."<sup>1</sup>

The two great Indian epics are later developments of Vedic thoughts in the form of books, where semi-historic and legendary personalities are given divine attributes and are presented as models of philosophic outlook of the Vedas. Though there are many epic writings, the most important are the Ramayana

and the Mahabharata. Of them Ramayana is the story of the god-hero, Rama, while Mahabharata is the story of the war between the Pandavas and the Kauravas.

The most important part of the Mahabharata is the Bhagavad Gita which is full of ethical, moral, and philosophical thoughts. Wilhelm von Humboldt has described the Bhagavad Gita as "the most beautiful, perhaps the only philosophical song in any known tongue."<sup>2</sup> The context in which the Bhagavad Gita occurs in Mahabharata, may be described here. The Pandavas are unjustly drawn into a war by their numerically superior kinsmen, the Kauravas. Lord Krishna, an incarnation of Vishnu, joins the Pandavas and leads Arjuna as his charioteer. Seeing his own kith and kin, his elders and teachers, in the enemy's camp, Arjuna loses his moral strength and lays down his arms. Lord Krishna then exhorts Arjuna about his duty to fight. This exhortation, which takes the form of a highly philosophical and ethical disquisition, is what has come to be known as the Bhagavad Gita.



111. CONCEPT OF SELF IN THE VEDAS  
AND THE UPANISHADS

As we have seen, the Rg Veda was composed by men who were outward-looking. They had not become introspective. It is only in the Upanishads that we find an almost completely inward-looking quest for truth. But we must note that the shift from the outward-looking attitude of the Vedas to the inward-looking attitude of the Upanishads was effected without losing sight of the reality of the outer world. What is remarkable here is the way in which the outer world of empirical phenomena and the inner world of psychic experience are reconciled. This reconciliation produces an almost "scientific" or rationalistic ground for the encounter between the divine and the human within the mind of man. According to Brhadavanyaka Upanishad, the "Atman" or God who resides within man's being is the same "Atman" that is the light of the sun. Thus man's inner nature and the reality of the external world are correlated. As a learned interpreter puts it, "Man thus becomes the meeting point of the gods of the universe or its controlling forces. The highest controlling force was the Atman, the source of light, both internal and external. . . . In any case (the Upanishads) accept the idea that God is the innermost spirit within man. The philosophical thoughts of the

Upanishads once and for all becomes inward-looking in its effect to find explanations."<sup>3</sup>

The central idea of the Upanishads is that the ultimate truth is within man. The Brhadaranyaka Upanishad tells the story of the Emperor Janaka who sought wisdom from the great sage Yajnavalkya.

"Yajnavalkya," said the Emperor, "What is the light by which man is served?"

"The light of the sun, O, Emperor," said the sage, "For it is by the light of the sun that man sits down, goes out, works, and comes back home."

"Quite so. But when the sun has set, O, Yajnavalkya, what then is the light by which man is served?"

"The moon then becomes his light; for it is then by the light of the moon that he sits down, goes out, works, and comes back home."

"That is so," said Janaka, "But when both the sun and the moon are down, what then, O, Yajnavalkya, is the light by which man is served?"

"The fire becomes the light," replied Yajnavalkya, "for it is then by firelight that he sits down, goes out, works, and comes back home."

"O, Yajnavalkya, that is true; but when the sun and the moon have set and the fire has gone out, what then is the light by which man is served?"

"Sound then serves as light," said the sage, "for it is with the voice as his light that he then sits down, goes out, works, and comes back home. O, Emperor, when it is so dark, that one cannot see one's own hand before one's own face, if a sound is uttered, then one can follow the sound."

"That indeed is true," said the Emperor, "but, O, Yajnavalkya, when the sun and the moon have set, and the fire has gone out, and there is not a sound - what is then the light by which man is served?"

The sage was driven to the wall. "Atman, the self," he declared, "becomes his light; for it is by the light of the self that he sits down, goes out, works, and comes back home."

The emperor was pleased; yet the discussion had to come to this point: "That is true, O, Yajnavalkya, but of the many principles within man, which is the Self?" Only when this question had been asked did the sage at last begin to teach the king.<sup>4</sup>

The Upanishads teach that it is only by delving deep within himself that man can find the Supreme Reality. In this sense the Indian concept of man is eminently humanistic. But it is a humanism which believes that the superhuman is within man. It is also an empiricism which does not exclude the metaphysical. The Upanishadic man is at home in the universe because he conceives of it "as the product of his own inner most Spirit, the Atman,...and all the gods were its products and he himself was created as the field of their activities and enjoyment.<sup>5</sup>

The Upanishads draw a distinction between man's empirical self and his true Self or Atman. The empirical self is the existential self, subject to sorrow and suffering and subject to change. The true Self is the unchanging Atman that observes the empirical phenomena but is unaffected and undying.

The Upanishads believe in the ultimate identity of the empirical self with the Supreme Self. This identity is clearly illustrated in the Chandogya Upanishad through the lessons given to Svetaketu by his father.

"Bring hither a fig from there," (says his father).

"Here it is, Sir."

"Divide it."

"It is divided, sir."

"What do you see there?"

"These rather fine seeds, sir."

"Of these, please divide one."

"It is divided, sir."

"What do you see there?"

"Nothing at all, sir."

Then he said to him: "Verily, my dear, that finest essence which you do not perceive . . . from that finest essence this great sacred fig tree thus arises. Believe mee . . . that which is the finest essence . . . this whole world has that as its self. That is Atman. That art thou (tat tuam asi) Svetaketu."

2.

"Do you, sir, cause me to understand more."  
 "So be it, my dear," told he, "Place this salt in the water. In the morning come to me."  
 Then he did so.  
 Then he said to him, "That salt you placed in the water last evening, please bring it hither.  
 Then he grasped for it but did not find it, as it was completely dissolved.  
 "Please take a sip of it from this end," said he. "How is it?"  
 "Salt."  
 "Take a sip from the middle," said he. "How is it?"  
 "Salt."  
 "Take a sip from that end," said he. "How is it?"  
 "Salt."  
 "Set it aside. Then come unto me." He did so, saying, "It is always the same."  
 Then he said to him: "Verily . . . you do not perceive Being here. Verily indeed, it is here. That which is the finest essence - this whole world has that as its self. That is Reality. That is Atman. That art thou, Svetaketu."<sup>6</sup>

One of the best accounts of the structure of man is to be found in the Taittiriya Upanishads. A distinction is drawn between man's body and his atman. Man's body is not the real self because "from the atman, which is the Brahman, aether (akasa) is born; from it air; from air, fire; from fire, water; from water, earth. From earth are born plants and from plants food is derived; and from food man is born."<sup>7</sup> The Atman is the Supreme Being; man is the finite creature. But deep within man is the Atman which is man's true self.

What then is man's true self? The body is not the Atman or Self, because the body is empirical. Is the Atman the vital principle or "prana"? No, it cannot be because when a man is asleep, his "I" does not respond if we call him, even though he is not dead. In this case, it is his mind that is unconscious. Is mind then the Atman? No, it is not because a lunatic's mind operates, though he is far from being his true self. What he



lacks is reason. Is reason, then, the Atman? No, it cannot be, for when a man is asleep his reason is dormant and yet we do not say that his self is absent. Is then the unconscious Atman? No, it cannot be because the Atman by its very nature, must be conscious. But the Atman though not to be identified or equated with any or all of these - body, mind, reason, the unconscious - is present in all of them. Thus we see that "the lower is the body of the higher, and the higher is the atman of the lower. Matter is not the atman of anything; and the ultimate atman is not the body of anything."<sup>8</sup>

What we must note here is that man is regarded as an integral unity of all these things and that the atman is what constitutes that unity. Such a view excludes the polarities and dichotomies that abound in the Western attempts to understand the nature of man. We do not find here the Cartesian division between subject and object and between matter and spirit. There is here a holistic approach which has become a significant part of modern speculations on the nature of human personality. If man's self (atman) is the microcosmos, the Brahman or the paramatman is the macrocosmos. The holistic structure of the reality within and outside man may be represented as thus:

<u>STATES</u>	<u>MICROCOSMOS</u>	<u>MACROCOSMOS</u>
Waking consciousness	Visva	Virat
Dream	Taujasa	Hiranyagrbha
Sleep	Prajna	Isvara
Pure state	Atman	Brhaman

Of this structure Professor Raju says, "In every state the microcosmos is . . . connected with the macrocosmos.

"Hiranyagrbha" is the vital principle that binds all parts of

the universe and the "Taijadas" are connected together through it. "Isvara" is the self conscious entity that, like mind, controls the universe. The Brahman is the self effluent Spirit than comprehends the whole. In their dream state, all men are bound together by the thread of the bio-psychic principle "Hiranyagarbha". In the deep unconsciousness of their sleep, they are the objects of "Isvara", who is eternally and without intermission conscious . . . In the fourth state, the microcosm and the macrocosm are one . . ."9 This hierarchy of relationship is also shown in a different way. Thus the mind ("manas") is regarded as being "higher than the senses, reason ("buddhi") higher than the mind, cosmic reason higher than reason, the unmanifest ("Avakta") is higher than cosmic reason and "Purusha" ("Atman") is higher than the unmanifest."10

Another famous illustration of the nature of man is to be found in the metaphor of the chariot in the Katha Upanishad: "The self (atman) is the owner of the chariot; the body (sarira) is the chariot; intuitive discernment and awareness (buddhi) is the charioteer; the thinking function (manas) is the bridle; the sense forces (indriya) are the horses; and the objects or spheres of sense perception (visaya) are ranging - ground (gocarna) . . . The individual in whom the self, the sense forces, and the mind are joined is called eater or enjoyer (bhoktav)."11

An equally well-known illustration is the metaphor of the two birds on one tree: "Two birds of beautiful plumage, close friends and companions, reside in the intimate fellowship on the self same tree. One of them eats the sweet fruits of

the tree; the other without eating watches."<sup>12</sup> Here the tree is the tree of life or of human personality and the two birds are man's empirical self and his true self - the one eating the fruit and the other looking on. The metaphor is interpreted thus: The individual life - monad (purusa), being deluded, laments, depressed by a feeling of helplessness (anisaya); but when he beholds on the same tree that other, the Lord in whom the pious take delight (justam isam), and comprehends its greatness, then the grief is gone.<sup>13</sup> This metaphor is an illustration of the unity of being and Being, of self and Self, of man and God asserted by Chandogya Upanishad in the sentence: "Tat-tvam asi" or "That art thou."

An important element in the Upanishadic concept of the self is the ego which is called "ahamkara". The ego is not static; it is dynamic. It includes the impersonal "I" and "mine". It is the empirical self, not the true Self or Atman. The activity of the ego is suspended in deep sleep. The ego is active only in waking states. The psychic force of man resides not in the ego, but in his true Self. Hence the Brhadaranyana Upanishad tells man to look within for his true Self.

The distinction between the ego ("ahamkara") and the true Self (Atman) is of great significance. When the Upanishads say that the highest goal of man is to realize his true self, they are not proclaiming a doctrine of self-indulgence. To realize the self one has to regulate the ego. Also, there must be ethical actions - action according to the law of "dharma". In Indian thought there is an extraordinary direct correlation

between human ethics and cosmic order.

The Upanishadic concept of human nature shaped the philosophy<sup>of</sup> education in ancient India. If the true Self within (Atman) is identical with the Brahman, then it follows that all human striving must aim at realizing that Self. For this reason in ancient India, the purpose of education was self realization through self knowledge. This stress on self realization is clearly anticipatory of the emphasis on self actualization in modern educational psychology. In ancient Indian thought, the whole of life was regarded as a training for self realization. There is, as we shall see, a difference between self realization, as understood in Indian thought, and the self actualization theory of present day humanistic psychology.



1V. THE CONCEPT OF THE SELF  
IN JAINISM AND BUDDHISM

Both Jainism and Buddhism, as is well known, derived much from Vedic thought. While rejecting the Upanishadic notion of a Supreme God (Brahman), they still substantially adopted the Hindu view of the world. In a way they are offshoots of Hinduism, and their chief difference from Hinduism, apart from their non-theism, is to be found in their greater emphasis on inwardness.

Jain metaphysics makes a distinction between spirit ("jiva") and matter ("ajiva"). "Ajiva" is the various kinds such as time, space, atoms, etc. Man is a "jiva" bound to "ajiva" by the bonds of "karma" or action. To escape from the bondage, the jiva must purify itself by rejecting "karma". Thus Jain ethics, in the extreme form, points toward inaction.

The Buddhist conception of man is more complex. While the Upanishads regard man as the ultimate reality, Buddhism regards "nirvana" as the supreme principle. While the Upanishads speak of matter as deriving from spirit and moving toward spirit, Buddhism ignores categories and concentrates on how to relieve man from his misery. All the same Buddhists have evolved a highly complex notion of the nature of man.

Buddhists regard man as essentially "nirvana" according to all schools of Buddhism. But existentially man is regarded

as a "pudgala", a psycho-physical being made up of five aggregates or "skandhas". These five skandhas are: "rupaskandha" or the aggregate of matter, "vedaskandha" or the aggregate of feelings and sensations, "samjnaskandha" or the aggregate of ideas, "samskaraskandha" or aggregate of instincts and "vijnanaskandha" or the aggregate of consciousness.<sup>14</sup>

Like the Upanishads, both Jainism and Buddhism stress the realization of the supreme principle within man, although they differ as to what constitutes the supreme principle. Both Jainism and Buddhism have drawn criticism on grounds of their excessive stress on self-control and their ignoring of the importance of action. It has been said that they "overstressed life above action; and their doctrine gave rise to the idea that action is detrimental to salvation."<sup>15</sup> This criticism, however, is true only of Hinayana Buddhism. Mahayana Buddhism has a strong ethical bias made manifest in the Bodhisattva ideal which involves postponing one's salvation (nirvana) in order to remain in the world of suffering so as to bring salvation to others.

We have seen that the Vedic concept of man shaped Vedic education. In like manner, the Jain and Buddhist views on the nature of man shaped the educational theory and practice of Jainism and Buddhism. Characteristically both Jain and Buddhist education had an almost exclusive monastic orientation. But their educational ideal - that of helping the individual to realize the highest within himself - is consistent with their concept of man.

V. THE CONCEPT OF SELF IN THE EPICS

In the Ramayana and Mahabharata we have a more realistic survey of man in action than in the Vedas and the Upanishads. However, except in Bagavat Gita (which, as we have seen, is a part of Mahabharata), we do not have in epics anything like the persistent wrestling with the problem of self that we find in the Upanishads.

The concept of the self in the Bhagavat Gita is identical with that of the Upanishads. In the Bhagavat Gita, the problem of the self is powerfully dramatized. Arjuna's confrontation with the non-self is here presented as a personal dilemma with a heavy ethical import. He is torn between duty (dharma) which enjoins fighting the righteous war, and the breakdown of the will caused by his compassionate regard for those he is enjoined to kill - among them his own relatives, teachers (gurus), and friends. Here there is a tremendous conflict of values. The conflict is heightened when Krishna tells Arjuna:

"Nay, but as one layeth  
His worn-out robes away  
And taking new ones, sayeth,  
"These will I wear today!"  
So putteth by the spirit  
Lightly its garb of flesh  
And passeth to inherit  
A residence afresh."<sup>16</sup>

If man's body and his temporal self are but the garb which the spirit wears and puts away, then what is man? The

question that Arjuna faces is: "Who am I?" The answer he receives from Krishna is that his true self is not the body or the temporal self any more than the true selves of his enemies are in their bodies or in their temporal selves. Arjuna's true self is nothing other than the Atman residing within him. The identity between this Atman and the Lord Krishna is revealed to Arjuna in the cosmic vision of himself that Krishna grants to Arjuna. Only then is Arjuna ready to understand and accept Krishna's exhortation:

"Abandoning attachment to the fruits of action,  
Constantly content, independent,  
Even when he sets out upon action,  
He yet does (in effect) nothing whatsoever.  
No action is found (binding) upon  
Him who would delight in the self alone,  
Who would find contentment  
And satisfaction only in the self."<sup>17</sup>

It must be noted that the "self" here means not the ego, but the Atman - the undying and enduring self, the microcosmic counterpart within man of the macrocosmic Brahman.

## VI. THE CONCEPT OF THE SELF IN THE SIX SYSTEMS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

The main systems of Indian philosophy are: Samkhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaisesika, Purvamimasa, and Vedanta. These systems did not evolve one after another; they developed concurrently through mutual criticism and interaction. Except from Samkhya, they accept the basic assumptions of the Vedas and Upanishads, but there are individual differences among them.

### 1. Samkhya

Samkhya philosophy holds a highly complex view of the nature of man as a spiritual and psycho-physical entity. It regards the ego as the center of both man and the universe. "As center is to the circumference," interprets Raju, "so man is to the correlate of the external world."<sup>18</sup> The ego emanates from reason, which itself emanates from Prakrti or Primèval Matter. According to Samkhya, the inner world of man ("antah-karana") consists of three parts: mind (mans), ego (ahamkara), and reason (buddhi). Reason or buddhi whose function is to analyze and to determine, has two aspects - "the satvika" or pure aspect and the "tamasika" or the lethargic aspect. "Dharma" (merit), "Jnana" (knowledge), "Vairagya" (detachment), and "Aisvarya" (Godliness) derive from the "Satvika" aspect, whereas from the "tamasika" aspect derive qualities antithetical to these.



In one respect Samkhya differs significantly from the Upanishads. For the Upanishads, the vital principle is different from the mind, but for Samkhya, the vital principle is the common function of the three forms of the inner instrument or "antahkarana". Each of the three has its own function; but together they perform the function of biological activity."<sup>19</sup>

The Samkhya analysis of the psyche conceives of man as being at once "active" ("kartar") and "receptive" ("bhoktar"). He is "active" through the five "organs of action" and "receptive" through the five "organs of perception". The ego ("ahamjara"), as we have noted, is central to the psyche. But the ego is the "prime motivating force of delusion" ("abhimana"). "Ahamkara" is the misconception, conceit, supposition or belief that refers all objects and acts of consciousness to an "I" ("aham"). "Ahamkara" . . . comprises all psychic process, producing the misleading notion "I am hearing; I am seeing; I am rich and mighty . . ." It is the prime cause of the critical "wrong perception" that dogs all phenomenal experience . . ."<sup>20</sup>

In this view of the ego, Samkhya comes very close to the Upanishads, but in contrast to the monism of the Upanishads. Samkhya holds a dualistic view of reality. Samkhya makes a categorical distinction between "prakriti" (primeval matter) and "purusha" (the collectivity of irradiant but inactive life-monads).. Samkhya regards the duality as axiomatic. "From this duality it proceeds to develop an "analytical enumeration" ("parisamkhya-ana") of the principles or categories" ("tattva"; "thatness") of nature as there have been developed "in the unceasing develop-

ments and combinations of inert matter under the uninterrupted influence of the brilliance radiating from the life-monads and producing consciousness."21

In Samkhya there is neither a personal God nor an impersonal one, neither monotheism nor monism. It conceives of the universe in terms of evolution. Hence Richard Garbe rightly says that in Samkhya, "For the first time in the history of the world, the complete independence of the human mind, its confidence in its own powers were exhibited."22 What is particularly striking in the philosophy of Samkhya is its concept of evolution. It regards "prakrti" (primeval matter) as the basis of objective existence, physical and psychical. "Prakriti" is the source of the word of becoming. In it all determinate potentiality is contained. It is not a being, but a force, a state of tension of three constituents or "gunas" - "sattva", "rajas", and "tamas". All these are products of "prakrti" consisting of the three "gunas" in different proportions. The varied interaction of "gunas" accounts for the variety of the world. When these three "gunas" are held in equipoise, there is no action. When there is a disturbance of equilibrium, evolution begins. The evolution of the unconscious "prakrti" can take place only through the presence of the conscious "purusha". The presence of "purusha" excites the activity of "prakrti" and this upsetting of the equilibrium of the "gunas" in "prakrti", positively starts the evolutionary process. The development of the process of evolution follows a law of succession. "Mahat" (literally, "the great") is the first product of the evolution

of "prakrti". It is the basis of "buddhi" (intelligence). "Mahat" brings out the cosmic aspects of "buddhi" which is not the "purusha" itself, but the subtle substance of all mental processes. Creation is the unfolding of different effects from the original "prakrti" and destruction is the dissolution of them into the original "prakrti". The Samkhya notion of evolution justifies Monier William's remark that, "the Hindus were . . . Darwinians many centuries before Darwin and evolutionists many centuries before the doctrine of evolution was accepted by the scientists of the present age."<sup>23</sup>

## 2. Yoga

Between Samkhya and Yoga there is a close connection. In fact they are regarded as two aspects of the same discipline. Samkhya provides a theoretical exposition of human nature and a theoretical way of "liberation" ("moksha"), while Yoga deals with the techniques of liberation.

According to Patanjali there are five mental states - "pramana" (true cognition), "viparyaya" (error), "vikalpa" (objectless ideation), "nidra" (cognition in dreamless sleep), and "smrti" (recollection). "Pramana" is of three kinds: perception, inference, and verbal testimony. Internal perception is the intuitive apprehension of truth, whereas external perception occurs when the senses come into contact with external objects.

Yoga, as a spiritual discipline, may be defined as the suppression of the five-fold mental activity described above. The freedom and the integrity of the self are curtailed by the



fluctuations of the mind which is subject to the influence of the sense data. The self, when subject to the changing conditions of the mind, is in a state of "avidya" (ignorance), and under such ignorance, it suffers from a total distortion of values, mistaking the ephemeral for the eternal, the corrupt for the pure, etc. To escape from such ignorance and its consequences, the following antidotes are suggested. These are known as "parikarmanas" which include "maitri" (friendship), "karuna" (compassion), "upeksa" (tolerance). Also recommended are "ahimsa" (non-injury), "satya" (truth), "asteya" (non-stealing), "brahmacharya" (sexual continence), and "aparihara" (non-appropriation). These observances are expected to lead to "samadhi" or quiescence of mind. "Samadhi" can be of two kinds - "samprajnata" in which the self attains only a partial liberation from the mind, and "asamprajnata" in which the self achieves complete freedom and regains its original nature as pure spirit.

From what has been said above it should be clear that Yoga is a form of metaphysics. The aim of the yogi is to discover his transcendental self. To find this higher self, the yogi not only follows the modes of spiritual discipline mentioned above; he also adopts a system of physical exercises that promote concentration and the attainment of "samadhi". These bodily exercises are called "asanas" or postures, and they must be considered as aids to yogic attainment rather than as ends in themselves.

The psychology of yoga has won higher praise from some

of the greatest psychologists of our times, including C. G. Jung. However, any praise given to yoga psychology also belongs to Samkhya since they are inter-related. As a well known Indologist says, "The supreme contribution by Samkhya and Yoga to Hindu philosophy lies in their strictly psychological interpretation of existence . . . Here the primitive mythical image of the rise of a universe out of the cosmic waters and cosmic egg is re-interpreted and re-vivified in terms of stages of human consciousness, as these can be observed in the subjective experiences of yoga. From the primal state of self-absorption or involution, which amounts theoretically to quiescence and resemble non-being, a state of intuitive inner awareness ("budhi") is involved; this is antecedent to the notion of "I" ("ahamkara"), which is the following transformation; and through intellect ("manas"), consciousness then proceeds to an experience of (and to action upon) the outer world through exterior senses. The cosmogenic process thus is read in terms of psychological experience, as the unfolding of a perceived environment from an innermost, all-perceiving center. The naive myth becomes immediately significantly structuralized; the world is understood as unfolding from a quiescent state of inward self-absorption; and the introspection therewith becomes the key of the riddle of the sphinx."<sup>24</sup>

### 3. Purva Mimamsa

The aim of "Purva Mimamsa" is to expound the nature of "dharma" or duty. Such an aim cannot, of course be achieved without examining the nature of man and the human self.

"Mimamsa" regards the self as distinct from the body and the senses. The body is considered as a means to an end; it serves the soul which directs it. Cognition is an attribute of the soul, not of the body. The energy of the soul causes the movement of the body.

The "Mimamsa" philosophers expound the theory of the plurality of selves in order to account for the multiplicity of experiences. The process of cognition involves "smrti" (recollection) and "purvabhava" (previous recollection). Remembrance of a past cognition is proof of the existence of a present self which is the substrate ("asraya") of the past perception and the present recollection. So Radhakrishnan says that according to Mimamsa, "the permanent self or personal identity is not the object of recognition, but the substrate thereof."<sup>25</sup> According to two Mimamsa thinkers, the self is at once the cognizer and the cognized. They do not, however, have a fully developed concept of self; they are seen as, "struggling towards a more adequate conception of self which they are unable to reach on account of their practical interests."<sup>26</sup>

#### 4. Nyaya and Vaisesika

For both Nyaya and Vaisesika, the vital principle ("prana") is an imperceptible entity called "Jiva-yoni-yatna" which functions both in sleep and in wakefulness. Regarding the inner instrument ("antahkarana"), Nyaya and Vaisesika take a simpler view than either Samkhya or Yoga. For both

Nyaya and Vaisesika, the "antahakarana" is simply mind ("manas"). These two systems do not concern themselves with drawing a distinction between ego and reason, and between one aspect of reason and another. Like Samkhya, they reject absolute monism of the Upanishads; but Vaisesika is definitely pluralistic, while Nyaya takes a position between dualism and monism.

### 5. Vedanta

"Vedanta" means the end of "Vedas" or the teaching contained in the "Upanishads". The great interpretation of the Upanishads is to be found in the "Vedanta Sutra" of Badrayana. According to "Vedanta Sutra", the "Purusha" and "Prakriti" of Samkya are not separate entities, but different forms of a single reality. Thus Badrayana asserts a monistic world against Samkya's dualism. According to him the Brahman (or "purusha") develops itself into the universe and yet remains transcendent.

#### a) Sankara: Advaita or Absolute Monism

The most important advocate of Vedanta philosophy is Sankara (6th century A.D.). Sankara's philosophy is known as "Advaita Vedanta". He accepted the Upanishadic views of man, on the whole, and he criticized "the loose and hasty speculations of Samkya thinkers, as well as the empirical tendencies of the Nyaya - Vaisesika. He broke away from (their) common sense method and substituted for it a logical criticism quite as stable and penetrating as that of the Buddhist thinkers."<sup>27</sup>

According to Samkara, the self cannot be known by means of thought. We know that the self is, but we do not know what it is. The self is not to be identified with the sense because, if senses constituted the self, then the sense perceptions should be identical simultaneous. Also in dreamless sleep, we have direct experience of the absence of knowledge and disquiet. Samkara holds that the "Atman" or the true self can be realized only when it is freed from all that surrounds it. Man as "jivatma" is identical with the "paramatma". This is the meaning of his doctrine: "Tat tuam asi" (Thou art that) which he takes from the Upanishads. Of the significance of this doctrine Radhakrishnan says, "The crux of all philosophy is this, that the sense organs and the neural processes of the body, which is in space and time, seem to produce consciousness. Surely, the non-conscious cannot be the cause of the conscious. If anything, the conscious must be the cause of the non-conscious . . . but the consciousness which is the cause of the non-conscious, is the finite consciousness but the ultimate one . . . of which the finite is only a fragment. The fundamental consciousness, which is the basis of all reality, is not to be confused with the human consciousness, which appears rather late in the cosmic evolution." 28

Samkara regards "Atman" as at once universal and infinite: it is the ultimate Reality. He attributes to the "Atman" truth, self-dependence and omnipresence. It is also possessed of absolute bliss or "ananda". The "Atman" cannot be logically apprehended. Radhakrishnan indicates how Samkara's



concept of self differs from that of some Western philosophers: "It is urged against Descartes that he tried to abstract the self totally from the not-self and established the reality of the former independently of its own right. We must be clear that Samkara's self is not the individual knowing subject . . . The "Atman" of Samkara is neither the individual self nor a collection of such selves . . . Samkara's self is different from the transcendental ego of Kant, which is purely a form which attaches to all objects of experience. Though it is said to transcend empirical consciousness, it is still individualized, since it becomes the practical will. Kant's account of its difference from the empirical ego, which is a product of conditions, applies to Samkara's "Atman". Only Samkara would say that the ever-present light of consciousness is the same thing, perfect and not in the process of growth. Fichte's absolute ego is not different from the empirical self, since the activity by which it becomes actually what it is potentially is determined by the non-ego. It is because Samkara finds the essence of personality in its distinction from other existences that he contends that the "Atman", which has no other existences independent of it, not a person . . . we live because we share the universal thought. Our experience is possible because of the universal Atman in us."<sup>29</sup>

According to Samkara, the individual's finite consciousness is limited to a certain kind and order of experience. This is because the finite consciousness is subject to "avidya" or ignorance. Thinking and reasoning belong to the level of

the finite, while ultimate reality transcends thought. This leads to Samkara's concept of integral experience which is obtained through what he calls "anubhava" which is intuitional consciousness. The difference between Samkara and other philosophers on the question of "intuition" is explained by Radhakrishnan: "Kant spoke of an intellectual intuition to indicate the mode of consciousness by which a knowledge of things in themselves might be obtained in a non-logical way. According to Fichte, intellectual intuition enables us to get at self-consciousness, which is the basis of all knowledge in his philosophy. Schilling employs the same term to denote the consciousness of the absolute, the identity between the subject and the object. But according to Samkara, the object of intuition is not the many things-in-themselves of Kant, or the self of Fichte or the neutrum of Schilling, but the "Atman" or the universal consciousness. As for Plotinus, so for Samkara, the absolute is not presented as an object, but in an immediate contact which is above knowledge."<sup>30</sup> What Radhakrishnan is trying to stress here is that, for Samkara, the absolute is apprehended intuitively, that it is simultaneously the highest principle within man and in the outer universe.

Samkara's philosophy has been compared with the thought of others besides Kant, Descartes, Fichte, and Schilling. Thus he has been compared to the British philosopher F. H. Bradley whose thought resembles Samkara's in many respects. In his Appearance and Reality, Bradley tries to show, as did Samkara, that thought can never fully comprehend reality. Such

a view is held also by C. G. Jung. As L. T. Bischof points out, "Jung felt that intuition is as important to man's mental life as in any of the other three functions. Only by intuition is man able to solve some of his problems."<sup>31</sup> Thus Samkara's stress on the limitation of intellect or reason finds support in the thought of one of the greatest modern psychologists.

Samkara's thought is also similar to that of Bergson, although there are differences between the two. As Radhakrishnan says: "Sometimes Samkara's theory is compared to that of M. Bergson, which argues that there has been a growth of consciousness in man. The upward ascent from the amoeba has been a long one. Many kinds of awareness or consciousness implicit in those beings have been suppressed in the development of man. We have paid an enormous price for being what we are. While our logical minds are useful for practical purposes, it is unreasonable to suppose the whole of us is exhausted by what we are now. Even in this world we come across men of genius or insight, in whom the slumbering powers are stirred to life. Samkara would not agree with Bergson's view that the intellect breaks up the flow of life, that the unending dynamic process is reduced by intellect of a static or geometrical presentation. Intellect does not dissect reality, but attempts to reconstitute it. It is both analytic and synthetic in its functions . . . . If Samkara regards intellect as not the highest mode of man's consciousness, it is because the completed world of intellect still leaves him with a riddle . . . . Samkara does not condemn the intellect on the ground that it employs analysis



and abstraction. He accepts its concreteness and yet finds it to be unsatisfactory."<sup>32</sup> Despite these differences both Samkara and Bergson agree in recognizing the limitations of intellect as a form of consciousness and as an organ of cognition.

An interesting aspect of Samkara's philosophy is that it is totally experimental. It is not other-worldly despite its emphasis on intuition. Like Kant, he attempted "to solve the question of the conditions of knowledge by the critical rather than the empirical method. Samkara avoided the error of Kant, who sought not so much the logical implications of experience as a priori condition of experience, and thus asserted the reality of an extra-empirical world of things in themselves. Samkara's object was to discover the immanent principle within experiences, and not a world beyond it."<sup>33</sup> This immanent principle within experience is, for Samkara, the omnipresent "Atman" of the Upanishads.

Samkara's philosophy, unlike Samkhya, is non-dualistic. Samkara is the greatest spokesman of the absolute monism of the Upanishads. For him, the individual soul is not a separate entity, but the absolute itself, though limited in some way. Samkara likened the individual soul ("jivatma") to the space in a jar and the Absolute Being ("Paramatma") to universal space. Freedom ("mukti") consists in realizing the oneness of the individual with the Absolute.

The empirical world, according to Samkara, is a mere reflection or shadow of the Absolute Being. This shadow appears real to us because of our limited capacity to perceive

reality. This limitation Samkara calls "maya" or illusion. This is not to say that the empirical world is non-existent. What is meant is that it is not the ultimate reality. The failure to see that the phenomenal world is not the ultimate reality is due to "avidya" (ignorance), and this ignorance is born of the confusion of the transcendental subject ("Atman") with empirical existence ("anatman"). In Samkara, the "Atman" is the same as Brahman. As a learned interpreter puts it, "Brahman according to Samkara is the identity of pure intelligence, pure being, pure blessedness. Brahman is the self of us all. So long as we are in our ordinary waking life we are identifying the self with thousands of illusionary things with all that we call "I" or "mine", but in dreamless sleep we are absolutely without any touch of these phenomenal notions; the nature of our true state as pure blessedness is partially realized. The individual self as it appears is but an appearance only, while the real truth is the true self which is one for all, as pure intelligence, pure blessedness and pure being."<sup>34</sup> Thus the main idea in Samkara's "advaita" (monistic) philosophy is that the ultimate and absolute truth is the Self which is one, though appearing as many in different individuals. The world as part of the different individuals has no reality, has no other truth, to show than this self. All other events, mental or physical, are all passing appearance while the only absolute and unchangeable truth underlying them all is the self.

Samkara was logically drawn to this conclusion because

he could not think of a "being" which is other than a Self-Existent-Being. It was Thomas Aquinas who solved this problem by pointing out two categories of being in the realm of existence, the Self-Existent-Being and the contingent being (Ens a se and ens ab alio).

b) Ramanuja: Qualified Dualism

Ramanuja concerns himself with the relation of the individual self to God unlike Samkara; he regards the individual souls as having separate identities. He also reacts against the intellectualism of Samkara's ethics. While Samkara is pan-theistic, Ramanuja is theistic. But like Samkara he believes that thought cannot comprehend the whole reality. Like Samkara, he attributes to intuition ("saksatkara") the capacity to grasp ultimate reality. Again like Samkara, he believes that human knowledge does not embrace the whole of reality. But there are major differences between the two as shown by Radhakrishnan: "Samkara believes that the distinction between subject and object is a relative one, since the real is the undifferentiated one. Ramanuja disputes this view, and holds that the nature of consciousness testifies to the existence of a permanent thinking subject, as well as objects distinct from the self".<sup>35</sup> In Ramanuja as well as in Samkara the theory of knowledge merges with the theory of being, but this merger does not mean that "knowing" is identical with the whole of being. Knowledge is self-luminous, but is only a function of the self.

Unlike Samkara who believes in an impersonal God

( 'Atman' ) Ramanuja believes in a personal God. Radhakrishnan says, 'While Ramanuja is clear that there exists an absolute self, he is equally clear that every finite reality is an expression of the self. To make reciprocal interaction among a plurality of existents possible, the constituent elements of the world - whole must have a common bond of unity and interdependence, which must be a spiritual principle. Not only logic, but religious experience demands a conservation of the finite and an admission of the infinite as a personal being. The sense of personal communion with God involves fellowship with an "other", divine personality.'<sup>36</sup>

Individual man is an imperfect personality, while God is the perfect personality. For Ramanuja, the pluralistic world of phenomena is as real as God is real, although the phenomenal world depends on God for its existence.

Ramanuja's emphasis on a personal God becomes more clear in the way he repudiates Samkara's interpretation of the Upanshadic text "Tat tuam asi" as meaning that the individual soul and the divine are one and the same. According to Ramanuja the text refers to the complex nature of the ultimate Reality without declaring a total identity, between it and the finite realities. He also agrees that, "If there were not a difference between the two, we could not say that the one is the other."<sup>37</sup>

Ramanuja takes pains to assert that human persons are separate, autonomous entities, though they are modes of the Supreme Being. For him, the Jivatma or the individual person is not one with the Brahman from whom he differs in essential character.

Ramanuja goes into the problem of human freedom. On the one hand, he recognizes man's dependence on God for all his activities but, on the other hand, he holds that the sufferings of life are not due to God, but due to man's power to choose between good and evil. He views God's absoluteness as being limited by man's erring will, but God, according to him, has his ways of bringing man back to righteousness, when he violates the law.

Thus Ramanuja's philosophy differs considerably from that of Samkara, especially in regard to the concept of the self. As against Samkara's absolute monism we have in Ramanuja a qualified dualism which combines a monotheistic outlook with the principle of immanentism.

c) Madhava: Unqualified Dualism

In Madhava, another Vedantic thinker, we have a more radical reaction against Samkara's absolute monism. In him we find an unqualified dualism, which includes a five-fold duality - between God and the individual; between God and the material world; between soul and matter; between one soul and another; and between one part of matter and another.

According to Madhava, there are three different entities existing from all eternity - God, soul, and world. The last two are subordinate to God. Brahman (God) is the only independent (svatantra) reality. While thus recognizing God as Supreme Madhava rejects the "Advaita" theory that the world of individual souls and of nature is but an illusion or an emanation from God. For him, every human being is an organism different



from every other organism and from God.

Like Ramanuja, Madhava rejects Samkara's interpretation of the text, "Tat tuam asi". But he goes further than Ramanuja in giving a dualistic interpretation. He not only denies that this passage declares an identity between God and the soul; he even claims that the passage means, "That thou art not" ("Sa atma atat tuam asi"). It is in so interpreting the Upanishadic text that Madhava proclaims a dualism that is more uncompromising than Ramanuja's.

V11. COMPARISONS AND CONTRASTS BETWEEN  
INDIAN AND WESTERN CONCEPTS  
OF THE SELF

The six systems of Indian philosophy we have discussed above are, according to Joseph Campbell, "The six aspects of a single orthodox tradition. Though apparently and even overtly contradictory, they are understood to be complimentary projections of one truth on various planes of consciousness, valid intuitions from different points of view - like the experiences of seven blind men feeling the elephant in the popular Buddhist fable."<sup>38</sup> What is basic to the orthodoxy that runs through the six systems is an over-riding concern with the nature of the self. This concern with the self, as we have seen, is central not only to the six systems, but to the Bhagavad Gita and the Upánishads as well.

As noted at the beginning of this paper, this almost exclusive concern with the nature of self is what distinguishes Indian philosophy from other philosophies. Greek philosophy despite Heraclitus, Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato, was generally outward-looking, while Indian philosophy has been essentially inward-looking. In Greek philosophy, the essence of man is reason; in Indian philosophy, the essence of man is beyond reason; it is the "Atman". While Greek philosophy and Western philosophy in general show a strong concern for human society, in Indian philosophy man's relation to God ("Atman")

is more important than his relation to man. For this reason, Indian philosophy bids man's rise above social virtues in search of the eternal and infinite. According to Raju, "Indian philosophy presents a more complicated picture of the relation of man to God than do other philosophies. From the time of the Upanishads this relation is its main problem . . . In this respect it is like Jewish thought. But Jewish thought is almost exclusively concerned with the ethical relationship between God and man. In Indian thought, this ethical relationship is transcended and transmitted into that of blissful communion."<sup>39</sup>

Indian philosophy has sometimes been criticized by western critics on the ground that it belittles individual man by emphasizing the universal "Atman". But these critics "seem to forget that the greatest of Greek philosophers - Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, - universalized man by lifting him to the level of reason and made him one with cosmic reason, and only then did they accept the Protogorian principle that man is the measure of all things."<sup>40</sup>

It has also been said that the Indian concept of man is based on a philosophy of negativism and inaction. There is an element of truth in this criticism, but such criticism ignores the fact that there is no less emphasis in Indian philosophy on "karmayoga" or way of action than there is on "jnanayoga" or the way of knowledge and the "bhaktimarga" or the way of devotion.



VIII. WHAT THE WEST CAN LEARN  
FROM INDIA

The greatest merit of Indian thought lies, as we have seen, in its unique concept of the self. And it is in its concern with the self that ancient Indian thought anticipates the increasing preoccupation with the nature of human self in modern western philosophy and particularly in psychology. "We of the Occident" wrote Heinrich Zimmer, "are about 'to arrive at a crossroads' that was reached by the thinkers of India some seven hundred years before Christ."<sup>41</sup> The development of modern psychology with its emphasis on studying the nature of man's inner world is a modern equivalent to ancient India's effort to understand the nature of the self. The modern theories of personality formulated by Freud, Jung, Murray, Adler, Moreno, Herney, Allport, Murphy, etc., are the result of modern man's attempt to understand himself. They are truly in accord with the Upanishadic exhortation: "Atmanam viddhi" (know thyself).

The importance of the Upanishadic doctrine has been recognized by several modern thinkers. Heinrich Zimmer says, "The supreme and characteristic achievement of the Brahman mind . . . was its discovery of the self ("Atman") as an independent, imperishable entity, underlying the conscious personality and bodily frame . . . The effort of Indian phi-

losophy has been, for millenniums, to know the adamantic self and make the knowledge effective in human life. And this enduring concern is what has been responsible for the supreme morning calm that pervades the terrible histories of the oriental world - histories no less tremendous, no less horrifying than our own. Through the vicissitudes of physical change a spiritual footing is maintained in the peaceful-blissful ground of the "Atman", eternal, timeless, and imperishable Being."<sup>42</sup>

According to another scholar, "A systematic detailed development of the philosophy of inwardness is the greatest contribution that Indian philosophy has made to the world thought, however one-sided it became in the process."<sup>43</sup> Yet another scholar regards the Indian emphasis on self knowledge as of very great importance. He says, "A volte face was made into the self with the words, "Tat tuam asi". (That, thou art) These words are among the greatest ever spoken by man."<sup>44</sup>

The Indian outlook could be an antidote to the alienation and identity crisis common to our age. The Indian search for reality proceeds from the outer world to the inner, unlike the western search for reality which proceeds from the inner to the outer world. The subjectivity or inwardness of the Indian approach provides a link between subject and object. Indian thoughts, as one writer puts it, "did not cut the umbilical cord between subject and object. Unlike the west, the East did not permit the object to evolve into a realm arising independently in front of the subject."<sup>45</sup>

The Indian mind "attracts and penetrates the non-subject

in manifold ways so as to divest it of as much of its otherness as possible. But it reaches its clearest expression when the subject returns to and is alone with itself."<sup>46</sup> In recent Western thought there has been a marked emphasis on the need of subjectivity as a corrective to the separation of subject from object. The holistic elements in modern Western thought are clearly reminiscent of the Upanishadic metaphysics of oneness, although modern holism generally lacks the mystic content of Advaita monism.

The modern search for holistic view of life has been seriously limited by a trend towards a rigidly self-sufficient humanism. On the other hand, the "humanistic" monism of the Advaita philosophy regards the spiritual as natural.

In Indian thought, "Spirit is considered to be as natural as matter, life or mind."<sup>47</sup> In the Indian view of life, therefore, there is an intensively religious humanism without being supernaturalistic. For this reason, it is more profoundly meaningful than the rationalistic humanism of the West. As Raju remarks, "Religion if it is healthy, must be adequately humanistic; and humanism if true, must be the embodiment of spiritual life."<sup>48</sup> There are signs today of a profound discontent with a rigidly rationalistic humanism. These signs are evident in the increasing interest in para-psychology, yoga, re-incarnation, etc. They represent attempts to give a spiritual dimension to modern humanism.

However, this search for spiritual dimension is hampered by modern humanism's failure to reconcile its objective approach

to reality with a meaningful subjectivism. Since the Indian mind looks for reality within itself, it grasps the real as an experimental phenomenon - intimately personal and subjective. "This immediacy of the Real," says William S. Haas, "enables the East to reach at an early moment supreme answers to basic problems. These answers in the depth and fullness of their significance have never been seriously questioned . . . From the East's standpoint, it has reached the astounding clarity and by dint of its own effort what the West is eternally searching under ever-changing forms. The Westerner, caught in his own net, would declare that where the Eastern mind stopped the Western started."<sup>49</sup> An Indian thinker, on the other hand, claims that "the interest of Indian philosophy begins where the West ends."<sup>50</sup> This statement appears to be nearer to truth, since Indian philosophy offers a more satisfactory account of the relation between God and the world, or rather, of God in the world, than does the western thought. In this respect Indian thought may be said to start from where Western philosophy leaves off.<sup>51</sup>

That this is so has been recognized by some Western thinkers as well. Gordon Allport, for instance, "believed it inexcusable provincialism for psychologists in our culture to neglect the wisdom of the East. He examined briefly the four central desires of Hindu psychology; pleasure, success, duty and liberation from the pleasure - success - duty periods of existence."<sup>52</sup> Like Allport, Murphy, Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow and others place great stress on "being".<sup>53</sup> The em-

phasis on 'becoming' is in tune with the idea of "becoming" in the Indian concept of personality. This idea is implicit in the Indian notion of the "Atman" as absolute Being to be distinguished from the finite being of the individual self. The unity of the being with the Being implied by the Upanishadic doctrine of the "Tat tuam asi" remains unrealized as long as the individual being is lost in the cloud of maya resulting from avidya or ignorance. In other words, the individual self dwells in the realm of potentiality. Through a process of becoming he is capable of attaining self-realization with the attainment of his unity with the Supreme Self.

However, as pointed out earlier, there is a difference between the Indian concept of self-realization and the principle of self-actualization upheld by modern humanist psychology. This difference stems from the basic differences between the Indian concept of self and the concept of self in modern psychology. As we have already noted, the distinction between the empirical self ("ahamkara") and the true self ("Atman") is a fundamental principle in Indian psychology. The Upanishads, Jainism, Buddhism and the six systems of Indian philosophy insist that self-actualization - "moksha" or "nirvana" - is attained by controlling "ahamkara" or the empirical self. On the contrary modern humanist psychology, cut off from Christian Theology, has no satisfactory substitute for God or the "Atman" as the ultimate goal of the individual self. Therefore, for modern humanism, self realization is no more than the fullest realization of the finite potentialities of



the empirical ego or what in Indian thought is called "aham-kara". In other words, although both Indian and modern humanism insists on self-realization as man's basic goal, self-realization means one thing in Indian thought and quite another in modern humanist psychologists.

Generally speaking, modern theories of personality place too much emphasis on cultural and biological factors and too little on the inward nature of man. This statement is true despite the great interest in the study of conscious and of the unconscious generated by Freud's psychological discoveries. The Freudian approach to the study of the mind - conscious and unconscious - is to isolate and analyze it objectively. Such an approach has its undoubted "scientific" merits, but it lacks the integral quality of the Indian approach which visualizes the nature of the function of the mind subjectively or rather experimentally without drawing rigid boundaries between the conscious and the unconscious. The delving of the Upanishads into the realms of dreams and of the unconscious was accomplished as the final step of a final journey from the known to the unknown in search of ultimate reality and integrity. This is where the unified approach of Indian "mystic" way is a corrective to the "divided self" of the modern western man.

No thinker of our time has appreciated this truth better than Carl Gustav Jung. "Life in India", he says, "has not yet withdrawn from the capsule of the head."<sup>54</sup> In an essay, "What India can teach us," he observes that there never occurred in India anything like the total dissociation that

happened in the West "between the conscious part of the mind and the unconsciousness."<sup>55</sup> Jung regards the unbroken link in India between the conscious and the unconscious as the result of a healthy "primitivity" which India, unlike a modern West, has been able to maintain within the framework of her highly developed civilization. Jung points to the happy conjunction of the "primitive" and the "civilized" as something for the West to emulate. He says, "Whatever the ultimate fate of the white man may be, we can at least behold one example of a civilization which has brought every essential trace of primitivity with it, embracing the whole man from top to bottom."<sup>56</sup>

Jung believes the holistic vision of India can be a foil to the divisive approach of the West. "Indian thinking," he says, "is an increase of vision and not a predatory raid into the yet unconquered realm of nature."<sup>57</sup> And finally as a tribute to what India can teach the West, Jung has this to say: "If you want to learn the greatest lesson India can teach you, wrap yourself in the cloak of your moral superiority, go to the Black Pagoda of Kanarak, sit down in the shadow of the mighty ruin that is still covered with the most amazing collection of obscenities, read Murray's cunning old Handbook for India, which tells you how to be properly shocked by the lamentable state of affairs, and you should go into temples in the evening, because in the lamplight they look if possible more ("and how beautifully!) wicked; and analyze carefully and with the utmost honesty all your reactions, feelings, and thoughts. It will take you quite a while, but in the end, if

you have done good work, you will have learned something about yourself, and about the white man in general, which you have probably never heard from anyone else. I think, if you can afford it, a trip to India is on the whole most edifying and, from the psychological point of view most advisable, although it may give you considerable headaches."<sup>58</sup> What Jung means is that despite the tremendous advance made by the West in science, philosophy and psychology, it can still take a lesson or two from India's timeless wisdom which is that of self-knowledge.

46

FOOTNOTES

1. S. Radhakrishnan, A Source Book in Indian Philosophy, (Princeton Press, New Jersey, 1957) p. 16.
2. Quoted in Jawaharlal Nehru, Discovery of India, (The John Day Company, New York, 1946), p. 99.
3. S. Radhakrishnan and P. T. Raju, eds., The Concept of Man, (Nebraska: Johnson Publishing Company, 1960), p. 217.
4. Brhadaranyaka Upanishad, 4.3. 1-7.
5. The Concept of Man, p. 225.
6. Chandogya Upanishad in The Thirteen Principle Upanishads, tr. Robert E. Hume (Oxford University, 1921), pp. 240-241, 247-248.
7. The Concept of Man, p. 225.
8. Ibid., p.226.
9. Ibid., p. 231.
10. Ibid., pp. 231-232.
11. Katha Upanishad, 4.1.
12. Mundaka Upanishad, 3.1. 1-2.
13. Ibid.
14. Ibid., p.261.
15. Ibid., p.263.
16. The Bhagavad Gita, (Edwin Arnold's Translation), 11, 22.
17. Ibid., 111, 17.
18. The Concept of Man, p. 287.

19. Ibid., p.288.
20. Heinrich Zimmer, Philosophies of India, ed., Joseph Campbell, (New York: Pantheon Books, Bollingen Series XXVI, 1951), p. 319.
21. Ibid., p.326.
22. Quoted in Jawaharlal Nehru, The Discovery of India, p. 78.
23. Quoted by C. P. Ramasawamy Iyer in Chapter 8, ("Religious Hinduism") of The Gazette of India, Vol. 1 (Nasik, India: The Government of India Press, 1965), pp.146-147.
24. Philosophies of India, p. 331.
25. S. Radakrishnan, Indian Philosophy, Vol. 2, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), p. 410.
26. Ibid., p. 414.
27. Ibid., p. 475.
28. Ibid., p. 481.
29. Ibid., pp. 484-485.
30. Ibid., pp. 512-513.
31. Leoford J. Bischof, Interpreting Personality Theories, (New York: Harper and Row, 1970), p. 136.
32. Indian Philosophy, Vol. 2, p. 523.
33. Ibid., p. 521.
34. S. N. Dasgupta, A History of Indian Philosophy, (The University Press, Cambridge, 1951), p. 438.
35. Indian Philosophy, Vol. 2, p. 679.
36. Ibid., p. 682.
37. Ibid., p. 688.
38. Appendix A, Philosophies of India, p. 605.
39. The Concept of Man, p. 324.
40. Ibid., pp. 352-353.
41. Philosophies of India, p. 1.
42. Ibid., pp. 3-4.



43. P. T. Raju, Introduction to Comparative Philosophy, (Lincoln University of Nebraska Press, 1962), p. 200.
44. W. S. Haas, The Destiny of Mind, (London: Faber and Faber, 1966), p. 140.
45. Ibid., p. 113.
46. Ibid., p. 119.
47. Introduction to Comparative Philosophy, p. 272.
48. Ibid., p. 260.
49. The Destiny of Mind, p. 131-132.
50. Introduction to Comparative Religion, p. 199.
51. These remarks, it must be noted, are true only of Western Philosophy, not of Western Theology. The Indian tradition makes no distinction between philosophy and theology.
52. Introduction to Personality Theories, p. 289.
53. See Becoming: Basic Consideration for a Philosophy of Personality, (1955).
54. C. G. Jung, Civilization in Transition, Vol. 10, of The Collected Works of C. G. Jung, (New York: Pantheon Books, Bollingen Series XX, 1964), p. 518.
55. Ibid., p. 527.
56. Ibid., p. 528.
57. Ibid., p. 529.
58. Ibid., pp. 529-530.

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