

EASTERN PHILOSOPHY

An Outline

Prepared by

J.S.R.L.Narayana Moorthy

Monterey Peninsula College

1997

Title page illustration: The Goddess Prajnaparamita (Perfection of Wisdom) of Mahayana Buddhism.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank the Governing Board and Administration of Monterey Peninsula College for the Sabbatical Leave in the Fall of 1986 which enabled me to prepare most of this syllabus.

Many thanks to Gail Baker for permission to use the photographs reproduced in the text.

Monterey, California
July 25, 1987

Narayana Moorty

EASTERN PHILOSOPHY

Contents

Page

Preface

1. What is Philosophy?
2. Similarities and Differences between Eastern and Western Philosophy
3. Essential Features of Indian Philosophy
4. Historical Survey of Indian Philosophy
5. Upanishads
6. The Bhagavad Gita
7. Nyaya-Vaisesika
8. Samkhya and Yoga
9. Vedanta
10. Early Buddhism
11. Later Buddhism
12. Essential Features of Chinese Philosophy
13. Historical Survey of Chinese Philosophy
14. Confucianism
15. Taoism (Lao Tzu)
16. Taoism (Chuang Tzu)
17. Zen Buddhism
18. J. Krishnamurti
17. A Note on Meditation
18. Conclusion

PREFACE

This outline is intended for the students who enroll in the Eastern Philosophy course. It presents more or less faithfully the content of the course in about the same order as will be followed in the class. Brief summaries of two important schools which are not generally discussed in the class are added to the syllabus for the sake of completion-- the logical-metaphysical systems of Nyaya and Vaiseshika and Confucianism. It is not that these systems or schools are not important in the study of Eastern Philosophy, but that they don't readily fit into the central theme in Eastern Philosophy I picked for this course, i.e., the theme of man's liberation construed in terms of a 'unified' experience and living. Also added for the sake of completion are a chapter each on the Essential Features of Chinese Philosophy and Historical Survey of Chinese Philosophy. We may not have time to cover these chapters during the course of a semester, but they are included just in case you are interested.

The discussion of the materials is made at a very elementary level and no prior knowledge of Philosophy is presupposed from the student. The following supplemental readings are to be used in conjunction with this **OUTLINE**:

Prabhavananda & Manchester: Upanishads, Signet.
 Prabhavananda & Isherwood: Bhagavadgita, Signet.
 Burt: Teachings of the Compassionate Buddha, Mentor.
 Merton, Thomas, The Book of Chuang Tzu, New Directions.

Our approach to and interpretation of Eastern Philosophy will avoid the following:

1) We will avoid the assumption commonly made among adherents of Eastern disciplines that Eastern Philosophy is so esoteric that you can only learn it from a revered teacher. The teacher in this conception may be revered to the extent of thinking that he is a manifestation of the Godhead itself, and that the pupil must totally submit himself to him and accept implicitly whatever he teaches. While it is quite possible that some of the instruction for practice can only come from someone who is aware of the students' peculiar personal characteristics, we do not share the opinion that the teaching cannot be formulated in objective and universal terms which can be shared by everyone, believers and non-believers alike. This is particularly true with the essential notions of Eastern Philosophy, the notions of what constitutes bondage and liberation, and of the various means of liberation, or at least the necessary and sufficient conditions for attaining it.

2) We will avoid the assumption that the occult and its associated notions are essential to Eastern Philosophy. For example, we do not share the idea that the beliefs in the various other worlds, planes such as astral planes, gods, demons, other lives, astral travel, seances, visions etc. are essential to understanding the basic notions of Eastern Philosophy or to applying them to one's life. If any of the systems or schools that are presented in the text espouse such beliefs, the beliefs are reported as such. My understanding of Eastern Philosophy developed in this **Outline** remains uncommitted to any of these beliefs, and tries to interpret Eastern Philosophy in a "minimal" fashion, with no "supernatural" overtones as it were, a philosophy which is compatible with modern science and even with the possibility that there may be nothing more to the human being than the empirically observable human behavior and what the individual can himself experience directly within himself. For example, my conception of Philosophy is compatible with the notion that there may be no such thing as consciousness independent of the human organism which may survive its death.

The simple reason for the avoidance of a belief in the occult is that there is not enough generally accepted evidence for it. Moreover, the belief in the supernatural etc. is, in my opinion, neither necessary nor sufficient to understand the basic notions of Eastern Philosophy. Here we only need to present those elements in the condition of man which everyone experiences or can experience.

3) Although we will be discussing the essential elements of meditation and the necessary conditions for it, we will not place any emphasis on the actual practice of it, since such a practice is outside the purview of this course. It does not mean that the ideas developed here cannot be applied to one's life. Part of the conception of Eastern Philosophy we are developing here is that these ideas cannot be separated from actual, personal living. Only we won't have recourse to a "guru-pupil" relationship (where a guru supposedly takes personal responsibility of the pupil), nor will we explicitly practice any particular method of meditation (although the whole course is in a sense a meditation), or yoga, including Pranayama or Kundalini, worship or practice any cult or religious activities. Understood thus, this course falls in the general category of a Western academic course in which everyone can freely discuss all views presented and publicly examine them.

At the end of each chapter a list of questions is supplied which will help you bring to focus in your mind the salient points of the chapter. There is also a list of vocabulary which you may not normally confront in other courses. Please familiarize yourself with the meaning of the words in the list, if necessary by using a dictionary. At the end of each chapter I have also provided a glossary of technical terms used in it for your ready reference.

If you have any comments or suggestions to improve this syllabus please don't hesitate to write them on a piece of paper and hand them to me. I will note them and if I find them helpful I will incorporate them the next time I revise the syllabus.

* * * *

Questions: What are the three assumptions concerning Eastern Philosophy that we avoid in this course? Why?

Vocabulary: Organism; bondage; liberation; meditation; supernatural; esoteric; astral; seances; occult.

Glossary: Yoga: (Lit. Yoking, Union). In general, any path to liberation. In particular a system of body control and meditation, founded by Patanjali. Pranayama: A system of breath control as an aid to meditation, as part of Yoga. Kundalini: A practice which involves arousing the "Serpent" power (Kundalini) in oneself by various postures (called asanas) and making it pass, with the help of pranayama, through one's spinal cord, via the various chakras (nerve plexuses) and finally via a point in the skull in a place called sahasrara chakra, and uniting it with universal energy.

CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS PHILOSOPHY?

1. What is Philosophy? Philosophy is an inquiry into the most fundamental and ultimate questions which concern man. The word 'philosophy' means 'love of wisdom' (Greek, 'philo' = love, 'sophia' = wisdom) in Western Philosophy. A parallel expression in Eastern Philosophy, for instance in Indian Philosophy, is Darshana Shastra (Sanskrit, 'darshana' = vision, 'shastra' = discipline) and it means the discipline which deals with the vision (of Reality). Whatever may be the terms that are used to refer to Philosophy, both in the West and in the East philosophy deals with the fundamental and ultimate questions about the universe and man, such as what is the ultimate nature of the universe, what is the ultimate reality in myself and how are these two related. Many other questions, perhaps less basic than the above, that Philosophy deals with are like the following: What are the means through which I know myself or the world? What are right and wrong? What is the nature of the good or authentic life? What remains in myself, if anything, after I die? Why should I be moral? What is the nature of beauty?

How Philosophy answers these questions, and whether these questions can be answered at all, and how disputes between different answers are settled are themselves matters of controversy in Philosophy: Do we use sense observation or reason to know about the truths in Philosophy or is there a higher, more immediate way of knowing Reality? Even the aim or purpose of philosophizing is also a matter of dispute: Do we do Philosophy to understand and know the nature of existence, or is the purpose of Philosophy to deliver us from the trammels of existence, or is it to merely clarify our thinking about various questions? One conception of Philosophy is that the enterprise of Philosophy, inasmuch as it represents an attempt to know and understand the world around us is itself a disease, for such an urge to understand is based on a prior alienation of ourselves from the world. According to this conception, the only business of Philosophy, if there is such a thing as Philosophy, is to free us from the very urge to understand the universe or ourselves.

We can indeed say that one major trend in Eastern Philosophy, as I interpret it, understands and diagnoses Philosophy in this fashion. In this understanding, human thought produces this alienation between man and his world, and Philosophy being itself a product of human thought, can never bridge this gap between the two. It may produce more and more systems of Philosophy, but the separation will never be bridged, for man as subject will always be left out of any objective understanding of the world, including man as human species. The only business of Philosophy is to help us realize the utter helplessness of

Philosophy to understand Reality or anything as a matter of that. Science, too, uses thought in a more limited fashion, but its understanding is never absolute, but adequate to develop uniformities or laws among observed natural phenomena, uniformities which can be used to predict and control other phenomena of nature. Unlike Philosophy, science has no presumptions to grasp the nature of ultimate Reality. Any model it arrives at now to comprehend Reality it can toss away tomorrow, in favor of a more adequate model, if the former proves inadequate to deal with the practical realities it constantly observes and is governed by. But if and when it lays claims to absolute knowledge of ultimate Reality, it too suffers the same fate as Philosophy, namely, of running into paradoxes and contradictions, while at the same time leaving the subject out of the picture it develops, and not coming to an understanding or knowledge of anything, and not really solving the problem of our alienation.

In the next chapter we will also discuss the nature of religion and its relation to Philosophy. These topics bring into focus a fundamental question of what Philosophy is. Suffice it to say here that there is no single definition of Philosophy which is universally accepted. Nor is there any agreement between the East and the West, or a unanimity within each of these cultures as to the nature and function of Philosophy.

Questions: What is Philosophy? How do you think it differs from religion and science?

Vocabulary: Philosophy; Science; Religion, System; Reality; Conception; Alienation; Uniformities; Paradox; Contradiction; Subject; Object; Phenomenon (Pl. Phenomena).

Glossary: Darshana Shastra: The Sanskrit term in Indian Philosophy which means Philosophy.

CHAPTER 2

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE DOMINANT TRADITIONS EASTERN AND WESTERN PHILOSOPHIES

1. Western Philosophy is generally considered to be born out of wonder (Aristotle) about the universe and man. On the other hand, Eastern Philosophy is generally understood to be more practically oriented, to inquire into human suffering and how to alleviate it, and to emphasize harmonious living of man.

2. In the West Philosophy has always been sharply distinguished from religion (and even theology). Philosophy started as a reaction against religion on the one hand, and against myth and magic on the other. Thales (c. 600 B.C.) was the first philosopher in ancient Greek times. He was also a noted physicist of his times. He tried to explain the nature of the universe in purely physical terms as when he said that water was the substance out of which the whole universe arose. He was also famous for allowing his scientific observations and reasoning (for example, about eclipses) govern his behavior, rather than rely on myth and magic. In the West Philosophy always tended to be a rational enterprise, severed from faith, superstition or religious experiences of various kinds.

In Eastern Philosophy, on the other hand, there is no sharp division between Philosophy and religion, or between say, Philosophy and Psychology. It was never strictly severed from religion. There never was a conflict between it and religion to begin with. It only heightened some aspects of religion, representing as it were the contemplative aspects of religion, while at the same time providing a theoretical framework and justification for the basic concepts of religion. To some degree it is true to say that Eastern Philosophy is to religion as Western theology is to religions like Christianity. Only it must not be forgotten that there are elements of Eastern Philosophy which are not just apologetics of religion, but which represent an independent aspect of civilization, consisting of an independent mode of apprehending Reality, other than what religions generally present. Furthermore, these modes are not based on belief, faith or ritual, some of the essential modes of religion.

3. In the West Philosophy is theory and is distinguished from actual practical living. In the East Philosophy includes experience (say of the oneness of existence) and actual living: they supplement each other.

4. Even when it started Western Philosophy was considered as theory (Greek, 'theoria' = vision). The dominant trend in Western Philosophy had always been an inquiry into the fundamental principles of the universe, of man, of his society and of values. It contains a system of interrelated principles explaining the universe. It is concerned with matters or problems of living, but only as an intellectual discipline inquiring into the sources, foundations or basic principles behind problems of living. For example, Hume, Kant, Mill and Bentham in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries asked what is the highest good for man and what is the justification behind our notions of right and wrong.

In the East when philosophical speculations began philosophers started asking the same questions as in the West, such as what is the ultimate reality behind the universe, the unity behind the diversity which we experience, and sometimes even came to similar conclusions, as for example, that the four or five elements--earth, air, water, fire and ether--are the ultimate principles of the universe. But from very early the dominant trend in the East had been to arrive at a unifying experience, an experience which is free from a sense of duality and multiplicity, in an attempt to answer these questions. This is one reason that religion and Philosophy are not sharply distinguished in the East. Philosophy as theory is construed only as a means of formulating and justifying systematically these experiences. This is particularly true of the systems of Samkhya-Yoga, Vedanta, Buddhism, Taoism and Zen Buddhism.

5. Eastern Philosophy is existential. In the West and Western Philosophy reason, and life governed by reason (for example, the 'examined life' of Socrates), and not by custom, instinct or passion, are given prominence. In the East and in the dominant trends of Eastern Philosophy reason has its place in life, but the final goal of life is liberation and freedom from the self. And the means to achieve it, i.e. the way we live our lives, must not be severed from this goal. So, ethical codes, if they exist, are organized around this idea. One can say the idea is not merely to use reason, but to go beyond it.

At least the dominant trends in Western Philosophy have always been such that they would present a view of the world and of life, but in some fashion leave the person who studies them unaffected. As a matter of history, only a few Western philosophers--Socrates, Zeno the Stoic, Epictetus and Spinoza--to mention some examples--translated their philosophies into living. In any typical Western university it is not even expected of a philosopher that he should live what he professes in his philosophy, at any rate nothing outside of the professional ethical standards everyone is supposed to adhere to. There is a deep underlying belief in the West that he must not be required to, because values are matters of personal opinion, and institutions have no right to impose their values on individuals.

In Eastern Philosophy on the other hand, the ultimate experience it talks about, however it is understood, is not a matter of individual opinion or philosophical theory, but

something which, if one ever attains to it, cannot but transform one's living or existence. In Eastern Philosophy generally speaking, knowing in the genuine sense of the term, is synonymous with being.

6) For the above reasons, the methods Philosophy uses are different between the West and the East: Rational speculation, dialectical use of reason showing the inadequacy of reason, or logical analysis etc. are the various methods used in the West, depending on how a philosopher conceives the business of Philosophy.

Some of these methods are indeed also used in the East in their system building or showing the contradictoriness of different views of reality. (For example, Shankara's or Nagarjuna's use of dialectical reason to refute opponents' systems.) Even the results also may seem similar. Compare, for example, Hume's rejection of the notion of the self as a substance with the Buddhist analysis of the ego as an illusion.

However, in the East there is a basic underlying distrust in the capacity of reason in comprehending ultimate Reality. It is not that, as we said above, people, including philosophers, do not use reason to speculate about the nature of Reality. It is not even that philosophers in India or China did not attempt to rationally systematize their philosophic intuitions into systems of philosophy. It is just that when it came to experiencing or comprehending Reality they believed that reason is incapable of it. What are their reasons for believing so?

There are two reasons for this: a) Any reality which one comprehends in some fashion, if it deserves the name of Reality, must include the knower. But reason by its very nature must separate the knower from the known, for ordinary process of knowing is such that we are at least implicitly automatically aware of ourselves as separate from the known. To think of a chair is to have the concept of a chair in mind, and this presupposes that I am (even though only in the background of my consciousness) aware of myself as distinct from the chair.

b) Reason is thinking done by means of concepts. The very process of conceptual thought is such that if a concept is used to "represent" Reality, then it must distinguish that Reality from what it is not, that is, the object (Reality known) from the subject (the knower), or the object from the non-object, and so on. This is so because concepts can be significantly used only in contrast to one another; they can only operate in duality. For example, we can make sense of the concept of chair by knowing not just what a chair is, but also what it is not. There can be no concept, at least no positive concept, of something totally unique, or totally all-inclusive. And if the Reality I am trying to know is to be all-inclusive, then it cannot be known by a divisive concept.

6. Distinctions, divisions, and oppositions are not ultimately real in Eastern Philosophy. For example the opposition between the self and the world, subject and object,

good and evil, right and wrong, pleasure and pain, beautiful and ugly, are all thought-generated, and have no ultimate validity. The West presupposes that ultimately the distinctions like good and evil must be real. At the same time it believes that what is ultimately real must also be good. The West always struggled to reconcile these two ideas in its aim of arriving at a monistic, unitary conception of reality. However, it is impossible to reconcile these, for, if Reality is only good and not evil, then evil will be an ultimate principle as well as the good. We will now have the choice of making evil a non-reality (an absence of Reality), or making good and evil relative conceptions, which means that they are real only at the conceptual or 'empirical' level, but not absolutely real. Eastern Philosophy, with of course many exceptions such as Visishta Advaita and Confucianism, takes the latter approach.

It is not that somehow this is a special problem with Western philosophy. Inasmuch as mankind in general by virtue of its being governed by the processes of thinking is subject to the same preconceptions, the problem is rather human than Western. For example, Eastern cultures are just as much subject to the notion of the self as opposed to the world, to the notions of good and evil, or of pleasure and pain. Thus understood, Eastern Philosophy represents a different possibility for living for mankind in general and not just for the West.

Questions: What are some of the essential differences as regards the basic concerns and methods between the dominant traditions of Western and Eastern Philosophy? Why do you think these differences exist? Do you think they are irreconcilable? Why (or why not)?

Vocabulary: Theology; Psychology; Sociology; Myth; Theory (Theoretical); Concept (Conceptual); Comprehend; Intuition; Knower; Known; Oneness; Existence; Principle; Intellectual; Discipline; Foundation, Unifying Experience; Transformation; Formulate; Monistic; Rational; Reasoning; Observation; Belief; Faith; Superstition; Experience Framework; Justification; Apologetics; Civilization; Ritual; Systematic; Illusion; Substance; Speculation; Eclipse; Profess; Dialectical; Analysis; Existential; Custom; Instinct; Passion; Person; Ethical; Code; Aristotle; Thales; Nagarjuna; Shankara; Zeno the Stoic; Socrates; Mill, Bentham, Hume, Kant; Christianity; Samkhya-Yoga; Vedanta; Buddhism; Taoism; Zen Buddhism.

CHAPTER 4

ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

Indian Philosophy shares with other Eastern philosophies many features such as its practicalness, existential nature, emphasis on a unifying experience which helps us transcend merely rational knowledge which separates the knower from the known and which frees us from duality and opposites including good and evil, pleasure and pain and so forth; emphasis on self-knowledge and selflessness; an understanding that the individual ego or self is in the final analysis unreal; and an understanding that all real knowledge must affect one's personal being, and so forth. It also has a few important features of its own which differentiate it not only from Western Philosophy, but also from the rest of Eastern Philosophy. The following are some common features of all Indian philosophies:

1. Practically all Indian Philosophy believes in some form or other in the law of karma and, its corollary, rebirth. The term `karma' means action. The law of karma states roughly that whatever we are is the result of our previous actions and what we will be in future is determined by what we do in the present (and also by what we did in the past, if the effects of past actions are not yet exhausted). The effects of our actions may be just physical, as for example, when I slap someone on his face, there are red marks on his cheek. The effects may be psychological: the other person may get angry at me in return. The effects are not only on the person but also on myself: I may feel guilty about my slapping, or I may feel justified and confirm myself (or be reinforced) in my attitudes toward the other person. Thus the law of karma establishes a conditioned response in myself.

So far the law of karma seems commonsensical, and no more than a mere law of cause and effect. But this is not the whole story. The effects may also be metaphysical. The law is invoked to explain a lot of unknowns in a person's life. Suppose I am born to poor parents and am a beggar, or am born a cripple, and my neighbor is born rich, yet nothing in this life seems to explain the difference in our plights, I am tempted to say that it must be because of what I have done in my past life (or lives). Similarly, I may lead a life of piety and righteousness in this life; yet the circumstances in my life seem constantly to turn against myself while in someone else's life they may be in his favor, notwithstanding the immoral life he has been leading. If, thus, I can't seem to find any immediate effects in this life of my moral or his immoral conduct, then I am tempted to say that our plights will reflect our conduct more faithfully in our future lives. Thus the law of karma begs for the postulation of past and future lives for a person. Again almost all Indian Philosophy believes in some form or rebirth or another.

In order to explain how karma or the effects of one's previous actions carry over into another time in this life, or into a future life, certain hypotheses are invoked: the actions

cause unconscious latent impressions in one's psyche. These latent impressions are carried over into the future life by a subtle body. The impressions not only cause our future plight but becoming as such, that is, our future lives. The future plight includes, among other things, going to heaven or hell. Notice that in Indian Philosophy heaven and hell are not permanent states one gets into, but are temporary stages in one's spiritual career where one works out the effects of one's previous actions without at the same accruing further merits or demerits. Thus, being subject to karma and undergoing births and deaths are generally considered as what constitute bondage in Indian Philosophy, and are commonly called - *samsara*.

Notice here that the law of karma requires an outside agency to coordinate the circumstances of the external world with the merits or demerits created by one's own past karma, or the karmas of different persons so that in some appropriate contexts they are bound together. In order to effect this some philosophies have invoked an unseen agency called *adrshita* or *apurva* (both these terms mean an unseen force). The first is used by Nyaya as

one of the fundamental constituents of the universe to explain the coordination of the effects of karma (for example, between different persons). The second is proposed by Purva Mimamsa as an unseen residual force which occurs as an effect of our actions and which, however, lingers on and takes effect at a later time. Thus it is clear how the notion of karma has taken a distinctly metaphysical connotation.

2. Liberation in Indian Philosophy is considered to be not only freedom from suffering, but also from karma and rebirth, i.e., from the binding effects of one's action which include being born, dying, and being born again and so on. This process of becoming is called *samsara*.

3. What in the West are considered to be the psychological aspects of man are considered to be only his material side. Where a bifurcation in human nature does exist (and it does not always, as clearly seen in Buddhism where body and mind are considered to be two aspects of the same basic process), the bifurcation is not, as in Western Philosophy, between body and mind, but between the body-mind (both of which are considered material) and consciousness. On this understanding, thought and its products, one's conditioning, even one's sense of oneself (the ego-sense), would all be considered material. So to be liberated would mean to be liberated from the material aspects of oneself.

4. All schools of Indian Philosophy contain accounts of the basic principles, particularly of what constitutes the universe and the human being.

5. In Indian theory of knowledge there are six valid means of knowledge, although not all of them are recognized by all the schools of Philosophy. In order to defend his philosophical position a philosopher has to engage himself in discussions about how he knows

what he knows. It is in answer to this question that Indian Philosophy postulates these valid means of knowledge. Every school of Indian Philosophy has a theory of knowledge and also a theory of error.

The six means of knowledge are: Perception or *Pratyaksha* (there are two kinds of perception: *savikalpaka* (discriminatory) and *nirvikalpaka* (rather more immediate and non-discriminatory)); inference; verbal testimony; comparison; presumption and non-existence. Every school of Indian Philosophy has a theory of perception and a theory of perceptual error. All the orthodox schools generally accept the Nyaya (one of the orthodox schools of Indian Philosophy, see below, the chapters on Historical Survey and Nyaya) theory of inference and fallacy. Several schools accept verbal testimony as an independent means of knowledge, and even the Vedas as an authority to be trusted. However, they only pay lip service to their authority and go ahead with their own philosophizing paying little heed as to whether what they say is or is not contained in the Vedas, sometimes even presenting ideas contrary to those in the ancient texts. The general tradition in India has been to claim only to expound and illuminate what the ancients had laid down and not to postulate new ideas.

Comparison as a means of knowledge is the basis for identifying a new object on the basis of the knowledge of its similarity with another previously familiar object. Presumption is a case of presuppositional inference: for example, if we see a man gaining weight, but he is not seen eating at all in the day time, it is presumed that he has been eating at night or when no one is observing him. Absence or non-existence would again be a special case of perception, as in Western theories of knowledge, although there is a dispute here as to whether it is a case of perception of something not being there, or a non-perception of something being there. Those schools of Philosophy which recognize one or more of these means generally argue also for the independence of each from the other means of knowledge.

6. There is also a considerable amount of discussion in Indian philosophical schools about what constitutes truth, how universals are related to particular objects, and how cause and effect are related to each other. Thus every school of Indian Philosophy would have theory of truth, a theory of universals, and a theory of causality.

7. Finally all schools of Indian Philosophy have a theory of what constitutes the highest state of the soul, an analysis of the psyche and also an account of the means which one can adopt to attain the highest state, however that is construed.

Questions: What are some of the essential features of Indian Philosophy which distinguish it from the rest of Eastern Philosophy?

Vocabulary: Duality; Transcend; Self-knowledge; Selflessness; Karma; Rebirth; Cause; Effect, Piety; Righteousness; Impression; Unconscious; Psyche; Subtle Body; Causal Body;

Bifurcation; Theory of Knowledge; Perception; Inference; Verbal Testimony; Analogy; Presumption; Non-existence; Nyaya; Purva Mimamsa.

Glossary: Apurva; Adrshta: Both terms mean unseen force. Samsara: The cycle of births and deaths; worldly existence; bondage. Pratyaksha: Perception. Savikalpaka: Discriminating. Nirvikalpaka: Nondiscriminating.

CHAPTER 4

HISTORICAL SURVEY OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

Origins: All major Eastern philosophies arose in India and China around the 6th Century B. C., about the same time as Greek Philosophy arose in ancient Greece, and Socrates was debating with the Sophists in the Agora (the market place) in Athens. In India the first philosophical expressions took place in the Upanishads, various texts which are considered revealed and which are part of larger texts called the Vedas. The Vedas were composed probably somewhere between 1,000 B.C. and 500 B.C. and were and still are the sacred texts of the Hindus. They were composed by a race of people called the Aryans who migrated to India from somewhere in Central Asia probably around 1000 B.C. and invaded and conquered the territories around the river basins of Sindhu and Ganges. There was a highly developed civilization already existing before the Aryans came into India, and this civilization was either subdued or destroyed or partly both by the incoming Aryans. From the Vedas themselves it can be conjectured that the Aryans conquered some cities and probably enslaved some populations and mingled with others.

The Caste System: The Aryans probably brought with them a caste system of their own, consisting of three castes, what are called the dwijas (the twice-born, because the young boys in all these three castes underwent an initiation ritual which made them religiously speaking 'born again'). The three castes were: 1) Brahmanas: the priestly caste; 2) - Kshatriyas: the princely and soldier caste; and 3) Vaishyas: the merchant and agriculturist class. The civilization of the natives, now technically called the 'Mohen-jedaro' (after the excavation sites in the Indus basin) probably had their own caste system akin to what obtains now in the South of India, based on some type of guild system. The present caste system in India is probably the result of an intermixture and the gradual fossilization of these two systems. The Aryan caste system was probably not very rigid, for we find accounts of intermarriage etc. in the texts. The native caste system, like the Aryan system, probably had no hierarchy built into it, and was also based on the idea of professions. But in course of time caste came to be based on birth, and a hierarchy developed among the castes: the Brahmins, the priestly caste, being placed at the top of the social scale, and the shudras, the menial caste, and the fifth caste (called panchamas) consisting of outcastes and the untouchables (called Harijans today), being placed at the bottom of the scale. In addition, the boundaries between castes became very rigid. (This some extent was probably prevalent in the Mohen-Jedaro caste system). The result is that there is a caste pride only in the upper castes, whereas formerly it was present in all the castes. At present at least in the rural Hindu

society there is a definite hierarchy based on the principle of who can drink from whom, and there is no intermarriage or interdining among castes. Due to Western influence this may be changing somewhat, but the system is still in tact, and plays a key role in the social, political and religious life of the Hindus.

The Vedas: The Vedas are four in number (Rg, Yajur, Sama, and Atharva). They contain hymns addressed to various gods and goddesses (many of whom derived from natural forces), formulas for rituals and sacrifices, and at times philosophical speculations. Those ending portions of the Vedas which contain philosophical expressions are called the Upanishads. Most of the Upanishads were probably composed before 500 B.C.

The Upanishads: The Upanishads are mostly dialogues between various sages, or between the sages and their pupils, or they are simply inspired expressions, and contain investigations or inquiries into what constitutes the ultimate reality of the universe or of oneself, what takes place when a man dies, whether there is such a thing as immortality, what is the nature of the good or authentic life and so on. There are more than a hundred of the Upanishads, and only about thirteen are considered important in tradition. The doctrines in them are not homogeneous, and the answers arrived at are often only tentative. There is no attempt at systematization. Rather, the attempt is to make tentative probes into what constitutes Reality until one arrives at a satisfactory answer. At times there are hints of myths, a theory of physiology of the human being, beliefs in karma and rebirth etc. but no attempt at rational justification of any of these, the reason simply being that the ideas are presented as facts rather than hypotheses, particularly facts of experience.

Dharma Shastra: The next set of works to be considered for philosophical purposes are the great epics called the Mahabharata and Ramayana, and Manu's Dharma Sastra all of which were probably composed before the third century B. C. These embody various ideals for human life called the purusharthas. There are four of these: dharma: performing one's moral duty, artha: satisfying one's economic needs, kama: satisfying one's sensual needs; moksha: striving for one's liberation. Besides these, the epics also advocate certain moral virtues such as telling truth, practicing non-violence, non-stealing, and so forth. The epics contain various legends. They are not of much interest to the philosopher except as containing sporadic philosophical ideas.

Bhagavad Gita: The Bhagavad Gita, officially a part of the Mahabharata contains a somewhat sustained dialogue about what constitutes the highest goal of man, how it is to be achieved, what is the ultimate nature of man, and how it is related to the universe and its Creator. This work deserves special attention, not merely because it is probably the most frequently read religious work of spiritually inclined intellectuals in India, but also because it relates some of the abstract ideas of the Upanishads to man in society. For one thing, it gave a place in the scheme of things for men of differing natures and abilities. It also tried

to strike a balance between the ritualistic activity of the earlier Vedas and the life of renunciation which is advocated more or less in the Upanishads and perhaps also in the reform movements like Buddhism. The Gita is unique in advocating a philosophy of 'action in inaction' and 'inaction in action', via the notion of selfless or disinterested action. There is no attempt here at argumentation or systematization, although at times we find rudiments of argument. Hence we cannot call this systematic philosophy in the usual sense of the term.

Buddhism and Jainism: About the same time as or a little earlier than the Bhagavad Gita, about 500 B. C., the Buddha and Mahavira taught their religions. Buddhism is a philosophy as well as a religion. It too, like the Bhagavad Gita, tried to strike a golden mean between sensual indulgence on the one hand, and self-mortification on the other, by advocating moderation. It clarified certain ideas in the Upanishads, taking at times a completely opposite metaphysical standpoint, viz. one of flux rather permanence (or being) being the nature of ultimate reality, and arrived at about the same results. It too, like the Upanishads, showed the inadequacy of thought to arrive at an experience of ultimate Reality. It too considered ignorance concerning the nature of the self and the consequent attachment to it as the source of human suffering. Furthermore, in the spirit of the Upanishads, in some strains it went to the extremes of denying reality even to the notion of means or a path to liberation, since it held that the notions of both bondage and liberation are products of thought, and as such are both illusory, as are all products of thought. Hence there is no such thing as a path to liberation, since ultimately there is no difference between bondage and liberation.

Orthodox Schools: All the major orthodox schools of Philosophy also arose about the same time as Buddhism and the Bhagavad Gita. There are six major orthodox systems of Philosophy, all called orthodox, astika, because they all claimed to be derived from the Vedas whose authority they accept. This feature is what distinguishes them from Buddhism, Jainism and Charvaka all of which rejected the authority of the Vedas, and hence are called nastika.

There are six main orthodox schools. They are: 1) Nyaya, the logical and epistemological school founded by Gotama (3rd Century B.C.). 2) Vaisheshika: the atomistic school of metaphysics founded by Kanada (later than 300 B.C.). These two schools are generally paired together. 3) The Samkhya philosophy founded by Kapila (7th Century B.C.?) whose metaphysics and psychology are shared by Yoga. 4) Yoga, the system of body control and meditation founded by Patanjali (2nd Century B.C.). Samkhya and Yoga are generally paired together. 5) Purva Mimamsa founded by Jaimini (5th Century B.C.), which developed a detailed semantical analysis and exegesis of the Vedas. 6) Vedanta founded by Badarayana, a system which claims to be derived from the Upanishads. Whence the term Vedanta (the end portions of the Vedas, viz., the Upanishads). There are three main subschools of Vedanta: a) Advaita or non-dualism, the protagonist of which is Shankara, a philosopher of the 8th century A. D. b) Visishtadvaita or qualified non-dualism of which Ramanujaa, a philosopher of the 11th Century A. D., is the main exponent. c) Dvaita or

dualism of which Madhva (13th Century A.D.) is the chief philosopher. (For a short description of the differences between these subschools, and the differences between Advaita and Purva Mimamsa, please see the Chapter on Vedanta.)

Sutras: The schools all started with source books called sutras or aphorisms attributed to various sages. Each text of sutras lays down the fundamental concepts and ideas in its system, its primary concerns, and some amount of justification of these basic ideas, particularly in the face of possible objections to them by the adherents of opponent schools. They are in the form of scientific treatises. However, there is no confusion made here between empirical sciences, such as physics or medicine and Philosophy which, according to the systems, deals typically with the suprasensual or the supernatural.

Commentaries: Following the sutra period for centuries to come, say from the first century a.d. even to date, we have many commentaries written on the sutras by various authors, and also commentaries upon commentaries. Although they only claim to explicate the ideas already contained in the original sutras, the commentaries do not lack originality, and are not only attempts at clarifying and systematizing, but also arriving at new ideas and syntheses not found anywhere in the originals. For example, Shankara's commentaries on the Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita or Brahma Sutras are quite original and not simply elaborations of ideas already contained in the originals. Shankara presents a whole new theory of knowledge based on the ideas of appearance and reality, different levels of reality and the experience of them. The same is true of the Navya Nyaya school developed in Bengal in late medieval times.

Recent Past: During the many following centuries there have been at times attempts at original works, but because of foreign domination, and lack of royal patronage, philosophical activity was at a lull. Toward the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century there has been a resurgence of philosophical activity, primarily attempts at justifying what seemed to be valid in Indian tradition in the face of challenges from Christianity and the West. Examples of philosophers who made such attempts are Gandhi, Radhakrishnan, Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Sri Aurobindo. The 20th century is also not lacking in sages like the Buddha: Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Aurobindo, Sri Ramana Maharshi and J. Krishnamurti can be mentioned as prime examples. J. Krishnamurti is not only regarded as an enlightened man, but his teachings are also original, much like the Buddha's teachings are original.

Questions: Mention the different philosophically significant periods in the history of Indian Philosophy and some of their essential features.

Vocabulary: Aryans; Sindhu; Ganges; Mohen-Jedaro; Hymns; Rituals; Sacrifices, Immortality; Authentic Life; Systematization; Physiology; Epic; Legend; Sensual Indulgence; Selflessness; Renunciation; Argumentation; Disinterested; Mahavira; Buddha; Mortification; Moderation; Manu; Gotama; Kanada, Kapila; Patanjali, Jaimini, Exigesis; Badarayana;

Shankara; Ramanuja; Madhva; Flux; Illusory; Bondage; Fundamental; Commentary; Medieval.

Glossary: Vedas: Sacred texts of the Hindus, considered revealed. Upanishads: Later portions of the Vedas, also considered revealed. Rg Veda: One of the four Vedas containing mostly hymns. Yajur Veda: The second of the four Vedas containing sacrificial procedures. Sama Veda: The third of the four Vedas containing sama chants, some texts in the previous Vedas set to musical notation. Atharva Veda: The fourth of the Vedas containing magical formulas. Dwija: 'Twice-born', a term applied to the first three castes. Brahmana: The priestly caste. Kshatriya: The princely or soldier caste. Vaishya: The merchant or farmer caste. Shudra: The menial caste. Panchama: The fifth caste, consisting mainly of outcastes and untouchables. Harijans: The contemporary term, given by Gandhi, for the untouchable castes. Mahabharata: An Indian epic of which the Bhagavad Gita, according to tradition, is a part. Ramayana: Another epic, the story of Rama, an Indian legendary hero. Dharma Shastra: A work of Manu containing the Hindu moral and legal code. Purusharthas: Life goals or ideals classified as four: Dharma: righteous living. Artha: Economic well-being. Kama: Satisfaction of sensual desires. Moksha: Liberation. Astika: Orthodox, meaning in the Indian context accepting the authority of the Vedas. Nastika: Heterodox, not accepting the authority of the Vedas. Nyaya: The logical and epistemological school founded by Gotama; one of the six orthodox schools. The others are: Vaiseshika : The metaphysical school of atomism founded by Kanada. Samkhya: The school of philosophy founded by Kapila. Yoga: The school of body control and meditation founded by Patanjali. Purva Mimamsa: The school of semantics and exegesis of the Vedas founded by Jaimini. Vedanta: The school of philosophy founded by Badarayana based on the Upanishads. Advaita: The non-dualistic philosophy of Shankara. Visishtadvaita: The qualified non-dualistic philosophy of Ramanuja. Dvaita: The dualistic philosophy of Madhva. All the above three are subschools of Vedanta. Sutras: Aphorisms; short statements of the basic Philosophy in any school of Philosophy. Brahma Sutras: A work written by Badarayana, being a commentary on the Upanishads. Navya Nyaya: The Neo-Nyaya school consisting primarily of logical works starting sometime in the medieval times.

CHAPTER 5

THE UPANISHADS

The Upanishads officially form part of the sacred texts of the Hindus called the Vedas. They are generally in the form of inspired pronouncements of the seers, dialogues or stories. Many of them are didactic dialogues, and some are inquiries cooperatively undertaken. Their main concerns are a search for immortality or liberation and an inquiry into questions such as what is the ultimate Reality in ourselves, what is the ultimate Reality of the universe, how these two are related, and whether there is something in us that remains after we die. There are many Upanishads of varying length--some very small and some very large.

Early in the Vedic period sages in India were satisfied with worshiping various gods and goddesses who are generally the powers behind natural forces such as rain, wind, fire, water, air, the sky and the sun. Later this worship got ritualized in the form of sacrifices. In sacrifices oblations (offerings) are made to the gods by offering ghee (clarified butter) and the entrails of a goat by dropping them in a sacred fire specially made for the occasion according to certain prescribed procedures. Sacrifices are made to different gods, for example, to Agni, the fire god, to Indra, the god of lightning and thunder, or to Varuna, the god of rain, and so forth. The sacrifices were made for different purposes: for instance, for a king to celebrate his conquest over neighboring kingdoms (as in the sacrifice called Ashvamedha), to petition (or compel) the god of rain to give rain in times of drought, to seek sons (as in the sacrifice of Putrakameshthi), and so on. Some of these sacrifices, for example the second one mentioned above, are still performed in India today. Later on in Vedic times sages were dissatisfied with the ritualism of the sacrifices, and began worshiping gods symbolically (as we find in the Aranyakas, the third portion of the Vedas), or entered into philosophical inquiries into the nature of Reality, as we find in the Upanishads.

It is obvious that if the Upanishadic sages were satisfied with the worship of gods and the results obtained from the offerings to the various gods in sacrifices they would never have embarked upon their investigations. Earthly and heavenly goods have all one quality in common: they are all transient. They are here today and they vanish tomorrow. Hence a search for something lasting, eternal in the universe, and immortal in oneself.

Also, the human mind attempts to grasp the diversity of the universe and arrive at a unity, as though there is something painful in the attempt to grasp the diversity of the universe. This attempt is not generally successful, for we always end up with questions like what is the source of the one reality behind the diversity, and what is the cause of that and so forth. In such an attempt one is bound to end up with inquiries like whether there is some one thing which is the source of everything but which is itself not caused by anything. Such are the origins of the investigations into that thing "by knowing which we know everything," or that

whose knowledge satisfies all our desires, and provides us with a bliss unknown to the body or to the mind, or that which is the source (or power) behind everything.

Philosophers of old in the West too were troubled with questions of this sort. For example, in his attempt to answer such questions the famous ancient Greek philosopher Parmenides

said that only Being (or existence) is real and becoming (or change) is unreal. However, he also seems to be aware that as soon as one postulates Being as the one Reality, one is simultaneously implicitly postulating non-being, which defeats the very purpose of finding a unity behind all multiplicity, something permanent behind all change. Thus we find Parmenides not only attempting to prove that becoming or change is unreal, (by showing that any account of becoming would involve talking about something coming out of nothing (non-being), or something becoming nothing), but also saying that he would not even allow us to say that we can think about nothing (because to think about nothingness would involve making that nothingness into something which exists--which is a contradiction). In other words, he says that we cannot have a concept, at least a positive concept, of non-being. The Upanishadic philosophers too seem to be aware of such problems: so, instead of postulating a concept which automatically implies its own opposite (Being by contrast implying non-being), they were attempting to avoid such a problem by envisaging an experience in which all conceptual duality is absent. For example, in Brahman experience there is neither the duality between Being and non-being, nor one between Brahman and non-Brahman, nor one between the subject and the object (Atman and Brahman). Whether they were consistent in such attempts remains to be seen.

Here are some commonly occurring themes of the Upanishads:

1. Ultimate Reality is called Brahman. The word `Brahman' is neuter in Sanskrit, and comes from the root *brh* which means `to grow'. `Brahman' is generally translated as `Absolute' in English. It does not mean God, because `God' means something personal as for example someone who has feelings, who gets angry, who does things for a purpose and so on, as Jehovah in Judaism and Christianity. But the Absolute is what remains in the ultimate analysis; it is the source of everything. Since personality characteristics are limiting, and Brahman is considered unlimited and infinite, personality is not attributed to Brahman. However, the Upanishads sometimes consider Brahman as consciousness and bliss as well as reality. Brahman is what is behind and yet within the changing world. It is beyond the experienceable world as its source, yet Brahman is the reality of everything we perceive. All we perceive could be Brahman if only it is experienced as unity and not as multiplicity. For Brahman is one. There are no differentiations, distinctions, divisions or separations in Brahman.

2. Brahman is the ultimate Reality in one's own self; it is the pure subject. Considered as such Brahman is called Atman. Indeed, the main doctrine of the Upanishads is that there

is no difference between Brahman and Atman: the ultimate Reality of the universe is not different from the ultimate Reality of oneself.

3. Expressed as bliss Brahman could also be construed as the experience of Brahman. For one thing, bliss is a characteristic of an experience, and only as such it is a characteristic of anything. For another, in Brahman experience there is no division between the subject, the object and the experience which the subject has of the object. Therefore, a characteristic of the experience can as well be the characteristic of the subject or of the object.

4. Brahman is eternal: Not in the sense that it lasts for ever, but in the sense that it is beyond time. It is not subject, for the same reasons, to decay. Decay can only occur to thing subject to time. If Brahman is eternal, and if Brahman is not different from Atman, then Atman is also eternal, i.e. not subject to death or decay. The one who realizes Atman becomes the Atman (or Brahman), because here the subject, the object of realization and the realization itself are not different. Therefore he becomes immortal. That is the end of the search for immortality.

5. Brahman is both the pure subject and the pure object: in the Upanishadic investigations the sages reject the superficial layers of one's personality as Brahman, for obvious reasons. One rejects the body, the senses, the mind, the intellect, and even the ego as Atman: for they are not only subject to decay, but also create (or cause) duality. If Atman is one and eternal these cannot be considered as Atman. For similar reasons, the Taittiriya Upanishad (see p. 55 of the Upanishads) rejects the five sheaths of Annamaya kosha (food), Pranamaya kosha (vital breath), Manomaya kosha (mind), Vijnanamaya kosha (intellect), and Anandamaya kosha ([ego-centered] bliss) as constituting the Self. The Upanishad declares that the Self is beyond all of these. The same is true of the objective world: one cannot regard individual things, or the five elements, the sun, the moon, the sky etc. as Brahman, because they are not their own essence. Their source and essence lie elsewhere. The culminating point of this search is Brahman which, like Atman, is without any distinctions or divisions, including the division between the knower and the known. Therefore the very object one is investigating is not different from the subject who is doing the investigating.

6. Ordinary morality and distinctions of good and evil are conditioned and relative. Therefore we cannot apply these distinctions or divisions to Brahman. The person who has realized Brahman has within his consciousness no division between good and evil, and hence he is free from all moral conflict. It does not mean his activity is immoral or amoral. He lacks self-centered motivation; hence he cannot act immorally. However, he is not bound by conventional morality, as such morality is ultimately based on custom or a self-centeredness

which stems from the fear of evil consequences for one's actions or from a desire for self-fulfillment of some sort. Instead, he is free to act according to the demands of the situation at hand.

7. Brahman is beyond worldly existence, yet to the one who has realized Brahman everything he experiences is Brahman, only it is without distinctions. Brahman is beyond worldly existence only in the sense that it is not subject to time, decay and multiplicity. It does not mean that Brahman is elsewhere, known only to belief or faith, speculation or conceptual imagination. For such notions always have to distinguish Brahman from what it is not. But if Brahman is one without a second, all this must be Brahman. Only it is Brahman as unity, not Brahman as multiplicity, multiplicity being only a figment of one's imagination, or part of the world of appearance.

8. To experience Brahman is to be liberated from karma and rebirth: There is a belief in the Upanishads in rebirth in the literal sense of the term. But we can also understand rebirth as the constant dying and being reborn, i.e, the becoming, of the self. If the experience of Brahman is free from becoming, and from self-centeredness, it must make us free from karma and rebirth. By karma we mean here the pleasures and pains generated by the effects of one's self-centered action, and the consequent conditioning manifested in us in terms of seeking those things which have given us pleasure in the past or avoiding those which have given us pain in the past. We can also understand rebirth in a non-literal sense as being "born" into the consciousness of our existence at a moment, and then "dying", i.e. losing our consciousness of ourselves or losing ourselves in things and activities of life at another moment.

9. To attain Brahman one must have faith, one must renounce, inquire and meditate. What is the nature of the Upanishadic inquiry? It is meditation in the sense of contemplation. When the Upanishadic seers ask us, for instance, to meditate on Brahman or Atman as the body, as the senses, as the mind or as pure consciousness which underlies the waking, dream and sleep states etc. what do they mean by meditation? When we have lived much of our life and begin reflecting on it, we start asking what it all means, and what it all amounts to. We are born and we will die (and may be we will be born again and will die again also). We are sometimes happy and sometimes we are in misery. Is there anything in us which is beyond all of these changes and is not subject to them? All this infinite looking universe, where does it all come from? When we die is only something inanimate left over? What is left? What makes us see, speak, think, experience joy and suffering? If we are consumed by questions like these, devote the rest of our lives inquiring into them with all our passion and energy (and not as a hobby!), and consider one tentative answer after another and reject whatever does not satisfy our fundamental urge of discovering unity in life, then we are meditating. The steps one goes through are successive steps of rejection. "It is not this, it is not this....It is not the senses, etc...." By a series of negations one arrives at not an

answer, but an experience, although what one discovers can be and is expressed as an answer.

On the one hand, methods such as meditation are prescribed, or some necessary and sufficient conditions such as renunciation are recommended, and a mention is made as to what happens in meditation as, for example, that the senses are quieted, thought or the intellect is made still, and so on. On the other hand, we also have investigations in successive stages into Brahman.

The nature of these investigations is philosophically interesting: for they start with some commonsensical answers as to what constitutes ultimate reality or the Self, answers such as that it is the body, it is food or that it is vital breath. Then there is dissatisfaction with the answers, for there are logical objections to them such as that the body perishes, is ill sometimes, is in pain, but the Self (by definition) cannot be. Then there is an attempt to go to a "higher" level answer, a more "abstract" answer: for example, the Self is something which is the support or essence of or is more subtle than the previously postulated entity. When one finally arrives at the most satisfactory answer it is pointed out, more often than not, that the Self or Brahman one has discovered is oneself, denoting the non-dualistic character of the answer. The answer is not an abstract intellectual answer, but one which can make better sense when it is realized in experience. Perhaps in order to experience it one must use the methods prescribed, such as meditation, and also satisfy the necessary conditions, like renunciation and faith.

10. Fleshly desires and a life of pleasure are not the way to the knowledge of the Self which transcends the body, the senses, and the mind. The Katha Upanishad distinguishes between what is pleasant and what is good. It says (see the Upanishads, p.16), "the wise prefer the good to the pleasant; the foolish, driven by fleshly desires, prefer the pleasant to the good." Why does the Upanishad consider fleshly desire and a life of pleasure prevent one from discovering Brahman?

a) The objects of desires and the pleasures resulting from achieving those objects are transient. They are here today and gone tomorrow. Things subject to change and decay or destruction cannot be the source of everlasting happiness.

b) The process of desire and the life of pleasure are such that through being attached to the object of desire or to the pleasure we keep wanting more of them, and there is never an end to this wanting. That means we are always seeking, traveling, but we will never arrive at any place. This is true not only of objects of desire and of pleasures but of any experience we consider desirable. It seems as though there is no everlasting peace in this sort of life. (Notice in this connection that all the Upanishads end with the motto, "Om, Peace, Peace, Peace!")

c) If we look into the reason for why the process of desire is never-ending, we will find built into it the assumption that one can find fulfillment only through something other than and outside of oneself. Thus there is a fundamental duality in the movement of desire, a duality between the self and the other (than the self), each of which presupposes the other and brings the other into existence. Once we start with this assumption, we keep looking outside of ourselves for objects which we hope will give us fulfillment.

Our idea of fulfillment is one of satisfaction (or pleasure) derived from the achieving of the objects of desire. (My happiness, for instance in the context of wanting to swim, is defined in terms of the pleasure derived from swimming.) Moreover, things we have already achieved, pleasures already experienced, do not count, for in the very process of being aware of them, we become other than them, and in that very awareness we feel the lack of them. When we 'chew' our achievements in our reminiscences, we do so only in order to make them (or things similar) into objects of another desire. The process of desiring implies an inherent and fundamental duality experienced as a 'tension' between myself (which here is defined merely as the lack of what I desire) and the other (the object of desire, which is meaningful to me as an object only because I desire it). Because of this tension, a fundamental dissatisfaction is built into the process of desire. Therefore, there is no peace or joy in the life of desire or pleasure.

The following is a list of readings from the book Upanishads arranged according to the main and sub-topics discussed above:

Descriptions of Brahman :

As negative: pp. 20, 30, 98, 102, 107.

As without cause and effect: 91.

As beyond the reach of arguments and logic: 17, 110.

As beyond thought: 31, 110.

As one without a second: 51, 121, 189.

As the essence of things: 30, 31, 39, 45, 69, 70, 87.

The Doctrine of Origins: 23, 55, 61, 80, 86 (spider, spikes).

As the body of the universe: 45.

As paradoxical: 18, 96, 110, 123.

As being within everything: 121, 123.

As pervading everything (as oil in sesame): 119.

As beyond "all these things": 62.

As support of everything: 119.

As master of the universe: 123.

Brahman manifest and unmanifest: 56.

Appearances: Name and form come from Brahman: 63, 123.

Earth, food etc. all forms of Brahman: 80.

Brahman resides in forms but is veiled by ignorance: 115.
 Brahman revealed in forms through Maya: 91.
 Maya and its relation to Brahman: 119, 121, 124.
 All things merge in Brahman, but in ignorance they do not know: 69.
 As that by which we know the unknowable: 68.
 As what you see and that by which you see: 66.
 The Story of Satyakama: 65.
 "That thou art": 69 etc.

Physiology : 38.
 The Self is in the lotus of the heart: 74, 104, 76.
 The five Pranas: 38

Psychology and the Self :
 Self's relationship to the senses etc.: 24.
 Individual self and mortal self: 46-47.
 Aspects of self: 50-51.
 The doctrine of the five sheaths: 55.
 Dream, sleep, etc.: 85, 86, 105.
 Desires: 20, 41, 94, 109.
 Association of Self with the body as source of pleasure and pain: 78, 104, 105.
 Fear: 56.
 Duality source of distinctions: 89.
 " " sorrow: 125.
 Enjoyment here and hereafter: 94, 105.
 Calculus of joy: 57.
 Subtle body and what happens at death: 108.
 Self is the boundary which divides the world from THAT: 76.

Karma : 23, 108, 109, 115.

Rebirth : 22, 115, 118.

Lay Morality : 54.

Knowledge of Brahman :
 "Homecoming": 70-71.
 Gives power and immortality: 39, 73, 31, 40.
 Without sorrow: 18, 48.
 Gives freedom from fear: 58, 107.
 " " " desire: 94.
 " " " pleasure and pain: 18, 78.
 " peace: 127.

" freedom from rebirth: 109, 118.
 Ends karma: 46, 78, 85.
 Knowing B. same as attaining (or being) B.: 39-40, 101.
 He who knows B. realizes the Self in all: 109.
 " " " " sees everything as Self: 73.
 Causes all doubts to be resolved: 46.
 Transcends good and evil: 47, 48, 58, 111.
 No duality in...: 107, 111.
 Makes you lose all distinctions: 41, 71, 107 ("Father...").
 Immortality in this very life: 48.
 Liberation in this life: 48.

Means of Knowing Brahman :

Faith: 114.
 Senses stilled, mind at rest, renouncing: 24, 120.
 Work without attachment, renunciation: 26, 33, 120.
 Meditation on Brahman as....: 58-59.
 Speech, name, mind...: 71-72.
 Indra and Prajapati: 76-78.
 Meditation, posture, etc. 120.
 Meditation--explanation: 51, 120.
 Visions: 121.
 "Fire and stick": 119.
 Grace: 123.
 Not through scriptures: 48, 110, 125.

Questions: What are some of the main questions the Upanishads address themselves to? What are their main answers to those questions? What type of methods do they use to arrive at the answers? What methods do they advise us to use to arrive at Brahman experience? (Notice that the last two are not the same question.) Discuss the significance of the Upanishadic doctrine of the identity of Brahman and Atman. Why do the Upanishads exclude diversity and change as real? What is the meaning of saying that by knowing Brahman we know all? Discuss the doctrine of the four states of mind mentioned in the Upanishads and its significance for the progressive investigation into the Atman. What is the significance of Netivada ("Not-this"-ism)? Compare it with other kinds of description of Brahman and Atman occurring in the Upanishads. Discuss the Upanishadic doctrine of renunciation of desire as a means to liberation? Is it possible to desire desirelessness? If not, how do you make sense of the doctrine? What sense do the Upanishads make to someone in the twentieth century?

Vocabulary: Didactic; Oblation; Entrails; Being; Non-being; Becoming; Unity; Multiplicity; Christianity; Judaism; Personality; Characteristic; Consciousness; Bliss; The Absolute;

Duality.

Glossary: Agni: The god of fire in the Vedas. Indra: The god of thunder and lightning. Varuna: The god of rain. Ashvamedha: The Vedic sacrifice of a horse to celebrate victory in a conquest. Putrakameshti: The Vedic sacrifice with the intention of obtaining a son. Aranyaka: The portions of the Vedas where symbolic worship of and sacrifice to the gods were made. Brahman: Ultimate Reality. Atman: The Self. Taittiriya Upanishad: One of the principal Upanishads. Kosha: Sheath. Annamaya: (Filled with) food. Manomaya: (Filled with) the mind. Vijnanamaya: (Filled with) the intellect. Anandamaya: (Filled with) [ego-centered] bliss. Katha Upanishad: One of the principal Upanishads.

CHAPTER 6

THE BHAGAVAD GITA

The Bhagavad Gita is officially part of a wider epic known as the Mahabharata, attributed to Vyasa or Badarayana. (Badarayana is also the name of a person to whom a text of sutras called the Brahma Sutras which codifies the teachings of the Upanishads is attributed. It is not clear whether these two Badarayanas are the same person.) The epic is probably dated around the 2nd or 3rd Century B. C. It relates the story of two dynasties of princes called Pandavas and Kauravas who are related as cousins, descending from the two brothers Pandu and Kuru.

The Gita is a semi-philosophical text. It contains a network of ideas, but we do not find much reasoning furnished for many of them. At times, however, a rudiment of argument does occur. It is a dialogue mostly in verse form, between Krishna and Arjuna. Arjuna is the third of the five Pandava brothers who are ready to wage a war against their cousins, the Kauravas. Krishna is the human incarnation of Lord Vishnu, the central god of the trinity--Brahma, the creator god, Vishnu, the sustainer god, and Shiva, the destroyer god. Krishna is related to Arjuna as brother-in-law.

The central theme of the Gita is Arjuna's dilemma of whether or not he should fight his kinsmen, and Krishna's advice to him in this context. If Arjuna fights and wins, his victory would be over the blood of his relatives and former teachers; if he does not fight, he would yield to the bullying and injustice (unfair treatment) of his cousin and opponent Duryodhana, the eldest of the one hundred Kaurava prince brothers, and subject the population of his kingdom to slavery (for they would then be the subjects of the tyrant Duryodhana).

Krishna's advice to Arjuna is to ask him to fight, for fighting the enemy who is in the wrong is the duty of a warrior, and Arjuna is a warrior by birth and training. In the process of the fighting the body of the enemy may die, says Krishna, but the soul never does. On the other hand, by not fighting for what is right Arjuna would set a poor example to his subjects as a coward. (Please read the Introduction to the Bhagavad Gita.)

One thing must be made clear in this context: there is, as far as the Gita is concerned, no question as to who is right and who is wrong in this controversy over which the battle of Kurukshetra (name of a place) is fought, nor is there a question here of relativity of values. Arjuna is on the side of the right and Duryodhana is on the side of the wrong, even if he thought otherwise. Arjuna and his brothers were promised their kingdom by the old king Dhrtarashtra, the father of Duryodhana. They had lost it in gambling to Duryodhana due to the tricks of a counselor to Duryodhana called Shakuni. They were to receive their kingdom back after they fulfilled their part of the bargain, namely, going into

wilderness for 13 years and in cognito for another year. The Pandavas duly fulfilled their obligation. Duryodhana, however, did not keep his end of the bargain; instead, he usurped their kingdom, disregarding all the attempts at peaceful negotiations by Krishna who acted as the ambassador of the Pandavas. The only recourse left for Arjuna, short of giving up and going into slavery, is to wage a war.

The dialogue in the Gita could have ended with Krishna's advice to Arjuna to fight. But it takes on a philosophical tone: for the idea of doing one's duty is now connected with the real topic of the Gita, viz., liberation and its related topics of what constitutes man's bondage, what in man's nature causes such a bondage, and what for a man in society are the different paths to attain liberation.

The central idea of the Bhagavad Gita is that man can attain liberation from samsara or bondage (see below for explanation) by performing activity which is in accordance with his nature, however that is understood, but without attachment to the result of such activity, that is, without a selfish motive or concern for what the results might bring him.

1. Bondage : Being separate from God, the world and oneself constitutes man's bondage. Such a separation causes suffering which is described as not only being caught between opposites such as pleasure and pain, but also being subjected to the cycles of rebirth, i.e. being born, dying, and being born again, and so on. This suffering and becoming had no beginning and, unless a person puts a stop to them, can go on endlessly. Bondage results from a lack of discrimination, arising out of ignorance concerning the true nature of oneself.

2. Man's Nature : Man's nature is two-fold--material and spiritual. (The Gita calls them `the field' and `the knower of the field'.) The Gita here follows the ancient Samkhya metaphysics in considering the universe to be ultimately constituted by two distinct and diametrically opposite principles: purusha or the principle of consciousness, and prakriti or the principle of primordial matter. Here we must be careful in not confusing this distinction with the distinction which Western Psychology makes between mind and matter. For the Samkhya and for the Gita both of what we call the body and the mind are products of the material principle. On the other hand, consciousness, which is generally regarded as an attribute of the mind in the West, is considered an independent principle. More about this distinction later. The Gita, however, adds the principle of God to the Samkhya metaphysics. (The latter is atheistic for it considers purusha and prakriti as together being adequate to explain all the furniture of the universe). God is the supreme purusha from whom the whole universe emerges at the time of creation, by whom it is sustained, and to whom it returns at the time of dissolution. The whole universe, including prakriti (which is considered as Maya, the power of God) and all the purushas in it are a manifestation of God.

What pertains to purusha does not pertain to prakriti and vice versa. Purusha is conscious, intelligent, passive and merely watchful, while prakriti is unconscious by itself, is

inert by nature, but becomes active because of the presence of (and for the sake of) purusha. Prakriti transforms itself into the observed world of evolved material nature because of the predominance of one or another of the three gunas or qualities. The qualities are sattva, -rajas, and tamas. These qualities are like strands of a rope, and are rather constituents of the principle of matter than its qualities. In inert matter they are characteristics such as mellowness and lightness, activity or inertia. At the same time, in the case of the human being, inasmuch as he is a product of matter, they are types (or characteristics) of personality. Note that all the qualities operate in a person all the time, but a only one predominates in each person at a time, although a different quality may dominate in the same person a different times. A person dominated by the sattva quality is intellectually or spiritually inclined, balanced in temperament, mellow and so on. A person who is dominated by rajas is passionate, restless, inclined toward activity and so on. A man dominated by the tamas quality, on the other hand, is dull, stupid, inert and submissive.

The human being, that is, the material side of him which comprises his body, senses, mind, intellect and ego sense, has evolved out of prakriti, all because of the presence of the purusha. Not only that, once prakriti has evolved to a certain degree, the human being whose essential nature is purusha, confuses his own nature with that of prakriti and starts thinking not only about the world and the things in it as "mine" and "not mine", but also confuses himself with his body, with his senses, with his mind and its qualities of pleasure and pain. (Note here that pleasure and pain do not really pertain to the purusha, but only to the mind, which is a product of prakriti.) Because of ignorance, purusha attributes them to himself, and thinks he is happy or he is unhappy. He thinks he is unhappy now because he has not satisfied a desire of his, and he thinks he will be happy by achieving that goal or satisfying that desire. Prakriti in him, by its nature, propels him toward activity, and he, because of his ignorance, attaches this activity to this or that object and constantly strives toward self-fulfillment through achieving these various goals.

3. Karma : The human being thus becomes subject to karma and rebirth. The reason for this is that his actions, including his thoughts, now performed under a sense of self-centered agency and motivation, have effects not only in the external world, but also on the agent, the person. In the person the effects take the form of pleasure and pain, tendencies to further actions in the same direction, impressions of his merit or guilt on his unconscious, and his status in life and society, or even of going to heaven or hell and experiencing the fortunes thereof. The inertia of karma, i.e., effects born out of the present actions and the unfulfilled results of past actions, creates the process of becoming through subsequent births and rebirths. All this constitutes samsara or bondage.

4. Liberation : To be liberated from samsara means at one and the same time to become free from becoming, from being born and dying, from karma, from pleasure and pain, and even from the very mechanisms which produce the apparatus of experiencing. In other words, it means becoming free from Prakriti and its products. If thus one realizes one's true state as Purusha or consciousness, since all purushas are manifestations of one and the same

supreme Purusha, God, and since one has become free from the sense of separation of oneself from the world, from the self and from God, (the sense of separation which is born out of ignorance), one becomes united with the Supreme Purusha or God.

5. Path : The Gita allows three different paths to liberation, depending on the dominant guna of a person or the type of personality one possesses: if one is of the sattva type, (see above for an explanation of the gunas), then jnana yoga (yoga here means simply a path to liberation) or the path of knowledge is appropriate to him. If he is of the rajas type, then karma yoga or the path of selfless or disinterested action is the right path for him. If, on the other hand, he is dominated by the tamas quality then he should practice bhakti yoga or the path of devotion or self-surrender to God.

a) Jnana : This path consists essentially of realizing one's nature by discriminating between the `field' (kshetra--the realm of prakriti) and the `knower' of the field (kshetrajna, i.e., purusha) and not confusing the two. One should see, for example, that one is not one's body or one's thoughts or any of the objects one usually identifies with, such as various goals, pleasures, pains, persons and places. He should realize that the true agent of one's actions is not really oneself (i.e., purusha), but prakriti. This discrimination is usually accomplished by meditation, by sitting in a relaxed posture crosslegged, closing one's eyes, breathing steadily and slowly, and inquiring into the nature of oneself.

b) Karma : The path of karma consists of doing one's duty as prescribed by the scripture, tradition, and the elders of the society reputed for their righteousness. One should practice one's duty selflessly, that is without looking for a selfish end in the action. Duty in the Bhagavad Gita is defined as the action which is appropriate to one's caste, guna, station in life, and to the given situation. If, for instance, Arjuna is born in the warrior caste, as a warrior his dominant personality type is rajas, and if the situation he is involved in calls for fighting for what is right, assuming that all other means such as negotiations have failed, then it is his duty to fight for and defend what is right, if necessary even by waging a war. One can perceive clearly what the situation demands only by keeping personal desires and motivations out of the picture. In this case, it is clear that Arjuna should keep his worries about himself or his kinsmen dying, and his own possible future successes and failures out of the picture. Then he would see that the situation calls for putting a stop to Duryodhana's wrong-doings by waging a war against him.

Selfless action, involving not caring or worrying about the consequences of an action, should not be understood as just an efficient means of performing one's action, putting aside the self and its concerns for the moment while one is acting. For one thing, one would still be identified with the outcome, even if he is not focusing on it for the moment. So, he is still affected by its success or failure. Hence, he is not free from the bondage of pleasures and pains generated by the success or failure of his action. For another thing, he has to constantly

be measuring his progress from time to time against the goal of his action. And as he is not free from the concern for the outcome, he must be subject to the anxiety arising out of the uncertainty of the outcome (for sometimes he is progressing, and at other times he is not). Thus he is still subject to bondage.

Selfless action is not acting stupidly either: for if one does not care for the consequences of one's actions, the question might arise, why act at all, let alone act efficiently. The answer is not that one should have no regard for consequences, although sometimes the Gita seems to talk that way. It says, for example, that one should have no regard for the consequences but dedicate the fruits (good or bad) of one's actions to God, and act for the sake of action alone, i.e., just because it is one's duty. It is just that one should have no regard for consequences for oneself, that is, one should act without a selfish motive.

Now, the question is, whether it is possible, and if it is, how it is possible for man to act selflessly, particularly if all of one's make up or personality is a result of one's past karma, prakriti, and the gunas. The Gita's answer to this is not at all clear. But we might imagine an answer on the following lines:

(i) Why should one act at all? : The Gita's standard answer to this question is that we must act because the Prakriti in us prompts us to act. The question presupposes that there is always just one source for all action--namely selfish motivation. This is not always true. For example, we know some examples of actions--such as a mother giving her life for the sake of her child, or a person automatically, even at the risk of his own life, saving someone else from danger, or spontaneous activities of various kinds such as a baby playing--for which there is no known selfish-motivation. If the opponent insists that there ought to be one even if we don't know of it, like an unconscious one, he is begging the question of whether all action is necessarily selfishly motivated, or he is defining his thesis away by saying that all action, by definition, is selfishly motivated.

(ii) The question, if there are no selfish motivations, then why act at all, is answered by saying that we should act because the situation demands such an action. There need be no other reason for the action. Thus we distinguish here reasons from motives for actions. Motives can be reasons for actions, but they don't have to be.

(iii) Would such an action not be stupid, blind and unguided? Such a question also presupposes that any action is intelligent only if it is self-motivated. And this is not necessarily true.

(iv) Of course, if one does not think of the consequences temporarily, it is true that one becomes, relatively speaking, more single-minded and to that degree more efficient. But efficiency and intelligence in action result also from gauging one's actions and adopting them constantly to the ends, and this one cannot do without keeping the consequences in mind at times.

(v) A deeper objection now emerges from the fact that human thought, being the generator of one's actions, by its very nature is self-centered, and as such it cannot produce anything truly selfless, because the very fact that there is a thought about something presupposes a distinction (or division) in consciousness between the self and the other, and this is enough, sooner or later, consciously or subconsciously, to produce the self-centeredness that can conflict with any true selflessness.

First, it is to be understood here that selflessness is not always synonymous with self-sacrifice. Second, the question of how selfless action is possible, may be an ambiguous question: it may mean how it can occur. On the other hand, it may also mean, how one can achieve such an action through the means available to oneself, such as thought. If the first is the meaning of the question, the answer is simple: look at some examples of truly selfless action. (We have answered this to some degree above.) On the other hand, the second form of the question is a serious question, because if human thought is necessarily self-centered, and if that is the only way one acts, then either selfless action is not possible at all, or when it does occur, it happens either without the means of thought or in spite of it.

Taking the latter alternative, perhaps selfless action does occur without any means, automatically or spontaneously as it were, when one realizes the futility of thought, or the impossibility of one's doing anything selflessly by means of it. This now would amount to reverting to the path of knowledge where one is trying to realize that all of one's consciousness is confused with prakriti and its `self-generating processes, and trying to distinguish oneself from them. The result, as far as ordinary consciousness is concerned, may be selfless action, if the situation calls for it, or total passivity.

This may be the only possible way of understanding selfless action. If, then, there is an action on the part of the person, it is as it were forced out of him by some automatic means, by the situation itself, and he personally has nothing to do it. He cannot even say that he did it. We may call this automatic or spontaneous action. The suggestion in the Gita, however, is that something else, like a universal or divine will or energy takes over and meets the demands of the situation for whatever universal purposes it may have.

Duty : It is defined in the Gita in terms of castes, stage in life, and what is appropriate to the given situation.

Castes : There are four castes in the Gita. It is interesting to note that the idea of the castes is related to the notion of gunas, each caste being dominated by a particular guna. For example, the Brahmin caste, i.e., the priestly caste, the members of which have the function of being priests, teachers or counsellors to the kings, is dominated by sattva guna; the Kshatriyas, i.e. the princely caste, the members of which have the duty of protecting the society by fighting, by the rajas guna, and the Vaishyas, i.e. the merchant or agriculturist class, the members of which have the function of providing for the society through trade, commerce and agriculture, by the tamas guna. However, there is no fourth guna which can

be matched with the fourth caste, viz. the Shudra caste whose function is to serve the other three castes as menials. This suggests that originally there were probably only three castes, all called the dwijas (see above Ch.4), or the 'twice-born,' and that by the time of the Gita a fourth caste was added to the list to accommodate all the slaves the Aryans enlisted during their occupations in India. It could also be that the Gita borrowed the guna doctrine from elsewhere and adopted it to suit the prevalent caste system as best as it could.

Notice that the Gita does not automatically call the functions of the castes duties, although they are the promptings of prakriti in accordance to each caste's gunas. These functions only partially determine one's duty, the rest being determined by one's station and the demands of the situation. You must be in a proper position in society to do what is appropriate to your caste. For example, although it is my function as a warrior to fight, I can't just fight unless I am also an enlisted warrior. Further, there must in fact be a situation of war where it is appropriate and right to fight the enemy who is clearly in the wrong.

The Gita mentions stages in life also as partially determining one's duty. This idea, like the idea of dwija (twice-born), also seems to apply only to males. There are four stages in life called ashramas (not to be confused with the other meaning of the term, namely, a retreat). Each stage has its own function or set of functions to perform in society.

Brahmacharya is the stage of the bachelor in which a young boy is initiated, is admitted as pupil under a guru, studies with him, and serves him. Either his parents pay for his education, or if he is too poor, earns his food by begging alms in others' houses in the village where he is studying and serves his teacher by tending his cattle or doing other chores. His duty is to serve his teacher and study well.

Garhasthya is the stage of the householder. In this state a person marries, begets children, earns an honorable living, performs all the obligatory religious rituals, entertains guests, serves his parents, satisfies his sensual desires and thus begins to pay off his debts to his parents, teachers, society, forefathers and gods.

Vanaprasthya is the stage of a recluse. In this stage one begins to withdraw from the active life of earning a living and performing rituals, and engages in rituals only symbolically. At this stage he starts simplifying his life, and retreats from the busy town or village life into hermitages and forest retreats. He is beginning to become other-worldly minded and spends considerable time meditating and seeking liberation.

Sannyasa is the stage of a renunciate or monk. In this stage one renounces all worldly life consisting of family, property, caste, and rituals. He even renounces his previous name. He does this by undergoing a symbolic funeral rite. He then acquires a new name, and starts wearing an ochre robe and carrying a staff. He spends his time mostly travelling,

counseling, and imparting spiritual instruction. He is solely dedicated to the spiritual life of attaining liberation.

As we said above, the promptings of prakriti are not necessarily one's duty. However, the Gita says that one cannot renounce action itself, only the results (for oneself) of action, for the Gita realizes that as long as one is subject to the laws of prakriti and karma one must act. Even if one withdraws into wilderness, one does not stop acting, because one's thought is busy running after things, and that still is action. Moreover, thought, being self-centered, is binding action. So, the Gita emphasizes performing your own duty selflessly, instead of not acting at all. Thus it talks about, "Inaction in action, and action in inaction." It also says that it is better to do your own duty poorly rather than doing someone else's duty efficiently, for it realizes that we won't be successful anyway, and it also frowns the mixing up of castes, because then you are going against the laws of prakriti.

c) Bhakti : Bhakti is to surrender oneself to God. It is to dedicate whatever one does as well as its fruits to God, to treat oneself as an agent of God's will, and not even feel that one is the agent of one's actions, let alone take responsibility for the consequences of one's actions. Of course, it is hard, in this path, to distinguish between God's will and one's own selfishly motivated will. Again, here too, like in selfless action, one must relinquish all concern for oneself and one's personal goals, and let God take care of them. One may end up carrying only those volitions which seem to be compelling, assuming they are introduced in one's mind by God.

To this extent one can see that no matter what path one chooses for one's liberation one is really letting his self-centeredness go, and that seems to be what is common among the three paths: in jnana one learns to relinquish all the things other than one's true self, including one's body; in karma, one performs selfless action; and in bhakti, one does God's will without concern even for one's own welfare. The mode of each path may be different, but all the paths have something essential in common.

How does selfless action or selflessness lead to liberation? The connection between the two must lie in the fact that while we are performing any action without concern for the results of it for ourselves, our attention is fully on the action itself. While we concentrate on the action itself, our involvement with ourselves is, temporarily at least, in abeyance. And our past self which is conditioned by our previous actions shows itself in the background of our consciousness as an object which we become passively aware of. In such an awareness the self which we were before now becomes a mere object, without at the same time our being involved in it. It is such a process of awareness which liberates us from our past self, and we are free from it until we again become involved in ourselves.

For, in desire and aversion, the object of desire or aversion is something with which we positively or negatively identify ourselves, and the self which lacks or is threatened by the

object of desire or aversion is only a self in relation to such an object. The self here is, in other words, both the subject and the object. It is this dualistic self which becomes a pure object in the passive awareness which occurs in the background of our consciousness when we attend to anything with full attention without at the same time being involved in it. If desire or aversion condition and bring forth our consciousness of ourselves, it is in turn our consciousness of this process of desire or aversion without interfering with it that disengages us from it.

The consequence of such liberation is that the energies in us which had been divided before through the process of desire or aversion now become united with themselves. As a result at least temporarily there is an explosion, a joy, a being with things, and an absence of any feeling of division between our self and what is not our self. This is essentially the nature of the Brahman experience, or bliss which the Upanishads or the Gita talk about. (The Gita talks at length about the realized man [sthita prajna, one who is established in wisdom], and his characteristics.)

If being fascinated and absorbed in things and losing ourselves by expending our energies in them is how we become conditioned, the process of deconditioning consists of being de-identified with things in a certain type of self-consciousness in which the whole conditioned self (i.e., both the subject and the object sides of it) becomes an object. This is not to control our desires (as the Gita sometimes seems to believe), nor is it to drop or relinquish particular desires. It is to disengage ourselves from the total process of desiring or being averse to things. And this may involve letting particular desires, any of them which we believe will 'fulfill' us, go. Hence the emphasis in the Upanishads and Gita on detachment and renunciation.

Some such process of de-conditioning must be what is common to the different paths of liberation mentioned in the Bhagavad Gita, namely, the yoga of knowledge, the yoga of devotion or self-surrender and the yoga of action, as well to various techniques of meditation, if they are to be successful at all in the fundamental transformation of man. And transformation is the real aim of Eastern Philosophy. The object of attention may be different in each case, (God, action, an innocuous object or the Self), and the particular mode of dealing with the object may also be different (placing trust on God, attending to one's duty, concentrating on an innocuous object or on an intellectual riddle, or questioning one's thought with an attempt to find out whether it is one's true self, and so on). But what happens to our consciousness in all these cases is probably the same.

Freedom of Action : An interesting question arises in this connection: How is it possible for man to ever get out of his empirical existence, if his whole existence is determined by the results of his previous actions, and by the forces of material nature in himself. It looks as if his empirical existence must contain seeds of self-transcendence as well as of bondage. The Bhagavad Gita does not answer such a question, but we can conjecture

such an answer from the point of view of Eastern Philosophy in general, taking our clues especially from Buddhism and J. Krishnamurti.

It is the essence of man's empirical existence to be involved in duality and conflict. It is this painful situation which prompts him to seek ways of solution for particular problems and conflicts. The majority of men do this first by seeking external solutions. When they fail to solve their problems, particularly the deeper, perennial problems of conflict and frustration, in this fashion, they try to find the source of suffering through an understanding of the totality of our existence. It is such an understanding which liberates man from his empirical existence. Exactly how does this happen?

Whenever we are in conflict, or whenever we suffer, we automatically become conscious of ourselves. This self-consciousness is also at the same time a consciousness which resists the suffering and attempts to escape from it. As a result of failure in such attempts to escape we at times become conscious of the whole process of desire and conflict. And it is this sort of self-consciousness which does not resist suffering, but which attempts to understand the sources of it that is liberating.

We also, however, become conscious of ourselves whenever we think about something we have achieved, or a pleasant thing happening to us. Then our consciousness is one of wanting to continue that pleasure or cherish that achievement. In such cases there is no resistance to the pleasure nor an attempt to escape from it. Rather we become more attached to the object of our enjoyment or to that kind of object of enjoyment, thereby becoming more conditioned to it. Spiritual realization consists of not only developing a self-consciousness which understands the sources of suffering, but also understanding the process of conditioning even where the process seems to be pleasant to us, by developing a self-consciousness of it and a detachment from the objects of conditioning.

Desire and aversion are dualistic processes which not only involve consciousness of an object as desirable or undesirable but also a consciousness of ourselves (self-consciousness) as lacking (or being threatened by) the object of desire (or fear). Animals run after things. But they lack the self-consciousness which is inherent to the very structure of human desire. This is a result of man's peculiar ability for symbolic representation of things in his mind even when they are not actually present. But this ability (of thought) is itself not adequate to explain self-consciousness. Somehow we must be involved in the object that is represented such that to become conscious of the object means also to become conscious of ourselves. How does this happen? To answer this we must go into the very source of conditioning.

There is no duality or self-consciousness when we experience things as pleasant or unpleasant the first time, when thought is not involved in the experience through categorization and recognition. (Such thought is involved in ordinary perception; but when we, like a child, are completely absorbed in things, it is not present.) But when we start thinking about our experience, then not only do we represent the object of our experience

in our mind either through a symbol or image, but the symbol or image (not at the moment distinguished in our minds from the actual object itself) means to us the object we enjoyed (or feared) a moment ago, an object whose enjoyment no longer exists for us at the present moment, but can be obtained again in future if we strove for it. So, it is not just thought, but our being absorbed in the object (or being identified with it) in the first place, which is also responsible for the consciousness of ourselves when we think of our past experience of enjoyment or non-enjoyment and represent the object of it in our minds through an image or symbol. Such thought, in other words, has automatically become also a process of desire or aversion.

Once thus conditioned to the object of desire or aversion, we naturally see a disparity between our present state as lacking the object (or as being threatened by it) and a future state (which we expect, hope, desire or fear will happen) in which we achieve the object of our desire (or annihilate the object of our fear). Then the question arises, why does thought ever arise in the first place?

Thinking about an experience is our way of making sure that we have that experience (or not have it, if it is a painful one), and storing it away in our memory (or wiping it out of our memory). Unfortunately, this very process also brings about desire or aversion, because while making sure of the experience, we are also aware of the fact that we no longer have the enjoyment we had yesterday, and that we should try to repeat it by striving for it.

The above account should explain not only how thought and identification with an object which we experience are responsible for self-consciousness which when extended to its limits enables us to transcend ourselves; it should also explain the origins of our conditioning and hence the sources of karma in our experience understood in this psychological sense.

God : Although in many ways the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita resemble those of the Upanishads, there are significant differences: Most important, the idea of Brahman is transformed here into the idea of God. Sri Krishna who appears as one of the two main characters of the dialogue, according to the myths of the Mahabharata, is a human incarnation of one of the ten incarnations of Vishnu, the sustainer god in the trinity of gods in Hinduism. (See above, the Introduction to the Gita, for explanation of the trinity.) We can construe these three gods, Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, as three aspects of the same God, who even according to the Bhagavad Gita, appears in each aeon in a different incarnation in order "to protect the innocent and punish the wicked." In the Upanishads this same God may occur as an impersonal, abstract principle construed only in negative, abstract or paradoxical terms. But here, on the other hand, we have a personal God, perhaps because that's the only way the human mind can have a positive conception of Brahman, viz., as that from which the universe emerges and to which it returns. As Krishna this God converses with men, acts as an ambassador, gives them spiritual advice, even describes himself in

glorious terms. Yet God in his true form is not human, for even to perceive him in his true form Arjuna needed to be granted special yogic powers by Krishna.

Does the Gita advocate violence? Is the Bhagavad Gita inconsistent in asking Arjuna to fight, in view of the general understanding that violence which necessarily involves duality and conflict is not the proper means to liberation which consists in becoming free from duality and conflict? The answer to this question is complex:

First, violence is a continuum at the one end of which we have conflict and duality in thought when we contemplate violence (for example, we are angry at someone and have the evil intentions of destroying him, revenging upon him and so forth), and at the other end of which we have the end result, namely, the violent action itself such as waging a war and killing the opponent. The duty of a warrior like Arjuna is to protect and preserve dharma (what is right). If he cannot do this by ordinary peaceful means like negotiations and mediation, it is his duty to adopt extraordinary means, namely, fighting. We can construe the Gita as exhorting Arjuna to perform his duty without any concern for the effects of his action on him, that is, without a dualistic involvement in his mind with the "enemy". In other words, Arjuna should perform his duty, which appears here to be violent, in a non-violent way, thus breaking the continuum between thought and action. What is outwardly violent is inwardly non-violent and at least to that extent is not in conflict with the basic aim of liberation.

Second, in the view of Gita, this apparent external violence does not really destroy anything important: although the body dies the soul never does. Duryodhana's (Arjuna's cousin and enemy) own actions brought about their natural effects according to the law of karma, and if Arjuna did not bring about these effects (such as war and killing) someone else would have brought them about, that is, if we take the law of karma seriously.

Third, in the evolutionary scheme of the universe implicit in the Gita, if we understand the Gita's idea of what is good and what is evil in a metaphysical sense, then the good is whatever is conducive to the long-run evolutionary goal of everyone being reunited with the Godhead, and evil is whatever prevents such a reunion. Duryodhana, in trying to usurp Arjuna's kingdom and driving a whole population into slavery, is obviously preventing their striving for such a reunion. It would therefore be right to put a stop to such wrongdoing. Punishing Duryodhana by means of the war and killing him are a way of not only preventing this wrongdoing, but also a way of teaching him about his wrongful behavior or life he has been leading and thus pave the way to his liberation. So, in this sense also, the apparent violence is not really violence, because it is not even harming the person to whom the action is addressed.

It is not that one should not show the other cheek to the enemy. But one should not be limited to it. One may have to use other means to solve the problem on hand such that the results in the long are "good". There is no one fixed and right response to all situations

of wrongdoing. In this context, the Gita is definitely not pacifistic nor does it necessarily advocate violence in the sense of "harming" someone because he has "harmed" you. The apparent violence is only a means to set right what is wrong, and to teach, if necessary by punishing, the wrongdoer through even what might appear to be violence. In this process, however, Arjuna can generate conflict and violence within himself, through the self-centered concerns, for example, by having consideration for his kith and kin. But if he follows the advice of the Gita seriously, he wages the war not for personal gains or to save his feelings, but because it is the right thing to do. So, he does his duty dispassionately, that is, with no agitation, remorse, guilt or conflict in himself, and while and after doing his duty he is free from the action as well as its outcome.

Fourth, one might object to the above answers by saying that if the Self is the only thing that is ultimately real, and if it never dies or is born again really, and if fighting and the kingdom for which Arjuna and Duryodhana fight are not ultimately real, then why fight at all? (I am not sure the Gita would say they are not real.) The Gita's answer to this question, if it is a genuine one, might be that although these things may not be ultimately real, Arjuna and Duryodhana have not realized that fact, and the action Arjuna performs, particularly in a selfless way, is a means for such realization for both Arjuna and Duryodhana.

(No special reading analysis for the Gita, for there is a table of contents in the book itself.)

Questions : Compare the Upanishadic and Gita views as to the nature of Brahman and the relation between Brahman and the world. Discuss the concept of Nishkama Karma (disinterested or selfless action) and show how it is a mean between action and inaction. How is it possible, or is it, to undertake disinterested and motiveless action? How can you make sense of the Gita doctrine that the different means like knowledge, selfless action and devotion lead to the same goal? How is the concept of selfless action related to the concepts of the three gunas, karma, one's duty and liberation? If man's personality is determined by his past karma and his material nature, how is it possible for him to act freely and selflessly (particularly if all the sources of one's action are one's own material nature)?

Vocabulary : Dilemma; Trinity; In cognito; Discrimination; Self-consciousness; Atheistic; Manifestation; Inertia; Temperament; Ego-sense; Disinterested; Selfless; Identification; Righteousness; Motivation; Automatic; Hermitage; Symbol(ic); Ochre; Self-centered; Transformation; Conditioning; Deconditioning; Empirical; Transcendence; Self-Realization; Negotiation; Mediation; Dualistic; Represent; Godhead; Reunion; Evolutionary.

Glossary : Vyasa: Another name for Badarayana, the author of the Bhagavad Gita. Pandavas and Kauravas: The dynasties of the kings Pandu and Kuru, two brothers whose descendents fought a battle on the field of Kurukshetra, the context of the Bhagavad Gita. Krishna: A human incarnation of Vishnu, the central (sustainer) god of the Hindu Trinity of gods. Brahma: The creator god in the Trinity. Vishnu: The sustainer god. Shiva: The destroyer god who dissolves the universe at the end of each cycle of time. Duryodhana: The

Kaurava prince whom Arjuna battles in the Gita. Shakuni: A counselor of Duryodhana who tricks Dharmaraja (the eldest of the Pandava brothers) into losing a gambling game. Purusha: The principle of consciousness. (Lit. Person.) Prakriti: The principle of (primordial) material nature. These two are the ultimate principles of reality in the Samkhya Philosophy whose metaphysics is basic to the Gita. Sattva: One of the three Gunas (qualities) or constituents of Prakriti, the material nature; (mellow in quality). Rajas: The second Guna, the active constituent of Prakriti. Tamas: The quality (Guna) of inertia; the third constituent of - Prakriti. Guna: Quality or Constituent of Prakriti, the primordial material nature. Also a trait of personality. Yoga: In the Gita, a path to liberation. Jnana: Knowledge (or discrimination): a path to liberation. Karma: (Lit. Action). Also effects of action. Bhakti: Devotion--another path to liberation. Kshetra: "Field," i.e. Prakriti and its products. - Kshetrajna: "The Knower of the Field," i.e. Purusha. Brahmana: The priestly caste. - Kshatriya: The princely or soldier caste. Vaishya: The merchant or farmer caste. Shudra: The menial caste. Dwija: "Twice-born", name given to the first three castes. Brahmacharya: The stage of life of a bachelor or student. Garhasthya: The stage of life of a householder. Vanaprasthya: The stage of life of a recluse or hermit. Sannyasa: The stage of life of a renunciate or monk. Sthita Prajna: (Lit. One who is established in wisdom) An enlightened person.

CHAPTER 7

NYAYA-VAISESHIKA

We are entering the six orthodox systems or schools of Indian Philosophy, all apparently based on, but only in principle agree to, the authority of the Vedas. The first two schools, Nyaya and Vaisesika, we are deliberately ignoring in our class discussion because 1) they deal with the more technical subjects of logic and epistemology (e.g. Nyaya) which do not quite fit into a first course in Eastern Philosophy, and 2) although they do mention a notion of liberation and the means to it, they do not place as much emphasis on them as *in the systems we emphasize in the course. However, just in case you are interested in them, I am including them here. In the following we will briefly mention the essential logical and epistemological ideas of Nyaya, its arguments for the existence of God, and its theory of salvation, along with the rudiments of the metaphysics of Vaisesika.

In this chapter we shall consider the systems of Nyaya and Vaisesika together, for these systems share some common presuppositions and complement each other. They share some of the basic tenets of Indian Philosophy: its basic concern for liberation, and seeing philosophy as attempting to provide means of achieving that liberation, however the latter is construed.

The system of Nyaya has about two thousand years of literature and is still alive. Scholars not only study it but contribute to it to this day. The original source book of Nyaya is Nyaya Sutras of Gotama (not to be confused with Gautama the Buddha) written in the 3rd Century B. C. Our discussion of Nyaya will not restrict itself to this work, but will draw from later works of Nyaya as well, particularly Udayana's work called Kusumanjali, a 10th Century work. The source book of Vaisesika is Vaisesika Sutras of Kanada, which is of slightly later origin than Nyaya Sutra. Nyaya had its revival in the Navya-Nyaya system of Gangesa (c.1200 A.D.) in his work Tattvachintamani and in the writings of subsequent writers.

While both Nyaya and Vaisesika consider the central aim of philosophy to be liberation understood as freedom from pain, Nyaya specialized in elaborate discussions of the means of right knowledge, including the nature of reasoning, rules for reasoning and debate, and various fallacies, and Vaisesika specialized in metaphysics which described the nature of the universe and of the human being. These constituted the objects of knowledge. The understanding here of course is that right knowledge will lead to liberation.

Nyaya Theory of Knowledge : In Nyaya, there are four constituents of knowledge: 1) the knower (pramatr); 2) the object of knowledge (prameya); 3) the means of knowledge (pramana); and 4) the resultant cognition (pramiti). Nyaya theory of knowledge

concentrates on pramana or means of knowledge, for it is that which determines whether our knowledge is veridical or not.

Nyaya recognizes four means of knowledge: perception, inference, verbal testimony, and comparison. It attempts to establish them as different and independent means of knowledge.

Perception (Pratyaksha) : Perception is defined as that knowledge which does not presuppose other knowledge. Perception results from the contact of the senses with the object. There are two kinds of perception: indeterminate perception and determinate perception. In determinate perception we have the knowledge that the object is such and such, for example, that it has certain qualities and that it belongs to a certain category. It implies a synthesis of the object, its quality and their relationship of inherence. In the determinate perception of a red rose, for instance, we synthesize into a complex the rose, the redness, and the relation of inherence of red in the rose. When this complex corresponds to the actual complex in the world we have a true perception.

In indeterminate perception Nyaya includes not only sense perception but any kind of immediate perception. Here we have an immediate awareness of the object without being aware of what it is. When we look at a tree we have an awareness of something, but we do not know that it is a tree or that it is green etc.

Error arises in perception not because what we think we see does not exist, for all perception is of something real and existent, but because we synthesize the elements given in immediate perception in a mistaken way. We for example misconstrue something tall as a tree. All the elements in erroneous perception are in fact given, either in the present or in our past. For example, the tallness, the darkness, the fog, greenness, and "being in" (inherence) are given either in the present case or in our past. We mistakenly put them together in the present object. This theory of error is called anyathakhyati (anyatha = elsewhere; khyati=knowledge).

Our perception is veridical when it corresponds to the object and its nature in fact. But we have no way of going out of our perception, except in another perception, to check this correspondence with fact. Therefore, the truth or falsehood of our perception, according to Nyaya, is tested in action. If the perception results in successful action which we expect out of it, then it is true; if it does not it is an error. For example, if our belief that what we see in the cup in front us is water is true, it means that if we act on that belief our thirst will be quenched.

There is external perception which is facilitated by means of the various sense organs, but there is also internal perception by means of manas (or mind) alone as for example when we are aware of our pleasure or pain or hunger. Anuvyavasaya or self-consciousness can also give us knowledge of a previous determinate knowledge.

An impression left by presentative cognition (anubhava) can be recalled in memory (smṛti) in representative cognition.

Besides ordinary sensory perception, Nyaya recognizes extraordinary sensory perception as well. There are three kinds of this: i) When we perceive not only things but the nature of things. We can perceive the person in front of us not only as John but as a man. This perception of the humanness of John is extraordinary because while John's physical person is given in sense perception his humanness is not perceived by the senses. ii) When we see the object which is proper to one sense organ as an object of another sense organ as for example, when we 'see' a flower looking as 'soft'. iii) Yogic perception in which a yogi perceives things of the past or of the future, or distant or hidden or infinitely small (as atoms).

In perception the self comes into contact with the manas, the manas with the senses and the senses with the object. When appropriate conditions in the external world exist, such as sufficient light, perception takes place.

Inference (Anumana): The term literally means "that which follows". Thus inference is knowledge which follows other knowledge. Generally it is knowledge which (at least ultimately) follows perception. In the Nyaya syllogism (pattern of inference) there are five components: 1) the proposition which is to be established by inference, as for example, "There is fire on the mountain." 2) The reason: in this case, "Because there is smoke." 3) Example: "Whatever has smoke has fire, for example, in the kitchen." 4) Application: "This mountain has smoke such as is invariably accompanied by smoke." 5) Conclusion: "There is fire on the mountain." This is a combination of what would be considered as inductive and deductive reasoning in Western logic. Items 3, 4, and 5 together would constitute a piece of deductive reasoning. The third proposition contains an inductive piece of reasoning when we conclude that whatever has smoke has fire on the basis of specific instances like the association of smoke and fire in the kitchen. Here we establish a universal association or connection between smoke and fire, and this connection, called vyapti, is the basis for the inference that there is fire on the mountain.

Certain rules must be observed to ensure the validity of the above sort of inference: (In the above example, the term "mountain" is called the paksha (this would be called the minor term in Western logic); the term "fire" is called the sadhya (this would be called the major term in Western logic); and the reason ("There is smoke") is called the hetu ("Smoke" would be called the middle term in Western logic). 1) The reason (smoke) must be present in the paksha (mountain) as well as in all things which have fire. 2) It must not be present in the things which do not have fire. 3) The conclusion must not be contradicted by perception. And 4) The hetu or the reason should not lead to the opposite conclusion than the one in fact arrived at.

Verbal Testimony (Shabda) : Verbal Testimony is testimony of a trustworthy person. A trustworthy person is one who knows the truth and can communicate it accurately. We know a person is trustworthy by the fact that his statements in general are true and that he is an unselfish person. In order for verbal testimony to count as a means of knowledge, it is not enough that one hears the testimony from a trustworthy person, but one must also understand its content. For example, we know that God exists because the Vedas declared so. Vedas are the words of God, an all-knowing person. But how do we know that God exists, let alone that he is omniscient? Unless we do know that, we have a circular argument when we conclude that what the Vedas say is true. The Nyaya, however, does not offer such a circular argument. Instead, it provides independent proof for the existence of God. (See below.)

Comparison (Upamana) : If we come to know a new object on the basis of our being told that it is similar to another object we are already familiar with, then our knowledge of the new object is based on Comparison. The similarity should be essential, not superficial or accidental. For example, if I am informed of the similarity in some essential respects between a cow and a deer and I already know what a cow is, then if I happen to meet a deer in a forest and know it as a deer, I know it by means of comparison.

Fallacies : Nyaya classifies various fallacies which one must avoid when one reasons or debates. These fallacies include many recognized as fallacies in Western logic. For example, self-contradiction, insufficient evidence, irrelevant conclusion, circular reasoning, equivocation, hedging, and shifting the meaning of words.

The Objects of Knowledge : The objects of knowledge, according to Nyaya are the soul or the self, body, senses and their objects, intellect, mind, action, mental defects, rebirth, results of action, pleasure and pain, and release. If we, however, consider the objects of knowledge as independent of the knowing subject, we get the various categories of the Vaiseshika system. These categories are: substance (the five elements, space and time, the self and manas (or the mind)), quality, action, universal, particular, inherence, and non-existence. (See below for explanation of these terms.)

The Atomistic Philosophy of Vaiseshika : The four elements, earth, air, fire and water exist in two forms: in the form of their ultimate material causes which are atoms (called paramanus), and which can only be known through inference or extraordinary perception; and in the form of composite object which can be perceived by the crude senses. In the former form they are partless and eternal. In the latter form they are subject to generation and destruction. Notice here, unlike the Western atomic theory which does not recognize qualitative differences among atoms, the Vaiseshika theory believes that atoms differ in terms of their qualities, and possess qualities such as taste and smell. The atoms combine into molecules of two, which are also imperceptible to the naked senses. Three such molecules combine to form a triad, which can be perceived, for example, as fine particles of dust in a

ray of the sun when it enters a dark room. Ether, the fifth element exists only in the form of an indivisible and infinite element.

We know atoms exist because all the material objects we perceive are divisible into parts. These parts can further be divided into others parts. But this division cannot go on infinitely. Therefore, the ultimate constituents of material objects must be simple atoms.

Space and time are not atoms nor are they constituted out of atoms. They however also exist as indivisible and infinite. While atoms themselves are not in space and time, all compounded objects are.

The Self: There are many selves, each being omnipresent and eternal. We perceive the self in our bodies only because it is there that it is characterized by qualities such as knowledge, thought, volition, feeling, desire, and aversion without which we have no way of knowing its existence, and these qualities are confined to the body. The self is known only as that which possesses these qualities. Still, Vaiseshika considers this to be direct knowledge gained with the help of manas. Knowledge and even consciousness are only accidental qualities of the self, for the self can exist without them, as for example in sleep, or in the state of liberation.

The mind is known to exist, because we know that it is through it that we are aware of our feelings and volitions. It is also the instrument which yields us knowledge of the external world through our senses. We know, for instance, that without its cooperation the senses by themselves cannot give us knowledge. For example, by merely looking at something we do not always see what there is. We must attend to that object with our mind through our eyes. It is through the manas that the self is related both to the external world and to the body. Association with it is the source of samsara or bondage, for it is through such association we have a sense of duality, the possibility of being attached to objects, and hence suffering.

Quality (Guna) : These depend on substances for their existence (they inhere in substances), yet they are independent realities for they can be known independently. There are 24 of these, and some of them are physical and the others mental. Some qualities are specific to some substances, as for example, smell is the characteristic quality of the earth. Some qualities, for example, magnitude, are common to more than one substance.

Action (Karma) is various kinds of motion such as upward, downward, contraction, expansion, locomotion and stability. Just like Gunas, their relationship to substances is one of inherence.

Universal (Samanya) : It is the essence or universal common to more than one thing of the same kind. The universal is what enables us to regard, for example, two cows as the

same. The universal "mammal" for example includes cows and horses. But, being itself simple, it does not include lower order universals of "cowness" etc. The highest universal is satta or existence. The universals inhere in the corresponding particular objects.

Particular (Visesha) : This is what distinguishes two individuals of the same kind. This is an independent category of objects because without it there would be no reason why two things of the same kind would be two different things.

Inherence (Samavaya) : Relations are generally included in the category of gunas except for this relation. The justification for this as a separate category lies in the fact that different things such as a substance and a quality appear as one whole. There are five types of inherence: 1) between substance and quality; 2) between substance and action; 3) between particular and universal; 4) between ultimate things (such as atoms) and particulars; and 5) between whole and parts (or material cause and its effects).

Non-existence (Abhava) : It is a separate category because we perceive it. We for example not only perceive this computer in my office but also the absence of the flower pot which I am looking for and do not find. Therefore, the absence must be a reality.

The Nyaya-Vaisesika view of causation : This view is called asatkaryavada (the non-existence of the effect in the cause). When, for example, a piece of cloth is woven, the threads are combined in it by the relation of conjunction. But then the universal "cloth" inheres in the threads. The effect, i.e., the cloth, Nyaya considers as something over and above the cause, and comes into existence after the threads. It does not mean, however, that the effect can exist apart from the cause, as we know that the cloth cannot exist outside of the threads. This view is opposed to the Samkhya view of causation (Satkaryavada) which says that the effect already preexists implicitly in the cause before it is produced. (See the chapters on Samkhya and Vedanta for further discussion of causation.)

Each individual object is compounded and produced ultimately by atoms of one of the elements. For example, the human body is a product of the earth atoms. While the atoms are eternal, the composite world of products is subject to generation and destruction.

God : God is recognized by later philosophers in the system. He is considered as another self; only he is the Supreme Self. He too is omnipresent and eternal. He is omniscient (unlike other selves). He has desire and will, but not pleasure, pain, attachment or aversion. He creates the universe in the sense of disposing the atoms to combine into individual objects. The Karma of the souls, (more specifically, the "unseen," i.e., supernatural [adrshta] merit and demerit of their actions), is what guides this process of creation. Once created, the world is maintained for a long time (called kalpa), is then dissolved, and once again another creation cycle starts. This process goes on endlessly.

God's existence is proved in Nyaya by means of arguments. Udayana, a famous Nyaya philosopher, furnishes, among others, the following reasons: 1) The world is an effect, and as such needs an efficient cause for its production. He must be equal to the task of creating the world. So, there must exist an omnipotent being as the efficient cause of the world. 2) There is order in the physical universe, and this order presupposes someone who provides the order or who legislates the universe. Therefore, there must exist an intelligent being who provides such an order in the universe. 3) Morality presupposes that a person's virtuous actions be rewarded and immoral actions be punished. The rewards and punishments or, as Nyaya puts it, the merits and demerits of actions presuppose a dispenser of moral justice. This dispenser must be God.

Notice here that while the second and the third arguments above are quite similar to the Teleological and Moral arguments in Western philosophy, the first one is somewhat akin to the Cosmological argument. Also note that while God in this system is an efficient cause of the universe He is not the material cause. Atoms function as the material cause of the universe. Since in this system souls or selves are independent substances, it follows that they too must be counted as part of the "given" furniture of the universe before God enters into the picture.

Release : The self-centered activity of man is motivated by love and hatred of objects. This activity in turn gives rise to likes and dislikes, and pleasures and pains. Release in this system is called *apavarga* which means escape from pain. Since pleasure is only momentary, it is not worthwhile spending one's life time trying to secure it. Release is a condition similar to sleep where there is not only the absence of pleasure and pain, but also of knowledge and consciousness which are just as much accidental qualities of the self as pleasure and pain.

It is wrong knowledge (called *moha*) which is the source of our actions being prompted by desire for pleasure (*raga*) and aversion for pain (*dvesha*). It makes us think erroneously that *manas*, body etc., belong to the self, and also that accidental features such as pleasure and pain, or knowledge are essential qualities of the self. By proper study of philosophy, reflection and gaining conviction upon the truths we learn by such a study, and meditation upon the true nature of the self one can obtain Release after one leaves his physical body at the time of death.

Questions : Discuss the four valid means of knowledge of Nyaya. Explain the basic categories of the Vaiseshika system. How do the valid means of knowledge and the metaphysical categories figure in the Nyaya-Vaiseshika theory of liberation?

Vocabulary : Presupposition; Perception; Inference, Verbal Testimony; Comparison; Determinate Perception; Indeterminate Perception; Veridical; Correspondence; Inductive; Deductive; Major term; Minor term; Middle term; Fallacy; Self-contradiction; Irrelevant conclusion; Circular reasoning; Hedging; Molecule; Triad; Volition; Universal; Essence;

Inherence; Material cause; Efficient Cause; Generation; Destruction; Omnipresent; Omnipotent; Omniscient; Dispenser; Teleological; Cosmological.

Glossary : Gotama: The author of Nyaya Sutra, the source book of Nyaya. Udayana: The author of Kusumanjali, a Nyaya classic. Gangesa: The author of Tattvachintamani, a Navya (Neo-) Nyaya classic. Pramatr: The knower. Pramana: Means of knowledge; Pramiti: Knowledge; Prameya: The object of knowledge. Anyatha Khyati (Lit. "Knowledge elsewhere"): The Nyaya theory of error in knowledge which says that error results from erroneously synthesizing elements of knowledge given either in the present or elsewhere. Manas: The organ of attention, feeling and remembering. In general translated as mind. Anuvyavasaya: Self-consciousness. Anubhava (Lit. "Experience"): Presentational cognition. Smrti: Memory. Anumana: Inference. Vyapti: Invariable connection. Paksha: Minor term. Sadhya: Major term. Hetu (Lit. "Reason"): Middle term. Upamana: Comparison. Shabda: Verbal testimony. Paramanu: Atom. Samsara: Bondage. Guna: Quality. Karma: Action (or motion). Samanya: Universal. Vissha: Particular. Samavaya: Inherence. Satkaryavada: The Samkhya theory of causation which holds that the effect preexists implicitly in the cause before it is produced actually. Asatkaryavada: The Nyaya theory of causation which says that the effect is something new and over and above the cause. Kalpa: Aeon, age. Apavarga: Escape from pain--the Nyaya concept of Release. Moha: Wrong knowledge. Raga: Attachment or desire for pleasure. Dvesha: Aversion for pain.

CHAPTER 8

SAMKHYA AND YOGA

Samkhya is an ancient system of Philosophy, perhaps as ancient as some of the Vedas themselves. The word 'Samkhya' is derived from the Sanskrit word 'samkhya,' meaning number, probably referring to the number of basic principles (26) in this system. The source book, Samkhya Pravachana Sutra, attributed to Kapila, is probably not written by him, but written sometime in the 14th century A. D. The earliest known work (3rd century A. D.) is by Isvara Krishna called Samkhya Karika. In Samkhya, as in the other systems of Indian Philosophy, we find not only a system of concepts and ideas carefully defined and formulated, but also a defense of the basic ideas, particularly in view of the objections raised by the opponents.

The Samkhya is an atheistic and dualistic system of Philosophy some of whose features we had occasion to study in the context of the Bhagavad Gita. The system is of interest to us for two reasons: one, because its conception of bondage and liberation is akin to the dominant conceptions in Eastern Philosophy, and two, because its metaphysics and psychology are the basis for Yoga. Also, its psychology and metaphysics are borrowed with modifications by other schools such as Vedanta and Tantra.

We have already discussed the notions of Purusha and Prakriti in the context of the Bhagavad Gita. Let us notice some of the differences between the Gita and the Samkhya Philosophy regarding Purusha and Prakriti. First, since there is no God in Samkhya, it is basically a dualistic system which maintains that fundamentally there are two principles to explain the universe, Purusha and Prakriti. Besides, unlike the Gita, which believes that all the Purushas are a manifestation of God, the Samkhya holds that there are infinitely many purushas, as many as there are people (and perhaps also as many as there are living beings in the universe, since it admits rebirth and cross-species transmigration along with other schools), each being independent of the others.

Second, the whole universe, with the purushas and prakriti in it, does not, at the time of dissolution, return to God, as it does in the Gita. Instead, at the time of liberation the products or evolutes of Prakriti recede into Prakriti, at least so far as the individual is concerned. This liberation is only an apparent liberation, since bondage in this school is not real: there can never really be a confusion between the two opposite principles of Purusha and Prakriti whose natures are so different. This, however, may be inconsistent with the Samkhya assertion that indeed everything we perceive in the objective world is real, and is a product of Prakriti.

Samkhya disposes with the notion of God on the grounds (1) that whatever we perceive in the objective world is real, and (2) that the whole of the objective world can be explained on the basis of principles which are within nature, without invoking an extraneous principle like God. The theoretical basis for this is the Samkhya view of causation which says that the effect in a cause-effect relation is only a transformation of the cause, and not anything new, and that any efficient cause is only needed to trigger the transformation of the cause into the effect, but not as a creator God who creates a universe out of nothing. (By the way, the view that God creates the universe out of nothing is generally foreign to Indian Philosophy, and to Eastern Philosophy in general.)

How does Samkhya support its view of causation? The view is called *satkaryavada* (*sat* = being, *karya* = effect, *vada* = ism); it holds that the effect is already contained (implicitly) in the cause. This view is directly opposed to another called *asatkaryavada* (meaning the view that the effect does not already exist in the cause, that it is something over and above the cause) held by Nyaya and some other philosophies. According to the Samkhya view, the transformation of the cause into the effect may be mediated by an efficient cause, but the efficient cause is itself generally part of another material cause. In the case of the Samkhya notion of Prakriti, the mere presence of Purusha is enough to trigger the process of the transformation of the material cause, Purusha by itself being passive, playing no active role in the process.

The effect cannot be something entirely different from the cause; because if it were, then it would amount to saying that something i.e., the present effect, came out of nothing, for the effect did not exist before it was produced, and as far it is concerned there was nothing before. But this is not possible. Second, if the effect were different from the cause, then there would be nothing common between the two, no common essence, such that we can say that it was the reason for the effect. In other words, there would be nothing to explain the necessary connection between the cause and the effect, such that we can say whenever we have this (sort of) cause, we will have this (sort of) effect. Third, if there is no such necessary connection, then any effect could come out of any cause. That is, sand could be produced out of milk and animals out of rocks. This is clearly absurd, for we know from experience that this cannot be done. Fourth, the effect and the cause have the same essence but different forms. For example, if curd is produced from milk, their forms may be different, but we know they both share the same essence of lactose, protein, water etc.

If the essence were not the same, then there is no reason why curds should come out of milk and not out of glass or something else. To explain how it still makes sense to talk of change and causation if both cause and effect have the same essence, the Samkhya says that the effect already exists, but potentially, in the cause. But this does not mean that causation is useless, for what is potentially there in the cause is made manifest in the process of causation. Another way of expressing this idea is to say that although both cause and effect have the same essence or substance, their forms are different. Whether this view can be

justified or not remains to be seen. (See below Ch. 8 and Ch. 10 for Shankara's and Nagarjuna's critique of this view of causation.)

The significance of this view of causation for Samkhya is to be able to maintain that whatever we perceive in the objective world is already implicitly contained in its cause, namely, prakriti. And the world we perceive is only the result of what is already implicitly contained in it being made explicit by the process of the transformation of prakriti. That means that the world requires no external cause such as God in order to exist.

The Samkhya also has an argument to prove the existence of Prakriti: All events are caused by something else outside of themselves, for an event cannot cause itself. It cannot cause itself, for in order to do so it must exist prior to itself which is impossible. If the world we perceive requires a cause (because it is an effect), then there must be a first cause, i.e., a cause which does not itself require another cause for its existence. It cannot be that the cause is itself caused by another cause, and the second cause by a third cause and so on ad infinitum into the past. This would land us in an infinite regress (meaning going backward infinitely). The problem with such a regress is, as Aristotle (and later his commentator Aquinas in the middle ages) pointed out, then there would be no first cause (i.e. the cause which is itself not caused but causes the other subsequent causes). If no such cause exists, then no subsequent causes can exist either, for they can only exist if they are caused ultimately by the first cause. If no subsequent (or intermediate) causes exist, then the final effect, i.e., the world we perceive, cannot exist either. But this is absurd, because we know the world exists; we perceive it. Therefore, there must be such a thing as the first cause, and in this case we call it prakriti. Prakriti is the material cause of the universe and it contains in it potentially all the variety of forms of things in the universe.

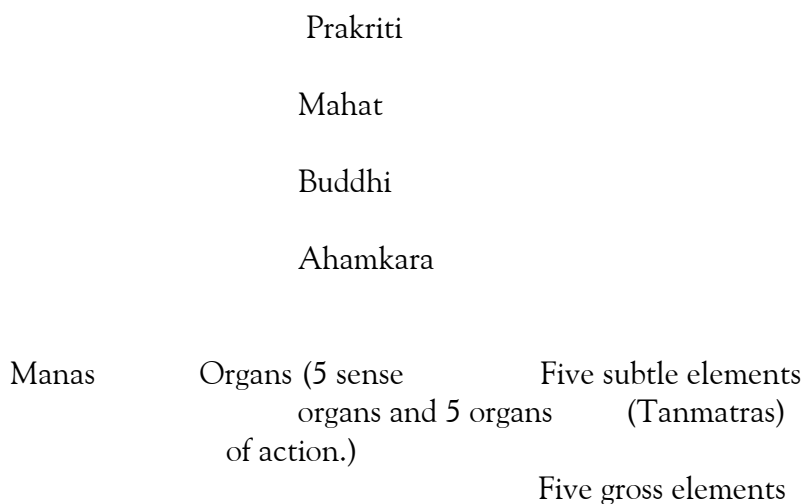
Then the Samkhya has some arguments to prove the existence of Purusha: 1) All that exists in the objective world is of the nature of a composite. Anything that is composite presupposes something else for whose use it exists. That for whose use this composite exists cannot itself be composite, for if it were, then it would require another entity for whose sake it exists; but then that third entity cannot itself be composite, for then it would require a fourth entity for whose use it exists, and so on ad infinitum. This would land us in an infinite regress. To avoid it we must postulate a non-composite entity for whose use Prakriti exists and that we call Purusha.

2) The objects which are the evolutes of Prakriti are constituted by the three qualities (or gunas) which account for the experiences of pleasure, pain and indifference. All such objects are controlled by something else which is not constituted by the three qualities (as for example, a chariot is controlled by a charioteer). Similarly, Mahat, the great principle, and other products of Prakriti require a controller, and that is the Purusha, who is independent of Prakriti and devoid of the qualities.

3) The objects of experience have the nature of being pleasurable or painful. But these qualities do not make sense unless there is someone who experiences these objects as having those qualities. Therefore, there must be someone who is not himself those qualities, but for whom they are pleasurable or painful.

4) There is a tendency in the whole universe among intelligent beings toward "isolation" (kaivalya) or liberation. This tendency presupposes there is a principle independent of the products of Prakriti, who is the pure spirit.

Evolution of Prakriti : The three gunas are constituents of Prakriti and they were in a state of equilibrium before the evolution of Prakriti began. Prakriti itself was in a state of quiescence. But once it is in the presence of Purusha, prakriti, like a lady performing a dance in front of a man for his entertainment, becomes agitated, one or more of its gunas begin to dominate, and the process of evolution begins. Notice that Purusha by himself does not cause the process of evolution to begin. It's his presence that triggers the process. The products of the evolution are as follows:



Mahat (meaning "the great one") is the counterpart of Buddhi in the objective universe. Buddhi is translated as the intellect. In the individual human being it is also called the antahkarana or the internal organ which has the three aspects of the intellect, the mind (manas) and ahamkara (the ego sense). Each aspect arises out of the dominance of a different guna in the Mahat. The intellect has the functions of understanding, discriminating, judging, and deciding. Ahamkara has the function of relating all knowledge, feelings and experience to the self. It is what makes us think "I feel, I experience, I know this," etc. Manas, generally translated as the mind, is the organ of attending, feeling, and perhaps also of remembering. Notice that from ahamkara there is a threefold evolution (again depending on which guna dominates). The five organs of sense are: eyes, ears, nose, tongue and the skin. The five organs of action are: hands, legs, mouth, the organs of

reproduction and elimination. The five tanmatras are the subtle essences of the five elements of the earth, air, fire, water, and ether, namely, the smell essence, the touch essence, the sight essence, the taste essence and the sound essence, respectively. The gross elements are derived from these. The gross material universe is derived in turn from the gross elements. Notice also that the scheme of evolution presented here does not discriminate between the subjective or individual psychological side of evolution from the objective material side of evolution in the universe, the simple reason for this being that for Samkhya the psychological is also part of the material universe and the human and non-human aspects of the universe evolve in a parallel fashion. But then, if there is a purusha for each of the persons in the world, is there is a universal purusha too?

Psychology : Knowledge and experience (say, of pleasure and pain) are made possible by the cooperation of the senses with the mind, the intellect, and the ego sense, the last three being the three aspects of the internal organ (antahkarana). For example, in visual perception, manas, the organ of attention goes out through the eyes to the object, say a chair, assumes the shape of the object (i.e., becomes identified with it) and returns to the antahkarana and gets reflected in it. The antahkarana also reflects the Purusha. Purusha through the agency of ahamkara (ego sense) attributes this reflection to itself and arrives at the knowledge not only that "This is a chair," or "This chair is comfortable," but also the knowledge that "I am looking at a chair," and "I am experiencing comfort." The mind retains the impressions of the past and replays them in dreams. The intellect discriminates between objects and makes decisions. The antahkarana collects the impressions of past experiences, the inclinations or propensities generated by them, and the effects of past actions. All these, i.e., the impressions, inclinations and effects, together are part of what is called the Sukshma sarira, or the subtle body. It is the subtle body that transmigrates when a person dies and enters a new body which it selects according to its past inclinations and karma.

Bondage : Bondage consists essentially of a confusion between Purusha and Prakriti. This confusion is two-fold: it is a confusion on the part of Purusha in thinking that the properties such as inertia, experience, knowledge, agency of action, pleasure and pain pertain to itself; and it is a confusion on the part of Prakriti in thinking that the properties of Purusha such as intelligence and consciousness pertain to itself. A "root" metaphor is used in this connection to explain the confusion. Suppose we place a candle light in front of a mirror. As the light of the candle is reflected in the mirror the mirror thinks it has the quality of light which truly belongs only to the candle, while the candle light thinks that it has the quality of a mirror image, whereas in reality the image pertains only to the mirror. The result is bondage or apparent bondage. Man thinks that he experiences pleasure and pain, and undergoes becoming, i.e. being born, dying and being born again. As a matter of fact, however, the properties of neither can pertain to the other. So the confusion is only an apparent confusion. In reality, because their natures are so different, there can be no confusion. So, in the system of Samkhya, both bondage and liberation are only apparent and not real.

Liberation (Kaivalya--Isolation) : The word Kaivalya is derived from the Sanskrit word kevala which means "pure," "alone" or "absolute". Liberation consists in realizing one's own pure nature as Purusha or consciousness and discriminate it from Prakriti and its products. As we said above, liberation is only apparent, because Purusha is always himself and can never really be confused with anything else. Only we have never realized that. It is just like a prince who when young was lost in the wilderness and was raised by the tribals thinks he is a tribal, but realizes his true nature when discovered by the royal guards and told who he was. Nothing new is gained in this process, nor is it lost. The prince was always a prince, and he will remain a prince. Only he no longer thinks he is a tribal.

Means of Liberation : There is nothing a person has to do to be liberated, i.e., to realize his true nature, except understand his true nature. The knowledge of the principles of Samkhya, for example, Purusha, Prakriti and its products, of how Purusha and Prakriti are diametrically opposite, and of how there can be no real relationship between the two, is helpful as a means to realize one's true nature. When a person obtains his liberation, at least as far as that person is concerned, Prakriti's evolution and its products do not mean anything binding for him. Moreover, in himself Prakriti withdraws its products into itself. In other words, in the process of being liberated, there is a reverse process going on in Prakriti, namely, one of involution, such that the gross elements merge into subtle elements, manas and the senses merge back into ahamkara, and that into buddhi, and that into mahat, until finally everything merges back into primal Prakriti. Notice that the Samkhya does not require the practice of Yoga as a means of attaining liberation. To this degree its path is similar to the path of Jnana in the Bhagavad Gita.

Critique : 1a) The Samkhya's explanation of why evolution takes place at all is inadequate. For one thing, is evolution universal or is it not? Is it real or is it not? If there are as many Purushas as there are persons, then how can one person's liberation stop the process of evolution? Similarly, if there are infinitely many Purushas, which particular Purusha's presence causes the evolutionary process to begin? If we say, that for each person, that particular person's body and personality evolve because of that Purusha, we have the problem of explaining how the evolution of the objective inanimate universe takes place.

1b) The Samkhya on the one hand seems to want a cause for the evolution, and yet on the other hand, is reluctant to attribute the causation to the Purusha, for Purusha by his nature is not active, and so cannot cause a process to begin. So, Samkhya takes an unsatisfactory middle approach to solve the problem by saying that although Purusha does not cause anything, the presence of Purusha does.

2) The Samkhya explanation of bondage is also unsatisfactory. On the one hand, it wants the process of liberation to be real, for otherwise, why do we need the whole theory of Samkhya if no one is really in bondage and no one really needs liberation? On the other hand, it simultaneously wants to maintain that since the natures of Purusha and Prakriti are so utterly different there can be no real confusion between the two, and therefore, there can

be no real bondage. But the question here is: Is thinking that I am bound real or unreal? If it is real, then it means that it really takes place, or that it is true. If it is real, then the thinking must be the result of a real confusion between Purusha and Prakriti. But this goes against Samkhya's own assertion above to the contrary. If, on the other hand, the thinking is not real, then why Samkhya?

3) The above criticisms do not mean that there is nothing important or significant in Samkhya: it seems that if we can free our mind from whatever identifications we have acquired in the course of our lives, it is possible to arrive at a consciousness which is a pure witness, and which is merely passive. There is a certain peacefulness in that consciousness which we do not have in our pursuit of pleasures and avoidance of pain. This seems to lie beyond our normal feelings of pleasure and pain, even beyond our thought structure which carries generally the burden of our experience. The philosophies of Samkhya and Yoga show us the possibility of liberating ourselves from the bonds of experience which our ordinary life creates for us. Samkhya does this by asking us to question ourselves as to what our true identity consists in. It says that it does not lie in the various objects we identify ourselves with, nor in the various pleasant and unpleasant experiences we strive for or avoid, nor even in our thinking about ourselves as an ego. It lies in a consciousness which is devoid of all these accretions.

YOGA

Yoga is a system of Philosophy as well as a practice. It borrows its metaphysics and psychology generally from Samkhya and adds its own account of practice to it. However, there are a few differences between Samkhya and Yoga which ought to be noticed at the outset. While Samkhya is an atheistic system, Yoga accepts the notion of God, although not as someone who creates the universe and so on, but as a perfect person who is omniscient and who can, like many others, serve as an object of meditation. Second, yoga offers its practice rather than the knowledge of the principles of Samkhya as a means of liberation.

Yoga Sutras is the source book for Yoga and is attributed to Patanjali. It was probably written around the second century B.C. The Yoga Sutras contains four parts, and has a discussion of not only the Samkhya metaphysics and psychology, but also the eight "limbs" or constituent parts of Yoga, which is the reason why it is called the ashtanga (eight-limbed) yoga. It contains, among other things, a detailed discussion of the various psychological states, of meditation, of the state of a liberated person, and also of the many supernormal powers one acquires in the process of meditation.

Patanjali's Yoga is also called Raja Yoga and should not be confused with many other things which go under the name of Yoga: for instance, "Hatha Yoga" which in current American usage refers to the practice of Asanas (postures) and Pranayama (breath control) is only one part of Raja Yoga and is not even an essential part of it. The main part of Raja Yoga is the meditational aspect of it. Hatha Yoga was in fact a later development in the history of Yoga. It originally consisted of a practice which involved striving for liberation through bodily transmutation by the use of Kundalini and was developed by Tantric writers such as Gorakshanatha in the 12th century A. D. Kundalini Yoga is a practice which consists of arousing the six chakras (nerve plexuses) by forcing prana (breath) through different channels in the body called nadis. Notice that while the Bhagavad Gita uses the term "Yoga" to mean any path for liberation, here the term means something more specific and refers to Raja Yoga. The word "Yoga" comes from the Sanskrit root yuj, meaning 'to yoke' and is generally translated as union (yoking). It should not be understood to mean union with God, because that is not the true aim of Yoga.

The eight steps in Yoga are the following: 1) Yama, meaning prohibitions or abstinences, of which there are five: Non-injury (ahimsa), not speaking falsehood (satya), not stealing (asteya), sexual continence (brahmacharya), and not accepting gifts (aparigraha). 2) Niyama, meaning observances, of which there are again five: cleanliness (shuchi), contentment (santosha), austerity (tapas), study of scriptures (svadhyaya), and devotion to Ishvara (Ishvara Pranidhana). 3) Asana, meaning stable and comfortable posture. 4) Pranayama: Breath control, consisting of inhaling, retaining and exhaling breath in a

uniform way, according to certain measures of time. 5) Pratyahara: withdrawal of the senses, meaning withdrawing attention from external objects. The last three steps together form the meditational part of Yoga and are called Samyama: 6) Dharana: holding attention or concentrating on a specific object. 7) Dhyana: meditation (or contemplation) upon the object. 8) Samadhi: generally translated as trance, occurs in two stages: a) Savikalpaka with the object in consciousness and b) Nirvikalpaka without the object, where consciousness shines in its own pure light without having to have the support of an object.

A few comments on the steps in Yoga: 1) It is not necessary that one should perfect some of the steps before the others; they can all be done simultaneously, with the understanding that the first two steps are necessary as a preparation and consist of moral purification, and the next two steps provide the body control necessary for a quiet and peaceful mind. There is a logical progression among the steps. However, they can reinforce and aid each other also. For example, some meditation can aid body awareness and hence its control, just as body control (asanas) can aid meditation.

2) Asanas are meant to bring the body under control. They are not meant to be practiced as calisthenics to strengthen your muscles, but to create tone and flexibility to the limbs. The main idea of the asanas is to stretch a limb or set of limbs as much as you can without creating discomfort or losing your stability and then release or relax them. There are hundreds of asanas, although no specific asanas are mentioned in the Yoga Sutras; only later texts mention them.

3) The point of controlling breath is not only to aid the performance of the asanas as is understood in current Hatha Yoga, but also to slow down the thought process. For Yoga believes that if you slow down your breath you also slow down your thought processes. Making exhalations longer than your inhalations helps you relax better. Asana and pranayama together help better circulation of blood and posture in general. This is one way they help meditation.

4) Withdrawal of the senses does not mean you physically withdraw your senses or close them, but you withdraw your attention upon external objects through them. As a consequence, a person ceases to be interested in the things of the world and does not mentally get lost in them.

5) The Yoga Sutras do not seem to care which object you concentrate upon for your meditation, as long as you pick something in which you are not personally involved. Any innocuous object such as a dot on a wall, the tip of your nose, the space between your eye brows, the sky, just anything will do.

6) The various "effects" or achievements you acquire in the practice of Yoga meditation may give you supernormal powers described in detail in the Sutras, but you are not supposed to be interested in them. You develop an attitude of detachment to them just

like to any other object. For, the Sutras realize that one of the reasons for our bondage is our identification with and attachment to products of Prakriti, no matter how glorious they are, and that so long as we are attached to them, they stand as an obstacle in our way of liberation.

7) In meditation or contemplation upon an object you let all your thoughts run around the object, in other words, as much as possible make that the object of your thoughts, if you have to think any thoughts at all. Not only the thoughts slow down, but they also become gradually less frequent.

8) It is in the first stages of Samadhi that the Prakriti starts being dissolved in yourself. Although such a dissolution should mean the end of the body as well as the other products such as the mind, the Yoga Sutras do not imply that after you are liberated you will be without any of these. In the Vedanta, however, there is a clear belief that a person can be liberated when one is still alive. In either case, of course, a person is never reborn after he dies, if he is liberated.

What are some of the essential features of Yoga meditation? Meditation seems to involve focusing our attention on something other than ourselves, and something in which we are not personally involved. This is not entirely necessary, if we are able to just remain quiet without interfering with our thought processes. However, it is easier to meditate if we focus on something, as for example on our breathing (and make it uniform and slow), so we are not busy day-dreaming or judging what we come upon when we sit quietly. The Yoga Sutras definitely prefer this way of doing meditation. As we said above, we can meditate upon various other objects, including our past lives, our body, the sky, etc. and even attain some supernormal powers. But the Yoga is not interested in them, although it mentions them. The important thing is that whatever happens in the way of meditation, one is not to be attached to it.

In the second stage of meditation, one does not try to control one's thoughts, as you are not likely to succeed. For if you try to control one of your thoughts, that itself is done by means of another thought, and this can go on infinitely. And when you think you have succeeded in doing so, the mere awareness of that brings forth another thought, or you will be lost in thinking about something else, or about thought in general. So you try to let your thoughts run around the object you are concentrating upon, again not forcing your mind to do so. But as and when you can you try to think about this object rather than other objects. And when you find that your mind runs into other things, you gently divert its attention to the original object. In such meditation you are ostensibly paying attention to the object of meditation. At the same time all your past concerns, your impressions from your past experiences, your worries, fears, fantasies--all tend to show up in the background of your consciousness sooner or later during the course of your meditation. And when they do, you let them happen, pay scant attention to them, be passively aware of them, while at the same time focusing attention on the object of your meditation as much as you can. In this process,

your mind gently and gradually gets detached from all your past conditionings or identifications. They lose their hold upon you and you become released from them. This is the general idea of any meditation.

As the Yoga Sutras would say, the seeds of the impressions of your past as well as of your Karma dry out like parched seeds. Your mind gets detached from the objects with which it has been identified; and consciousness gets detached from the mind. In other words, consciousness gets detached from the object and stands as itself in its own light. The mind, having no object to identify itself with, will now be withdrawn into Prakriti in the reverse process of involution. For a while consciousness, when it is in the process of being liberated, has to have the innocuous object as a support. But in the final stage of samadhi consciousness shines in its own light without any object. This is complete and final liberation.

Questions : Give an account of the essential ideas of Samkhya concerning the fundamental principles, evolution, bondage, liberation and the means to liberation. What is the Samkhya concept of causation? How does it argue for it? What is the significance of its theory of causation for its metaphysics in general? Give an account of the eight limbs of Yoga. Explain the basic principles of Yoga meditation and how it leads one to liberation. What are the major differences between the philosophies of Samkhya and Yoga?

Vocabulary : Epistemology; Salvation; Cause and Effect; Efficient cause; Material cause; Ad infinitum; Infinite Regress; Composite; Subsequent; Intermediary; First Cause; Potentiality; Implicit; Evolution; Transformation; Quiescence; Volitional; Agency; Impressions; Propensities; Inclinations; Aristotle; Aquinas; Subtle elements; Gross elements; Intellect; Internal Organ; Equilibrium; Constitutents; Innocuous; Inhalation; Exhalation; Retention; Detachment; Nerve Plexuses.

Glossary : Samkhya Karika: The earliest known Samkhya work written by Ishwara Krishna. Samkhya Pravachana Sutra: A work of Sutras in Samkhya attributed to Kapila, but probably written in the 14th Century. Yoga Sutras: The source book of Yoga written by Patanjali probably in the second century B. C. Satkaryavada: The theory of Samkhya which says that the effect preexists in the cause implicitly. Asatkaryavada: The theory of Nyaya which says that the effect is entirely different from the cause and does not preexist in it. Mahat: The Great One: The first evolute of Prakriti in Samkhya theory of evolution or transformation. Buddhi: Intellect: the second evolute. Antahkarana: Internal Organ. Ahamkara: Ego sense. Manas: Mind. Tanmatras: Subtle essences of the five elements. Sukshma Sharira: The subtle body. Kaivalya: Isolation or liberation in Samkhya. Hatha Yoga: The Yoga which is traditionally part of Tantra. It advocates liberation through bodily transmutation, and the practice of Kundalini Yoga toward that end. Currently used for the practice of Asanas and Pranayama. Kundalini: In Kundalini Yoga the "serpent power" supposed to lie dormant at the base of a person's spine and roused and led through it to be united in the skull with the universal energy through Pranayama (breath control). Yama: Abstinence. Brahmacharya:

Celibacy or sexual continence. Satya: Speaking truth; Ahimsa: Practicing non-injury. Asteya: Non-stealing. Aparigraha: Non-acceptance of gifts. Niyama: Observance. Shuchi: Cleanliness. Santosha: Contentment. Tapas: Austerity. Svadhyaya: Study (of scriptures). Ishwara Pranidhana: Devotion to God (or Ishwara). Asana: Posture (Lit. Seat). Pranayama: Breath control. Chakra: Nerve Plexus. Nadi: A channel through which the Pranas or various vital airs pass through. Pratyahara: Withdrawal of the senses. Samyama: Concentration: a term applied to the last three stages of the practice of Yoga: Dharana: Attention. Dhyana: Meditation or contemplation. Samadhi: Trance. Savikalpaka: With the object as support. Nirvikalpaka: Without the object as support.

CHAPTER 9

CHAPTER 9

ADVAITA VEDANTA

The word 'Advaita' means non-dualistic and the word 'Vedanta' means the end or aim of the Vedas. This school is popularized by a South Indian philosopher and teacher called Shamkara around the 8th century A.D. The main ideas of the school, however, existed before in his grand-teacher Gaudapada's work. Both of these philosophers claim that they derive their inspiration from the Upanishads (which by the way are the end-portions of the Vedas) and from the work called Brahma Sutras (also called Vedanta Sutras) written by Badarayana (between 500 and 200 B.C.) codifying the teachings of the Upanishads. The latter work is a source book for not only Advaita Vedanta but also the other two major schools of Vedanta, viz., Visishtadvaita (qualified non-dualism) propagated by Ramanuja in the 11th century A.D., in the South of India, and Dvaita (dualism) taught by Madhva in the 13th century also in the South of India.

Before we proceed further let us briefly examine how Advaita Vedanta differs from Purva Mimamsa (the fifth of the six orthodox schools of Philosophy in India), since they both claim to be based on the Vedas. The Mimamsa (Purva Mimamsa literally means prior examination or analysis) emphasizes the earlier portions of the Vedas and claims that the essential teaching of the Vedas is contained in them. According to it, the aim of the Vedas is to prescribe action, particularly ritualistic action: some of the actions it prescribes are mandatory, regardless of what our wishes are; they are to be performed routinely by everyone; whereas the others are optional, depending on what one's goals are. In either case, of course, the Vedas deal with the extrasensory or supernatural world. For the problems of the empirical world, you consult the empirical sciences like medicine and chemistry. If your goal, for instance, is to obtain sons, the Vedas prescribe a sacrifice called Putrakameshti, and if you wish to go to heaven you perform another sacrifice or you practice penance praying Brahma or Vishnu, and so on. It is not the intention of the Vedas to describe the nature of the universe or of the self.

For this reason, historically, the Mimamsa became famous for its exegeses on and interpretations of Vedic sentences, for its ideas on how to interpret them and what their true purport is. The Vedanta in general, however, emphasizes the latter portions of the Vedas, particularly the Upanishads (that is why it is sometimes called Uttara Mimamsa). The Advaita Vedanta claims that the true meaning of the Vedas lies in describing the essential nature of the universe, and of the self, but not to prescribe any action. Since it emphasizes knowledge but not action as the true means of liberation, it naturally takes this approach to the Vedas. The Mimamsa takes its approach because it believes that ritualistic action is the means to attain the supreme goal in life, which, according to it, is attaining heaven, or a state of freedom from pain, depending on the particular school of Mimamsa one is following.

How does Advaita differ from the other two schools of Vedanta? Primarily in its conceptions of what constitutes ultimate Reality, the state of liberation and the means to liberation. The Advaita believes that ultimate Reality or Brahman is one, without any distinctions, and is the ground of the universe. The universe is an appearance (vivarta) of Brahman. The state of liberation consists in realizing the non-difference between oneself and the universal Self, i.e., Brahman. This is a state in which there are no divisions, not even the division of the subject and the object, and not even any self-consciousness. The means of liberation is knowledge, i.e., realization of the non-distinction between oneself and the universal Self and not any ritualistic action or devotion to a personal God.

The Visishta Advaita (qualified non-dualism) thinks that God is personal (Saguna Brahman, i.e., Brahman with qualities), is the soul of the universe, or to say the same thing in other words, the universe and the souls in it are the body of God. God is a unity-in-difference, not just a unity or just a difference. The universe and the souls in it are a result of God's self-transformation or manifestation. The state of liberation consists in realizing that the individual self is only an aspect of God, and not independent of Him. It is in essence of the nature of God, but never completely identical with Him. Devotion or self-surrender to God is the path to such a salvation, not mere knowledge or ritualistic action.

The Dvaita believes in ultimate differences: God created the universe and the souls in it. Nothing can bridge the gap between the souls and God. Through devotion one at best can attain the presence of God in heaven and become his servant. Here too God is conceived as personal.

Shankara : Shankara was a Nambudri Brahmin who lived in the present Kerala State (Malayalam speaking country) in the South of India sometime in the 8th century A. D. Very early in his life he showed great intellectual promise. To unite the Hindu religion which in his time was plagued with schisms he wanted to renounce and become a monk, but he needed, according to the rules of tradition, the permission of his widowed mother, who refused it for fear she would be left alone. But he talked her into granting it by contriving an accident in which a crocodile would clutch his leg in the neighboring river and wouldn't let it go until she gave him permission, which she now readily granted.

Shankara at the very early age of 16 became a monk, travelled all four corners of India, engaged his opponents in debates, mostly in courts of kings, and defeated them. He established four (or five) seats of religious authority in the four corners of India, which exist and are influential even today.

He was also known for his rebelliousness: Some years after he became a monk, his mother died. As he was a monk he was not, according to the rules of the Hindu tradition, allowed to perform the funeral rites for his mother. He not only performed them, but also buried his mother's body in his own backyard, which again, is contrary to tradition.

By the time he was 30, when he died, he wrote commentaries on the major Upanishads, on the Bhagavad Gita, and on the Brahma Sutras. He also wrote several works of Philosophy expounding his own doctrine, and of devotional poetry, some of which delve deeply into Tantra, an esoteric practice some form or another of which is common to all Indian religions--in the Shaivite and Vaishnavite sects of Hinduism, in Buddhism and in Jainism. Many of his works are popular to this day.

Basic Tenets : For Shamkara Brahman alone is real, and the world, including all the selves in it, is an illusion. At the outset we should make clear what Shamkara means by illusion. If the world is an illusion, it does not mean that it does not exist at all. It only means its nature is not what it is perceived to be. Its true nature is oneness, i.e., Brahman, whereas it appears to be many and changing.

Levels of Reality : Shamkara differentiates between several levels of reality or between their corresponding experiences: First, there is unreality, as for example, the barren woman's son or the horns of a hare or a sky flower. These cannot possibly exist; therefore, they are unreal, and there can be no experience of them.

Second, there is illusory or dream reality (called *pratibhasika satta*). This reality exists only as long as it is experienced, and ceases to exist when it is sublated by the experience of another reality. As long as, for example, we are dreaming, the dream world is real to us. But when we wake up to ordinary reality, the dream world is no longer real. We say we were only dreaming.

Third, there is the empirical (or ordinary reality) (*vyavaharika satta*) and the experience of it. This is characterized by plurality and change, and it satisfies our practical requirements: for example, when you are thirsty and drink water, the water quenches the thirst. This reality and the experience of it too are sublated in the experience of ultimate reality, i.e., the experience of Brahman, such that when we do have the latter kind of experience, the empirical reality and the experience of it are no longer real. The experience of empirical reality is also characterized by subject-object divisions and the consciousness of I and mine.

Fourth, Brahman and the experience of absolute Reality (absolute reality = *paramarthika satta*). Here there is no multiplicity or change, and no divisions of any kind, including that between subject and object or between Brahman and the experience of It. Shamkara wants to say that the relationship between empirical reality and absolute reality is parallel to the relationship between empirical reality (or our waking experience of it) and illusory reality (or our experience of it). Each is real while it is experienced and is sublated in a higher experience where it is no longer real.

To explain further the relationship between empirical and absolute realities Shamkara analyzes illusory experience: When, for example, we enter a dark room and

stumble upon something which feels like a snake, we jump and start, are frightened, run to the window to open it and let in some light. On examination, we discover that what appeared to be a snake is after all a rope. Then we let out a sigh of relief thinking after all it was only a rope and not a snake. It is not that the snake was totally unreal and did not exist at all (like the sky flower). It was real when I experienced it, (or else why would I jump and start?), but is no longer real now, because I don't experience it any more. The experience of the illusion had an objective basis or ground, viz. the rope. But I projected on it the snakesness which I remembered from somewhere in my past. The experience of the illusion consists in covering the feature of ropeness of the rope and projecting on it the features of the snake.

Similarly, the experience of the empirical world is also illusory: Brahman is the ground of the illusion; it is its material cause. We project the world on the ground and experience it as the world. (Does the projection come from our past because of our karma? I am not sure that he would say that, but he would say that this illusion is without any beginning.) When we experience Brahman or absolute Reality, then the world is no longer experienced as the world but as Brahman. Then the question is whether the world (or snake in the snake-rope illusion) real or unreal? We can't say it is real, because it is sublated in a further experience. We can't say it is unreal, because we experienced it, and the experience had an effect on us. So, Shamkara says, that the world is undefinable: you can't say what it is!

Theory of Knowledge : If the above is Shamkara's explanation of error, what is his theory of knowledge? It is somewhat akin to that of Samkhya, with necessary modifications appropriate to his Philosophy. Brahman is the ground of both the subject and the object. Brahman, i.e., Atman because of avidya (ignorance, or lit., nescience), on the one hand, appears to us as our self seeing the world as the other. It appears as the individual self and is reflected in the Antahkarana i.e., the internal organ. Brahman, on the other hand, also appears, because of maya (the objective illusory power of Brahman), as the world of objects. For instance, a chair, which is an appearance of Brahman, is grasped by manas which goes out through the sense organs (also part of the appearance of Brahman) and becomes reflected in the antahkarana. Knowledge arises when the individual self is identified in the antahkarana with the object chair, and the perception that there is a chair in front of me arises. This cognition is always accompanied by a simultaneous self-cognition viz., that I see the chair.

Notions of Cause and Change do not apply to Brahman : In Shamkara's view all categories, including those of cause and effect, time and change, are applicable only to empirical reality and not to the absolute Reality, Brahman. To show this, Shamkara takes up the two possible views of causation, namely, Satkaryavada of the Samkhyas and -Asatkaryavada of the Nyayas and subjects both of them to a thorough criticism. He tries to show that since both views lead to contradictions neither view is tenable. In his critique, as was common in his days, he uses the Samkhya objections against the Nyaya theory, and the

Nyaya objections against the Samkhya theory in order to show that neither of them is a coherent view. Against the Nyaya view he says that if the effect is something entirely different from the cause and new, then there could be no relationship between the cause and the effect. In the first place, he says, how could the cause create something entirely different from itself? If it were possible, then anything could be generated out of anything else. In the second place, the view would tantamount to saying that something, namely, the present effect, could come out of nothing, for the present effect was non-existent before it was created.

On the reverse side of the coin, he criticizes the Samkhya view by saying that if the effect was of the same nature as the cause, then causation would make no sense, for it does not make sense to say that the already existent effect (in the form of the cause) created what already existed. There is no longer any change to be explained by the relationship of causation. Suppose the Samkhyas reply to this by saying that the effect is only potentially present in the cause, and thus we still need the notion of causation to explain the occurrence of the effect, because the form of the effect is different from the form of the cause, although their substance is the same. Now Shamkara asks whether this difference in form is a real difference or not. If the Samkhya answer is that it is, then Shamkara would object to it by saying that this would now amount to abandoning their position and playing into the hands of their opponents, the Naiyayikas, because we now have an effect entirely different from the cause. Besides, an absurd consequence would arise from considering the change of form as a change of substance: for example, a man standing would be a different man from the same man sitting, because their forms are different.

Besides, if we assume that form is distinct from substance and equally real, then it would be impossible to explain the relationship between form and substance: to explain the relationship between form and substance, we have to invoke another reality; and to explain the relationship between that reality and the form and the substance, we need a second reality; and to explain the relationship between this reality and the former entities we need a third reality, and so on, ad infinitum. We would thus end up in an infinite regress, which means we would be left without an explanation of the original relationship between form and substance.

If, on the other hand, the difference in form is not an essential difference, then we would have to admit that there is no real change to explain here, unless form has a reality of its own. Then causation would be superfluous.

The upshot of this critique is to show that if the notion of causation does not make any sense because any possible explanation of it leads to contradictions, since reality cannot be contradictory, then it follows that a contradictory attribute such as causation cannot be applied to Reality. And causation is the only way we can make sense out of change. Therefore, it follows that any sensible notion of change cannot be applied to Reality. That

means that for Shamkara Reality or Brahman is changeless, timeless, and not subject to causation.

Bondage : Due to the beginningless ignorance (avidya) in himself the individual sees Brahman as the world and not as Brahman, sees himself as a self separate from that world and opposes himself to that world. Because of this ignorance the world appears as many, and the misapprehension about things and even my body as "I am this," and "This is mine," arises. Along with it arise the phenomena of karma and rebirth, and we are caught in the eternal cycles of births and rebirths, now and then having a few pleasures, but most of the time suffering. We are thus subject to the "disease of existence."

Notice, for Shamkara, there can be gods, other worlds, even one unitary God, karma and rebirth; but all these are part of the "empirical reality" and none of them, even the scriptures, such as the Vedas which show the way out of samsara, are absolutely real. To illustrate the point here is a story attributed to Shamkara: once someone thought of making a practical joke on Shamkara. When Shamkara was expounding his philosophy in the court of a king, the joker led a wild elephant into the court. The elephant ran amuck and went on a stampede. Everyone, including Shamkara, started to run for their lives. The joker stopped Shamkara and ridiculed him by saying, "Hey, Shamkara, what do you say, is the elephant an illusion?" Shamkara answered without stopping, "Yes, and so is my running."

The things of the world are only real to the extent we do not realize their unreality. But when once we do, we are free from the illusion, and none of them, even the caste system, rituals, and stages of life are real. Somewhat like in Samkhya, since we are all already Brahman, dispelling the illusion that we are something different or separate from it is the only thing one has to do to be liberated. There is, in other words, no need to follow any path or do anything.

Liberation : Shamkara, in his commentary on the Brahma Sutras, stipulated some antecedent conditions or qualifications for someone who undertakes the inquiry into Brahman. These do not include performing any ritual activity prescribed by the scriptures, not even performing moral action, although these purify the soul and incline the person in the direction of Brahman inquiry. The qualifications are: discrimination between the eternal and the non-eternal, renunciation of the desire to enjoy the benefits of one's actions in this world and in the other, acquisition of tranquility, self-control etc., and desire for final release or liberation.

A man so qualified first listens to the "great statements" (mahavakyas) of the Upanishads such as "Thou art That," "I am Brahman," "Brahman is one without a second," "All this is Brahman," from an enlightened teacher. This listening (called sravana) is the first step in the path to self-realization. The second step is contemplation (called manana) and consists of thinking about how these statements could be true, what the possible objections

to their truth are, and how the statements would make sense in spite of those objections. The third step is realization itself (called *nididhyasana*). It consists in realizing in one's own experience the non-difference between oneself and Brahman. This realization is immediate, which means that it is not mediated through senses or reason or anything else. Brahman knowledge does not consist of knowing Brahman as an object, for the knower and the known here is oneself. And since there are no divisions in Brahman, the knowledge (called *-aparoksha anubhuti*, meaning immediate experience) is whole, undivided and immediate.

To illustrate this there is a story whose authorship is attributed to Shamkara. Once upon a time, there was a teacher with ten students. One day the teacher decided to take all his students to the neighboring village to visit another teacher. On the way the party had to cross a river. After crossing the river, the teacher asked one of his pupils called Devadatta to count the people in the party to make sure no one was lost in transit. Devadatta went to take census and returned to report that a person was missing. The teacher looked around and saw that all the ten pupils were present. He realized that Devadatta miscounted by not including himself in. He asked him to go and count again. Devadatta did and reported the loss once again. Then the teacher asked everyone to line up, asking Devadatta to stand at the end of the line. He started counting, pointing to each student and saying, "You are the first one, you the second, you the third, you the fourth etc." and when he came to Devadatta he said, "You, Devadatta, you are the tenth one." Devadatta immediately realized his mistake, and learned in an immediate fashion that he was the tenth one. This realization is not of the usual kind of knowledge of identity where we know that this person whom I see here is the same as the person I saw elsewhere etc. There are no two persons to relate to one another here. I realize that I whom I thought to be different from Brahman or Atman is in fact no other than Brahman itself.

A person may attain this sort of realization while he is still alive. For such a man ordinary distinctions do not exist. However, he may appear as if distinctions are still real to him. For instance, he may appear to be hungry and eating, teaching his students, and even getting angry at them and punishing them, but all these are mere appearance, because for him, that is, in his consciousness, there are no such distinctions. Even moral distinctions are unreal. That means the ordinary rules of morality do not apply to a liberated man. But this does not mean his actions are immoral. They may be unconventional; people may have hard time understanding why he acts the way he does. But being free from the self-centeredness generated by the illusion of the ego, such a man cannot act immorally.

When the time comes, and his body perishes, by merging in Prakriti, he will not be subjected to karma and rebirth, for, because of his release, his avidya, the root cause of becoming, has ceased to be.

The significance of Shamkara's philosophy lies in the fact that he emphasizes that it is our erroneous perception of the world which looks at it as divided, multifarious and changing that is responsible for our problems and suffering, and if we remove the layer of -

avidya (or ignorance) from our perception we would be able to look at the world without -maya (or illusion). The word `maya' comes from the Sanskrit root `ma' meaning to measure. The world we perceive ordinarily is categorized and measured by our thought or mind. This measurement involves the self, for any `this' or `that' is such only in relation to a self, and the self itself exists only in relation to the `this' or `that'. They are mutually correlative and call for each other; they cannot exist without each other. But once the self is created by thought in this relational and relative process, then all our problems, our pleasures and pains, our becoming, past and future, and our suffering in general begin. The Upanishads hinted at this by saying that the world of name and form (nama and rupa) is phenomenal and is only of the world of appearance. That is, although this world is derived from Brahman or is an appearance of Brahman, it has no ultimate validity. Once we are free from this divisive, dualistic thinking, we are free from our suffering, and we will be harmonious in our living.

One comment on Shamkara's path of knowledge as a means to liberation: Both Samkhya and Shamkara believe that the original state of being of the human being is pure consciousness, an already free state. It is only the thinking that we are bound that is illusory. For this reason they do not really prescribe a course of action or a method which seeks a state of liberation. If they did, that presupposes we have to attain a state which we are not already in or do not have. Besides, all seeking presupposes duality and is part of the empirical reality (in Shamkara). So, Shamkara cuts through this problem of forever seeking a state which we are not in, and never really attaining it (which is the essential nature of our becoming), by saying that the path he is prescribing does not involve any seeking. The only thing one has to do is undo or dispel the illusion that the goal you are seeking is different from yourself, i.e., the seeker.

Questions : What are the different levels of reality (or their experiences) in Shamkara's Philosophy? How does he explain the relations between them? What are the essential elements in an illusory experience, according to Shamkara? How would Shamkara explain the relationship between the individual soul and God? How would he explain bondage? What are the preliminary conditions for inquiring into Brahman? Explain the different stages of Brahman knowledge. What is the significance of Shamkara's philosophy to the modern age?

Vocabulary : Illusion; Prescription; Mandatory; Extrasensory; Supernatural; Empirical; Absolute; Exigesis; Purport; Appearance; Non-difference; Transformation; Manifestation; Unity-in-difference; Self-surrender; Nambudri; Kerala; Projection; Nescience; Cognition; Form; Substance; Immediate; Unconventional.

Glossary: Advaita: Non-dualism. Vedanta (Brahma) Sutras: The source book of Vedanta, written by Badarayana. Shamkara: The most important teacher of the Advaita school. - Gaudapada: Shamkara's grandteacher. Vishishtadvaita: Qualified non-dualism. Dvaita: Dualism. Ramanuja: The most famous teacher of the Vishishtadvaita school. Madhva: The most famous teacher of the Dvaita school. Purva Mimamsa: One of the six orthodox systems

of Indian Philosophy which believes that the essential teachings of the Vedas are contained in their earlier portions. Tantra: An esoteric practice in Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism. The aim of Tantra is to attain the "natural" or "mindless" state of bodily perfection and immortality, or simply to achieve (like in Kundalini Yoga) a union of individual energy with divine Energy. It combines various practices like Kundalini Yoga (see Glossary in the previous chapter for explanation), uttering sacred syllables (called mantras), meditating upon a diagram (yantra) (representing the geography of the universe and of the human being), holding the body in various gestures and postures (called mudras and asanas respectively), and at times even ritualized sexual union. Pratibhasika satta: Illusory reality. Vyavaharika satta: Empirical reality. Paramarthika satta: Absolute Reality. Avidya: Ignorance or nescience. Manas: The mind, the organ of attention. Antahkarana: Internal Organ. Maya: Illusion; also the power of Brahman to make Itself appear as the world. Satkaryavada: The theory of causation (of Samkhya) which says that the effect preexists in the cause implicitly. Asatkaryavada: The theory of causation (of Nyaya) which says that the effect does not preexist in the cause, but is new. Mahavakyas: "Great Statements" meaning the important statements of the Upanishads. Sravana: Listening (to the "Great Statements"). Manana: Contemplation. Nididhyasana: Realization. Nama and Rupa: Name and Form: the term in Upanishads and Vedanta for the phenomenal world.

CHAPTER 10

EARLY BUDDHISM

Gautama the Buddha ('the Buddha' means the awakened one; it is a title, not a proper name; hence 'the' before 'Buddha') was born in Kapilavastu in Nepal around 560 B. C. He died about the year 480 B.C. He was born a prince, but became the founder of the religion of Buddhism. When he was born astrologers predicted that he was going to be either a world-ruler or a world-teacher. So his father, king Suddhodana, took all precautions such that he was not exposed to any of the suffering of this world, hoping that this way Gautama would not become disillusioned with this world and renounce it. But despite the king's efforts, when Gautama attained youth, he went out one day in his chariot for a ride into the town and saw three painful sights: an old man, a sick man, and a dead body being carried to the cremation ground. He asked his charioteer, Channa, what these sights meant, and if these things could happen to everyone. Channa explained and said that these could happen to anyone. Gautama got very perturbed at these scenes, and got disillusioned with his princely and worldly life. By this time he was already married and had a son, Rahula, to his wife Maya. One night, in his 29th year, he left his home without saying good bye to his family, became a monk, and roamed about in forests and jungles looking for an answer to his spiritual quest.

He became a disciple of a few contemporary religious teachers, became dissatisfied with their meditational practices, austerities, and other types of discipline, and left them to seek his enlightenment alone. His practice of austerities went so far as mortifying his body; but he became so weak that he could hardly get up from the water in which he fell. He vowed that he would not mortify his body any more through fasting and other means, but instead would eat just as much as necessary to enable his body to survive. One day he sat under a Bodhi tree and vowed that he would never get up until he became enlightened. After 14 days of intense contemplation, he became enlightened. He rested for 9 more days assimilating his newly found wisdom and started walking back to Benaras where he started preaching. He first looked for the 5 associates who were earlier disappointed in him for the lack of his success in achieving enlightenment and left him, and made them his first disciples.

The Buddha soon established a monastic order. His own son, his father, and relatives became his pupils. He wandered with the monks from place to place, accepting food given by people, particularly the rich, and preaching the Dharma, his doctrine. He died at the age of 80 probably from some sort of food poisoning, after eating a dinner at an untouchable (a

butcher?). He is known to have been a compassionate man, tending to care for the sick, the downtrodden, and the crippled.

Buddhism is a very pragmatic, and to a large degree empirical and rational religion. In some fashion it is also atheistic. It does not believe in the existence of a supernatural entity called God, although it believes in many gods. These gods, however, have no special status in Buddhism, for they are considered to be part of the natural world, like animals and people are; only they may have superior powers and occupy heavenly regions. The Buddha also tried, as much as he could, to avoid metaphysics and metaphysical questions which are not relevant to the understanding of suffering and being liberated from it. For example, he avoided the questions of whether the world is eternal or not, whether the world is finite or infinite, whether the body and the soul are identical or different, and whether the soul does or does not exist after death. Questions like these the Buddha did not answer because he thought that that they did not tend to "edification," meaning that they were not conducive to the solution of the existential problems of the human being. (See Burtt, pp. 32-36.)

The Four Noble Truths: The four pillars on which Buddha's teaching rests are what are called the four Noble Truths. The first is the truth of suffering: it is a fact that there is suffering everywhere in life. Not having what we want is suffering. Having what we do not want is suffering. After getting what we want, not being able to keep it is suffering. Worrying or being afraid of the possibility of losing what we have is suffering. Old age is suffering, sickness is suffering and death is suffering.

The second noble truth is that there is a cause to suffering: The Buddha's analysis of suffering is that it is ultimately based on the fact that we desire things, and this desire is in turn based on an ignorance, particularly the ignorance that we are an independent and permanent ego or self, and on the resultant grasping of the self. We will later give a more detailed analysis of the causation of suffering.

The third noble truth is that it is possible to remove suffering. The fourth truth gives us, in the form of the famous eightfold path, the way to remove suffering.

Before we discuss the details of the four noble truths, let us discuss a few basic doctrines either explicit or implicit in early Buddhism:

Impermanence: First, Buddhism believes, unlike the Upanishads, in a changing view of reality: everything in the world is impermanent (anitya). It is not only that change exists, but that everything in the universe is in a constant flux, such that we cannot say that there are any stable self-subsistent things. This reminds us of the ancient Greek philosophy of Heraclitus that the ultimate reality of the universe is flux or constant change. This view reverses our ordinary view of reality which looks at the world as made up of more or less stable things in different states, and of change as consisting of change of a state in a substance. It replaces it with a process view of reality, according to which the world is a

collection of innumerable processes. In this view, what we call things are only sets of processes occurring in a certain spatial context within a certain time continuum, only so called because the different segments of the same process more closely resemble each other than segments of other processes.

Of course, this doctrine in Buddhism, unlike in Heraclitus, is closely related to their view that the fundamental fact of life is suffering, and that Nirvana consists in becoming free from suffering. Even the Upanishads grasped the idea that suffering is a result of the fact that things change in the world. What happens may or may not be to our expectations, and what we hold on to as dear, including our life, may change, or may cease to exist tomorrow.

It may well be that the Buddha did not hold this doctrine dogmatically, for he attempted to avoid any dogmatic views concerning reality. It may be that he used this idea as an antidote to the commonsense view of reality (which we described above), for it is the latter that is responsible for our suffering, particularly when we identify ourselves with the notion of a permanent self, with its fixed desires and goals. Suffice it to note here that the idea that everything is changing is as much based on the idea of a self which compares what happens one moment with what happens the next moment by remembering the former. Without the idea of the self, there is no time, no permanence or change, and no earlier and present moments: there is something happening, and no description it is possible in temporal terms.

Dependent Origination: Second, Buddhism believes in a view of causation unlike that of commonsense. This view is called the doctrine of dependent origination (*pratitya - samutpada*). If there are no permanent things, and if everything is constantly changing, we can't say one (stable) thing causes another. The best we can say about causation is that when certain conditions obtain then certain other conditions obtain in the world. Contrary to popular belief, there is no internal link between a cause and its effect that forces the effect to occur, given the cause. As the doctrine says, if A occurs then B occurs; as long as there is A, B is there. And when A disappears B disappears. There are no internal connections or forces necessary to explain causal connections. Buddhism uses this doctrine to explain how suffering occurs and how it can be removed. Both the second and the last noble truth are explained by use of this doctrine.

The Wheel of Becoming: The explanation of suffering occurs through the use of what is called the Wheel of Becoming (*bhava chakra*): There are 12 links in this circular chain of causation. Ignorance is the first link in the chain and old age and death, the culminating points of suffering, are the last link. This chain is circular because the last link in the wheel in turn causes the first link in the next round of births and rebirths creating an otherwise endless (except for the fact that Nirvana can terminate it) wheel of births and rebirths which constitute *samsara*.

The first link, viz., ignorance (concerning the nature of the self), is the root cause of all suffering, being itself caused by the last link in the previous cycle. Ignorance is the cause of the next link, namely, impulse. Impulse is the tendency to be born again which is carried over from a previous life. It is this which causes a person to be born in this life. Impulse causes the next link, viz., consciousness, consciousness in a seed form while we are still in the form of an embryo in our mother's womb. This gives rise to body and mind, our psychophysical make up, at least in a rudimentary fashion. Given this we have the next link, namely, the six senses, which are the five senses and the mind, and their objects. (Buddhism understands this in a phenomenological sense where no strict separation is made between the senses, their objects and the sense fields in which both occur. All together are called the senses).

The senses give rise to impressions of their respective objects in the external world or objects within the psyche itself. Once we have these sensations or impressions, then we perceive the objects as such and such. This perception causes a desire in us for the object. Once we have desire, we tend to grasp the object and become attached to it. And this causes the process of becoming, i.e., our being subject to karma. That is, our actions start binding us, causing our pleasures and pains, and eventually our being born again. That, our being born again, is the next link in the chain. Once we are born, the consequence of old age and death are inevitable. And these are the last link in the chain. Notice that the cycle goes over three life times: our past life whence we acquired our ignorance, our present life where we undergo becoming, and our future life caused by that becoming, and ultimately ending in old age and death.

If the Wheel of Becoming is an explanation of how our suffering arises, it also tells us how it can be eliminated. By removing ignorance, which is the point of the eight-fold path, we remove the next link in the chain of causation, namely, impulse to be born again, and by removing this we remove consciousness and so on till we finally remove old age and death.

No-Self: The third and perhaps the most important doctrine of early Buddhism is the doctrine of no-self (anatmavada). This follows directly from the doctrine of impermanence (or anitya): If everything in the world is constantly changing, then there cannot be a permanent entity called the self. Therefore, what appears to be a permanent self in us is only an appearance, and is an illusory entity. There is no basis for any belief in such an entity in our experience.

Skandhas : The Buddha asks us to investigate and find out for ourselves what we really are in our own experience: he says that whenever we look into ourselves whatever we find are nothing but sets of processes: the bodily processes (which he calls rupa), the process of sensation (called vedana), the process of perception which involves recognition of the object we perceive, (called samjna, so called probably because it implies a symbolic consciousness; 'samjna' in Sanskrit literally means a sign or a symbol), the process of

tendencies or impulses to act in certain ways (called *samskara*), and finally, the process of consciousness (probably meaning self-consciousness, called *vijnana*). The Buddha asks us if there is anything in our experience we can find which we can call ourselves besides these processes. These processes are called *skandhas* (lit. aggregates), and the theory is also called the *skandha* theory of the self.

Of course, we think we are something above and beyond these factors or groupings of processes. We think we have always been there, will always be there, will continue to 'progress' through our actions and through enriching ourselves by experiences. We think we are agents with powers to cause our actions, with potentialities which we hope to realize in future. But, according to Buddhism, all this is an illusion. Actually we are nothing but a certain arrangement of these factors. The personal identity of James, for instance, is explained by the peculiar arrangement of these factors. And the personal identity of Mary is explained by a different arrangement of these same pieces or factors. There is no such thing as the self or ego of 'James' being different from the ego or the 'essence' of 'Mary'. (Read, for instance, the last portions of Herman Hesse's novel *Steppenwolf*.)

The so-called causation through agency ('I cause my action') is explained by the Buddhist doctrine of dependent origination. For example, you insult me and I slap you on your face. This is explained by saying, first there is the perception of the so-called insult; upon this happening the state of being angry at you arises; and upon that arising, my hand being raised and slapping your face arises! Similarly, personal continuity through time is explained by the similarity of the different states in a series within a spatio-temporal continuum which we call a person. I feel I am the same person as I was yesterday because the 'I' of yesterday is more similar to the 'I' of today than to anything or anyone else. Or to be more precise, my yesterday's state of being insulted or being angry, for instance, is so similar to today's state of being insulted (or being angry) that we naturally assume that there is some underlying ego (called the 'I') that feels insulted or is angry about the insult.

Later Buddhism, particularly *Madhyamika* Buddhism (of *Nagarjuna*) explains the illusion of the ego in the following way: it is somehow the result of misusing thought beyond its ordinary legitimate relativistic limits. If we learn to use thought restricting it to its relativistic limits, the illusion of the ego will disappear. Then we will see that terms like 'permanence' and 'impermanence', 'substance' and 'attribute', 'similar' or 'same' and 'different', and 'cause' and 'effect' are relative terms. We will realize that the ego being permanent in any absolute sense is an illusion. Notice, however, that this explanation of the illusion of the ego is different from the early Buddhist explanation mentioned in the previous paragraph.

At any rate, it is not difficult to understand how thought can create the illusion of the ego: I was insulted by you yesterday, for instance. I was angry then. I think about the insult now again. And I become angry again. If I didn't remember yesterday's insult I would not feel that I am the same person as yesterday, feeling the same insult and becoming angry

at it again. The yesterday's `I' who felt the insult (in self-consciousness) and to-day's I who remembers yesterday's insult are so similar that we feel they are one and the same, that they are identical. But this identity and continuity are created by thought which confuses similarity with identity. In reality, terms like `similar', `identical' and `different' are relative. What can be considered as similar for certain purposes and in certain contexts may have to be considered as different for certain other purposes or in other contexts. For example, a person may undergo such a profound change in his beliefs and attitudes that what's left of the old person may be just a collection of memories. Then we have no hesitation to call the same person a different man, even if that person happens to be ourselves. To become free from the illusion of the ego is to separate fact or reality from illusion (created by thought) and to be in close touch with the reality or fact which is constantly changing.

It is also easy to see how this explanation of the illusion of the ego is connected in Buddhism to the idea of becoming free from suffering: if there is no illusion of the ego, then there is no person who grasps at things, who is attached to them. And if there is no such person, then there in turn is no one to be disappointed when those things change or cease to exist. We are liberated to the extent of being able to flow freely with reality and accept all the pleasures and pains life brings, without being bound by them; for bondage can only arise when there is someone to be attached or bound to things.

The Buddhist analysis of the illusion of the ego reminds us of Hume's (an eighteenth century English philosopher and historian) analysis of the ego: he too said that the idea that there is a permanent and substantial self or the ego in ourselves has no basis in our experience. He says that whenever we delve into ourselves to discover our so-called self, we always stumble upon this particular sensation or that particular feeling or this image or that thought, but never the entity called the ego. We only see the players on the stage, but never the theater or the stage on which the players put on their play. But Hume arrived at his skeptical conclusions concerning the ego for epistemological (theory of knowledge) reasons, rather than for existential reasons of liberation from suffering.

The Eightfold Path: The eightfold path of the Buddha offers the way to attain Nirvana or liberation. The path consists of right views, right determination, right speech, right conduct, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration. The step of right views involves knowing and understanding the four noble truths and how they are true. Right determination is to resolve to renounce the world and not commit any harmful deed. Right speech is to abstain from speaking falsehood, slander, malicious talk, and prattle. It also involves practicing kindly, friendly, purposeful and meaningful speech.

Right conduct is to abstain from killing, stealing, and sexual incontinence. Positively, it means acting in such a way as to enhance peace, happiness and well-being of all living beings. Right livelihood is supporting oneself by means which do not involve professions which harm others, such as selling arms, liquor, drugs, poisons etc., but which promote peace and well-being among living beings. Right speech, right conduct and right livelihood all

imply love and compassion to fellow beings. Right effort is to strive with all of one's energies to stop harmful qualities from arising in oneself, to abandon those which are already in oneself, to nourish good qualities which have not arisen, and to reinforce, encourage, increase and perfect the good qualities that already exist in oneself.

Right mindfulness and right concentration constitute the early Buddhist practice of meditation: the former involves being passively aware of what state the body and its different parts are in, what one's feelings, thoughts or emotions, inclinations, and actions are, how they arise and pass away, and so on. It is also to be aware of one's actions in each of their stages analytically, without assuming the ego. For example, instead of thinking "I have helped this man from drowning," I become aware of the fact that first there is the seeing of the man drowning, then there arises the thought or impulse of helping him, upon which the movement of jumping into the water and bringing the man ashore takes place. Nowhere here is the presumption that I (the ego) did anything. Similarly, when I am angry at someone, I am also aware of my anger, what the other person did, and tell myself, "Why should I incur sin by revenging upon him or even trying to hurt him by angry words or action. His own karma will take care of his offense."

When I am fascinated with things I also become aware of how ephemeral things are, how my own life and body will come to an end some day. In another meditation, I become aware of the different parts of my body from top to bottom, and realize how unclean and ugly each by itself is. In still another kind of meditation I watch dead bodies at different stages of disintegration or decomposition, I realize that I too will become like that one day. Such meditations develop in a person not only the distance from his or her emotions such as anger and fear, but also a detachment from worldly life and compassion toward fellow beings.

Right concentration is to develop and dwell in an ecstasy which is free from lust and wrong dispositions. In the second stage of concentration one becomes free from all mental activities including observation and reflection and develops and dwells in a state of serenity. Then the meditator passes on to the third and fourth stages of concentration which consist of complete equanimity and awareness beyond the opposites of happiness and unhappiness.

The right views and determination, the right speech, conduct and livelihood, and the right effort, mindfulness and concentration all support each other--it is not that somehow one is a prerequisite or preparation for the others.

Notice that much like in Yoga the practice of mindfulness does not involve criticizing, judging or justifying what you observe in yourself. One merely observes and reflects. This inevitably brings a distance between oneself and what one observes and therefore a release from it. For example, when I am engaged in gossip about others, being aware of the fact that I am gossiping, without attaching any judgments to my awareness, is by itself a movement away from it and hence a release from it. Of course, the same applies to our so-called positive states of mind as well. In this passive and dispassionate observation

the self that is put together through conditioning is being dissolved, and this is how such meditation is ultimately responsible for liberation.

Readings: Please read Pt. I of the *Compassionate Buddha*.

Questions: Explain the four noble truths of the Buddha. Why do you think that the Buddha took suffering as the most fundamental fact of life? Explain the Buddha's avoidance of all metaphysical questions. What philosophical consequences does this position imply? Explain the doctrine of dependent origination. What is its role in Buddhism in general? Explain the Buddhist doctrine of no-self and how it is related to the doctrine of Skandhas. How does Buddhism show that there is no permanent self? Discuss briefly the twelve-fold Wheel of Becoming. Discuss briefly the eight-fold path of Buddhism.

Vocabulary : Gautama; Buddha; Kapilavastu; Siddhodana; Disillusioned; Channa; Rahula; Maya; Mortification; Benaras; Dharma; Edifying; Existential; Heraclitus; Self-subsistent; Flux; Continuum; Dependent Origination; Psychophysical; Phenomenological; Aggregate; Hesse; Steppenwolf; Nagarjuna; Relativistic; Hume; Epistemology; Mindfulness; Incontinence; Equanimity.

Glossary: Anitya: Impermanent. Pratitya Samutpada: Dependent origination. Bhava - Chakra: Wheel of Becoming. Anatma Vada: Doctrine of No-self; ('vada' = ism). Rupa: Body. Vedana: Sensation (or feeling). Samjna: Perception (lit. Sign). Samskara: Tendency to act in certain ways. Vijnana: Consciousness. (These last five are the Skandhas which make up the human being.) Skandha: Group of processes. Nirvana: Liberation (lit. Blowing out). Samsara: Bondage; empirical existence in general.

CHAPTER 11

LATER BUDDHISM

i. HINAYANA AND MAHAYANA

After the death of the Buddha in 480 B.C. questions arose as to what the Buddha actually taught. Several Buddhist councils were held to clarify unclear and controversial issues. The first council was held at Rajagrha in 480 B.C., the second in Vaisali in 383 B. C. and the third one was held by the Emperor Ashoka in Pataliputra in 247 B.C. Direct disciples of the Buddha and their disciples who had good memory recited Buddha's teachings, and checks and counterchecks were made on what they recalled. The teachings thus recalled were grouped in three collections: the Sutra Pitaka, the Vinaya Pitaka and the Abhidharma Pitaka, containing rules of discipline, discourses of the Buddha on various topics, and the Philosophy of early Buddhism, particularly the doctrinal content of it, respectively.

By the time of the third council there developed a great schism in Buddhism, i.e., the split between Hinayana and Mahayana. Hinayana (meaning the 'lesser vehicle', a name given to them by their opponents) is also called Theravada (the doctrine of the elders), Pali Buddhism (because the basic texts in this Buddhism were written in Pali, a language derived from Sanskrit) or Southern Buddhism (because it is this Buddhism that spread from India to many South Asian countries such as Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Laos, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Malaya). Mahayana (meaning the 'greater vehicle') is also called Sanskrit Buddhism (because of the fact that many sutras in this school were written originally in Sanskrit) or Northern Buddhism (because this is the school that spread from India to various North Asian countries such as Tibet, China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia and Manchuria. Zen Buddhism is originally a Chinese offshoot, mixing in it elements of Madhyamika Buddhism, a school of Mahayana Buddhism, and Taoism. The schism between Hinayana and Mahayana persists till today.

Let us note some important differences between Hinayana and Mahayana: The Hinayana is the more conservative of the two schools, claiming to be more faithful to the original teachings of the Buddha. The Mahayana is the more liberal and fanciful school. It claims to represent the true spirit and not the letter of the Buddha's teachings. At times it even claims to be the esoteric teaching of the Buddha, which, according to it, the Buddha reserved for a select few constituting the inner circle of his pupils. Hinayana teachings are mostly based on the three pitakas and other sundry teachings. Mahayana developed its own prolific literature called the Prajnaparamita (lit. 'Perfection of Wisdom') literature. There

are dozens of these Prajnaparamita sutras. Besides these, in the Mahayana tradition there are also other important original works written by various philosophers.

Both schisms developed subschools of their own. Here we will discuss two or three important subschools in each: the Vaibhashika (also called the Sarvastivada) and the Sautrantika from the Hinayana tradition, and the Yogachara (also called Vijnanavada) and the Madhyamika (also called Shunyavada) from the Mahayana tradition.

Problems arose as to how to interpret the Buddha's doctrine of impermanence (anityavada). For example, if everything is changing all the time, and if there is no such thing as a permanent ego or substance in the person, then how can we say that the person who is striving now for Nirvana is the same person who will attain it later? Or if I am acting now, how can I be said to reap the benefits or demerits from my action in my later life, or in another lifetime? In other words, how do we explain the identity and continuity of a person? Hinayana gave some metaphysical answers to these questions, and Mahayana too came up with answers of its own.

Kshanikavada: Hinayana (particularly the Vaibhashikas and Sautrantikas) developed a metaphysics called Kshanikavada (doctrine of momentariness) to clarify Anityavada, and it goes something like this: The universe is constantly changing. However, there is no change without something that changes. Or else, we cannot explain the continuity of things, or explain any of our knowledge, or expect certain results to follow from our actions. The something that changes in any change is called a dharma or element. The dharmas are the ultimate constituents of the universe. There are dharmas for instance, in all the five skandhas--body dharmas, sensation dharmas etc. Each of these dharmas arises for a moment, stays only for a moment and passes away the next moment giving rise to another dharma. Although each dharma has a past, (when it has not existed yet), a present (when it does exist), and a future (when it no longer exists, each, lasting only a timeless moment, is in itself eternal. There is a continual stream of these dharmas arising and passing away. Such a stream is called Samtana. The Vaibhashikas do not make it clear how dharmas which only exist for a timeless moment can constitute a temporal series .

Personal Identity: The Vaibhashikas (also called Sarvastivadins) maintained that a particular set of dharmas called the prapti (lit. `possession') makes sure that dharmas of the same kind stay together in a particular series. It is these series, which we may also call processes, which make up a person, and also make up the things in the external world. Most of these dharmas are conditioned, because they are "caused" by and in turn "cause" other dharmas. However, there are unconditioned dharmas, as for example, the dharmas of Nirvana which are neither caused nor cause other dharmas. They attach themselves (or are attached by Prapti) to the conditioned (samskrita) dharmas. It is these that explain the difference between a man in samsara and a man in nirvana.

There is nothing underlying these dharmas which explains either the identity or continuity of a person or of a thing. It is just an illusion to think that such an identity exists. What exists is the similarity between the dharmas in the same series. A lighted candle when whirled around at a certain speed creates the illusion that there is a fire wheel, whereas in reality there are only a number of discrete flames, one giving rise to another. Similarly, when we think of ourselves now as the same as the person who we were yesterday, we have one set of dharmas replaced by another, and that by another and so on. At the time of death, because of our past karma, one set of dharmas are passed over from one body to another body. This is all there is to karma and rebirth.

To explain the identity of a person some other Hinayanists (called Pudgalavadins, i.e., Personalists) believed in what is called the Pudgalavada. Pudgala means a person. They say that behind the stream or *samtana* constituting a person there is a pudgala characteristic of each person, which explains what makes that stream the stream of that person and not of another. If asked as to what this Pudgala is, they say it cannot be further explained, nor can what the relationship between the stream of dharmas constituting the person and the person himself, or between the person and the pudgala, or between the pudgala and the stream of dharmas constituting the person.

Thus Hinayana developed a realistic metaphysics of external reality consisting of eternal, independent dharmas, each lasting only a moment. These are some sort of particles or elements. The Mahayana philosophers, particularly the Yogacharas and the Madhyamikas, believe that the notion of the self, along with the notion of the (phenomenal) world, is ultimately invalid, although it is relatively valid at the "empirical" level of experience.

Nirvana in Hinayana: The Hinayana emphasizes the efforts of the individual to strive for his own Nirvana and the resulting cessation of suffering. An individual must become a monk and live in a monastery in order to practice the particular sort of meditation the Buddha has taught. The enlightened person is called the arhat, (also called Pratyeka Buddhas by their opponent Mahayanas to indicate they are isolated individuals). At any rate, in Hinayana liberation is personal and individual. A person who enters the monastery and the path to Nirvana is called once returner, because after he makes his effort to attain Nirvana, when he dies he will return in the next life to work off his remaining karma. Once he returns, he is then called a non-returner, meaning, if he does attain final Nirvana in this life time, he will never return to empirical (mortal) existence again.

The Bodhisattva: The Mahayana, on the other hand, believes that an individual is not an isolated entity, that his destiny is bound up with the destiny of all other beings in the universe. So, Mahayana develops the notion of the Bodhisattva who although enlightened to some degree, takes a vow to postpone his own final enlightenment to help other beings in their path to liberation, until all the beings in the universe are liberated. He takes this vow and several other similar vows in the presence of the Buddha, if he happened to be alive

at the time of the Buddha, or in the presence of another Bodhisattva, who predicts that he will become a Buddha after some aeons.

First an ordinary person hears the teaching of a Buddha or Bodhisattva. As a result of the virtue generated from such hearing, after several lifetimes, the person performs many good deeds. This in turn will result in course of time in the person being interested in enlightenment both for reasons of his own desire to transcend samsara (bondage) and for altruistic reasons. In due course he transcends the duality of these purposes and realizes that he and others are the same. Arousing the thought of enlightenment is itself a meritorious act. It ensures that the person will not be reborn miserable but only well. This is called "winning the stream." Thus a Bodhisattva is born. He takes the vow mentioned above and other vows such as, "When we have crossed the stream, may we ferry others across. When we are liberated, may we liberate others." (Robinson, *The Buddhist Religion*, p.56)

As part of his career a Bodhisattva practices six virtues (or perfections). He practices them without any self-consciousness, ulterior motives or self-congratulation. Doing any act without such self-consciousness etc. is what constitutes the first virtue, viz. Wisdom (Prajna). This virtue is necessary to practice the other virtues. They are: 2) Charity (Dana, lit. 'donation') which consists of giving one's material possessions and the merit from such and other good deeds to other beings; 3) Morality (Sila, lit. 'character') which consists in doing good deeds such as not killing, not stealing, not lying or involving oneself in slander, not speaking harshly, abstaining from loose talk, not having covetous or hostile thoughts, and not having false views. (Notice the similarity between this and Right Views and Right Conduct etc. in the Eight-fold path of Early Buddhism.) 4) Patience (Kshanti) which involves not being angry, not being agitated, enduring hardships and so on. 5) Vigor (Virya) which consists in having energy and vigor in studying and practicing the Buddhist dharma. 6) Meditation (Dhyana) consisting of practicing all meditational trances, concentrations or attainments and yet not accepting rebirth in paradise.

There are several stages, varying in number, depending on the text one consults, in the career of a Bodhisattva. These are called Bhumis. In each stage one of the perfections is supposed to be practiced. The final stage involves the non-dual awareness that the cause of suffering (i.e. the illusion of the ego) is destroyed and will never arise again. The usual length of a Bodhisattva's career is three aeons (called kalpas).

There are several Bodhisattvas, the Buddha himself having been one in his previous lives. The names of some of them are: Vairochana, Avalokiteshwara, Maitreya, Amitabha, Samantabhadra, etc. Ordinary mortals can pray these for help, and one of them, Amitabha, in answer to our prayers, helps us be reborn in the Pure Land where we can all become finally liberated. Amida Buddhism in Japan is centered around this particular Bodhisattva.

Mahayana also developed many supernatural entities such as gods, demons, protectors, etc. and also various Buddha "bodies," in an attempt to glorify the Buddha

metaphysically. The Form Body (called Nirmana Kaya, lit. construction body) is only an apparition. This is the mere physical body of the Buddha and is only an appearance of the eternal and everlasting Dharma Body (Dharma Kaya). The second is Enjoyment Body (called Sambhoga Kaya) which is the glorified body that the Buddha attains as a reward of his Bodhisattva practice. It is this body of the Buddha that other Bodhisattvas witness. Mahayana gives the impression that the Dharma Body is the universal ground of all existence.

Mahayana also had occasion around the Seventh Century A. D. in Tibet to mix Tantra with its philosophy and practice. Such a path is called Vajrayana (the thunderbolt or diamond vehicle). This path involves concentration on Mantras such as Om and on Mandalas, geographic representations of the universe as well as of the human being (similar to yantras in Hindu Tantra).

The Mahayana metaphysics is in general idealistic, or dialectical, meaning that it tends to deny the possibility of the human intellect to comprehend reality, the self or Nirvana.

ii. SCHOOLS OF BUDDHISM

Vaibhashika: This is a Hinayana school. It is also called the Sarvastivada school. The followers of this school believe in the momentary dharma theory. They believe in 75 different sorts of dharmas, 72 of them conditioned and 3 unconditioned. Nirvana is an unconditioned one. Prapti is what glues the conditioned dharmas in an individual to the dharma of Nirvana. (See page 92 above for a discussion of prapti). Vaibhashikas are direct realists in theory of knowledge: they believe that we can through our senses know objects in the external world directly as they are.

Sautrantika: This is also a Hinayana school. This school also believes in the dharma doctrine, except they believe that each dharma arises in one moment, and does not even stay for a moment, but passes away the next moment, giving rise to another dharma. (It is in fact this view which is often referred to as Kshanikavada.) As a consequence, this school maintains indirect realism in theory of knowledge: when I try to know through perception an object in the external world, by the time let us say the light rays pass from the object to my eyes the object which I am trying to see has already passed out of existence, and what I am perceiving now is really only a mental representation of an object that existed a moment ago, which made an impression on my consciousness, and which I am now inferring on the basis of my present mental representation.

(See above under Differences between Hinayana and Mahayana for a general description of the Hinayana conceptions of Samsara, Nirvana and means of liberation.)

Yogachara (Vijnanavada): The term Yogachara is probably given to this school because the followers of this school practiced Yoga. And the term Vijnanavada means (only) school," signifying their doctrine that in the final analysis the universe is nothing but an impersonal consciousness. Asanga and Vasubandhu are the famous teacher-philosophers of this school a lived probably around the 5th to 7th century A. D. Their works are retranslated from Tibetan translations.

Vijnanavada holds that the belief in an external material world is mistaken. It thus comes close to what in the West is called Idealism, a philosophy which holds that ultimately in reality there are only minds and their ideas. Taking off from the Sautrantika position that we can know external objects only through our mental representations of them, the Yogacharas argue that we have no reason or evidence to believe that the representations represent anything outside of our consciousness. Thus, for instance, they say we have no reason to make any distinction between the color blue and our awareness of the color blue. As far as we are concerned, the color blue is our awareness of it. Thus, if the existence of the external object is identical with our awareness of it, then it follows that its existence is dependent on our awareness of it, because mental representations cannot exist without our being aware of them.

The same logic is applied to the existence of the selves. Vijnanavada comes to the conclusion that outside of the ideas we have in our minds we have no evidence to conclude that there is a self or mind which is aware of the ideas. The self, as far as we are concerned, exists only in the awareness of the object. The self is thus dependent on the object (or rather our awareness of it, which is the same thing) for its existence. The subject and the object are dependent on and create each other in each of us. They are two sides of the same coin.

Both the self and its object, however, are in the ultimate analysis dependent for their existence on the ultimate reality of consciousness which is like a Repertoire and holds in itself not only my self and my world, but all selves and their objects. Consciousness is like a vast stream, and in it all our past karmas are carried away like little seeds. When the karma is ripe, the seeds sprout, and when they sprout the selves and their objects arise simultaneously and thus their dualistic life begins. There is no problem for the Yogacharas of explaining personal identity because personal identity is not ultimately real.

Consciousness for the Vijnanavadins exists because it is self-revealing. And consciousness can exist without any objects. This can be shown, for example, by 1) the phenomenon of dreams where we have only consciousness or ideas without any external objects. If this is possible in some cases, then it means it is in general possible for consciousness to be without objects. The various objects of consciousness, therefore, the

Yogacharas argue, are only its creations or projections. All distinctions between self and other, subject and object, reality and knowledge, self and others are all only distinctions within consciousness, and we have no proof for their independent existence. 2) People who have Yogic perceptions report that all objects are only manifestations of consciousness. Consciousness has the potentiality of manifesting itself in its various activities. It can also manifest itself as its objects. It thus creates in us the impression that we exist as an independent entity, and that there is a world independent and outside of our self.

There are various levels to consciousness: on the surface level there are the consciousnesses of the senses (the six consciousnesses--five of the senses and one of the mind); at a deeper level there is a self-consciousness which is aware of all these and gives them a unity. Underneath this consciousness, which is within the realm of ordinary experience, there is a seed consciousness known only to enlightened men. This is an undifferentiated consciousness, and the various specific functions of consciousness arise out of this and merge back into it at the time of enlightenment. This consciousness is further indescribable except by saying that distinctions and divisions of any kind do not exist within it.

Vijnanavada, like Advaita Vedanta, makes a distinction between relative (or empirical) reality and absolute reality. It is at the level of empirical reality we have all these levels of consciousness, and consciousness projecting itself as both subject and object. When once this duality is created there is a grasping of the objects as though they are independent realities and the consequent suffering. However, when through the understanding of the four noble truths an individual realizes the illusoriness of the dualistic world, then for him the dualistic world as well as the different levels of consciousness and the consequent suffering cease to exist.

Madhyamika (Shunyavada): `Madhyami ka' means the middle (coming from their claim that they take the middle path and avoid all extremes, "extremes" meaning all mutually opposed views such as that Reality is such and such or it is not such and such). `Shunya' means emptiness or nothingness. The term `Shunyavada' signifies their view that we can only say that Reality is Emptiness or Nothingness, for no ascriptions can be made about it, not even that it exists or it does not exist, for "existence" and "non-existence" are merely relative terms which are applicable to the empirical world of ordinary experience and not to Reality as such.

Nagarjuna, who probably lived in the second century A.D., in the present Andhra Pradesh state in India, Dinnaga, and Dharmakirti are the most famous teacher-philosophers of this school. Nagarjuna is supposed to have come to the South of India from somewhere in the North, and settle down in a place named after him called Nagarjunikonda. Nagarjuna's works such as Madhyamika Sutras, Mulamadhyamika Karika, and - Vighrahavyavartini are famous till today. His philosophy is probably the acme of Indian Philosophy, at least of a certain strand of it, and it, like Shamkara's, is worthy of a somewhat

detailed study for our purposes. His philosophy is perhaps even more consistent and spectacular than that of Shamkara and takes a certain line of thinking about Reality and life to a logical limit.

Kalpana: Nagarjuna is well known in Buddhism for his startling statement that there is no difference between Samsara and Nirvana. If this is true, certain radical consequences follow for the whole religion, particularly for the four noble truths and a path to liberation. How can such a statement be true? Nagarjuna holds, like Shamkara, the distinction between empirical and absolute truths or realities. The empirical reality is a reality of Kalpana (a word which means "fabrication" or "construction"). Nagarjuna uses this term in place of Shamkara's Maya or Avidya. (Notice here that Nagarjuna lived much earlier historically than Shamkara, although we are studying him after Shamkara, and it was Shamkara who borrowed the Buddhist terms such as Maya from the Buddhists, rather than the other way around.) The empirical reality is a "construction" or "fabrication" of the mind or thought. In this reality everything is relative: substance and attribute are relative; so are cause and effect, time and space, reality and knowledge, the self and the world, and even samsara and nirvana. That means that the two items in each of the pairs depend on each other and create each other.

Samsara and Nirvana: The ideas of Samsara and Nirvana also presuppose each other and each have validity only in comparison with the other. For instance, if we don't have a higher notion of liberation, nothing in the world constitutes suffering. The world or life would be just what it is, and not something we have to run away from. Similarly, the notion of Nirvana or liberation is only a valid concept on the assumption of some suffering we suppose we have to become free from, or else it loses its validity. So, Nagarjuna says, true liberation consists in becoming free from both the notions of Samsara and Nirvana, for they are both really in the realm of Samsara, i.e., the relativistic or thought-constructed world. As the contemporary teacher U. G. Krishnamurti puts it, "The only thing we have to be free from is the very idea of becoming free." There is really no difference between Samsara and Nirvana, because they are both relativistic, thought-created notions.

Reality: Absolute reality is beyond the reach of thought. We cannot even say that it exists. For existence is a relativistic notion. We only know, for instance, this particular thing existing or not existing at this particular time and place, but we can never know anything like existence as such, let alone the existence or its opposite, viz., non-existence, of Reality in general. All our views, including all philosophical theories, about Reality are absolutely false and inapplicable. They are false because everyone of them leads to contradictions, and inapplicable because what is contradictory cannot be applied to Reality. Perhaps we can even say that all our suffering arises because we mistake what is only relative for what is absolute. The reason, or cause for this, according to Nagarjuna, is our grasping on to the world or things, and this in turn is the result of the ignorance concerning our ego. Can we say that the ignorance concerning the ego is itself in turn a result of the above mistake of considering what is only momentary and relative to be permanent and absolute?

Nagarjuna sets out to show that all our views about Reality are false because they lead to contradictions: The list of subjects he considers includes all the categories we use to describe reality: for instance, substance and attribute, cause and effect, time and space, knowledge and error, the self and the world, Samsara and Nirvana, and even the very notion of a Path. As an example, we will here consider Nagarjuna's critique of causality which is somewhat similar to that of Shamkara.

Causation: Instead of Shamkara's two alternative views Nagarjuna has four possible alternatives each of which he rejects as untenable: whatever arises, arises out of itself or arises out of another, or both out of itself and out of another, or neither out of itself nor out of another.

The first view is rejected on the grounds that if it were true, cause and effect would be the same, and hence causation would make no sense. Causation would make sense only if cause, which is different from the effect, produces the latter. The second view is the view of commonsense and also held by the Vaibhashikas and Sautrantikas. It holds that cause and effect are different from each other, and that the cause produces the effect. This view is rejected on much the same grounds on which the Nyaya view is rejected:

First, this view would amount to saying that something comes out of nothing; for, the effect would have been non-existent before it was created, and to that extent we would have to say that something that is, i.e., being, came out of something that it is not, i.e., non-being. Second, if one event causes another event, what is the relationship between the two? To say that they are related to each other as cause and effect is to beg the question, because what makes them one the cause and the other the effect in the first place? The effect that was non-existent could not have any relationship with anything, let alone that of causation. Third, if no definite relationship exists between the cause and the effect, then it means that anything can be produced out of anything. (Notice this is also an objection similar to the one Samkhya and Shamkara made against the Nyaya view.) This means that we have to abandon the notion of causality altogether because causality assumes that there is a definite relationship between two events.

The third view, namely, that a thing arises both out of itself and out of another is also rejected on grounds that a combination of two non-causes (i.e., the thing itself and another thing) cannot produce an effect. The fourth view is rejected on the grounds that that would amount to abandoning the notion of causation altogether. If none of the four possible views makes sense as a coherent view about causation, then we have to abandon the notion of causation as applicable to reality.

Nagarjuna is not saying that there is no reality as such, but that what we in our minds have constructed as reality, i.e., the world of names and forms, is an illusion. In our ignorance we take this illusory world to be the real world. This constructed world consists of 1) gross things, such as trees, cows, mountains and men, 2) the elements of the gross things, such as

the dharmas or kshanas of the Vaibhashikas and the Sautrantikas, and 3) relational entities such as tallness and shortness, heaviness and lightness, earlier and later, near and far, being alive and being dead etc., which are based on comparisons of perceptions with one another. This whole world is constructed by the mind on the basis of its perceptions.

Only direct insight can reveal the true distinction between reality itself and the world we construct out of reality. The dialectic of Nagarjuna, which consists of rejecting both a view and its opposite view (or various opposites, if there is more than one) about reality, can at best prepare us for such a direct insight by making us realize the falsity of all our views about reality, but does not produce such an original insight.

When the complete relativity of all views is realized there is no longer any reason to cling to and grasp anything in the empirical world as absolute. All distinctions, including that between samsara and Nirvana will be realized as relative and without any absolute basis, and a person will then be truly liberated. There is no path necessary, nor any useful except one of such a realization. In fact the idea of a path is part of the relative or empirical world of name and form which one has to realize as such and abandon. One might even add to this the idea that even the notion of realization is an illusory notion and we have to abandon it as well by realizing that there is nothing to realize!

Readings: Please read Pt. III (pp.111-122), Pt. V and Pt. VI-9 of the book *Compassionate Buddha*.

Questions: What are the general differences between Hinayana and Mahayana Buddhism? Compare the epistemological doctrines of the four Buddhist schools. Explain the Yogachara doctrine of Vijñānavāda. How does it show that objects have no independent existence, but are only projections of consciousness? Why does consciousness project them? Is the subject-object distinction part of this projection? Describe briefly Nagarjuna's philosophy of Shūnyavāda. What is the point of his distinction between empirical and absolute standpoints? Does he really advocate Nihilism (a Philosophy which says that there is no reality)? Give an example of Nagarjuna's destruction of categories. What is the role of *kalpana* in his thought? What sense can you make out of the Buddhist notion of Nirvana? In particular, how do you understand Nirvana as the extinction of the ego-series? How do the Buddhists explain the doctrine of Karma and rebirth by using their doctrines of momentariness and *pratitya samutpada*?

Vocabulary: Rajagrha; Ashoka; Pataliputra; Pali; Esoteric; Constituent; Monastery; Non-Returner; Stream-winner; Vairochana; Avalokiteshwara; Maitreya; Amitabha; Amida Buddhism; Idealistic; Dialectical; Unconditioned; Direct Realism; Indirect Realism; Representation; Repertoire; Asanga; Vasubandhu, Dinnaga; Dharmakirti; Nagarjuna; Categories; Substance; Attribute; Contradiction.

Glossary: Sutra Pitaka: One of the three baskets in which Buddha's teachings were collected after he died. Vinaya Pitaka: The basket containing Buddha's teachings concerning rules of conduct. Abhidharma Pitaka: The third basket containing Buddha's teachings, those pertaining to his Philosophy. Hinayana: The "lesser" vehicle; the name of a schism in Buddhism. Mahayana: The "greater" vehicle; another schism. Theravada: The doctrine of the elders. Pali: A language spoken at the time of the Buddha and derived from Sanskrit. Prajnaparamita Sutras: Texts called "The Perfection of Wisdom". Vaibhashika: One of the Hinayana schools. Sarvastivada: Another name for Vaibhashika. Sautrantika: Another Hinayana school. Yogachara: A Mahayana school. Vijnanavada: "Consciousness(-only)" school; another name for Yogachara. Madhyamika: A Mahayana Buddhist school. - Shunyavada: "Emptiness" school; another name for Madhyamika. Kshanikavada: The doctrine of momentariness. Samtana: Series. Dharma: Teaching; element (ultimate constituent of the universe). Samskṛta: Conditioned. Arhat: The enlightened one. (Lit. "Qualified.") Pratyeka Buddha: Another name for Arhat. Given by the Mahayana followers to the Hinayana's enlightened person. (Lit., Isolated Buddha.) Bodhisattva: A semi-enlightened being in Mahayana Buddhism. Prajna: Wisdom; one of the six perfections a Bodhisattva practices. The others are: Dana: (Donation) Charity. Sila: (Character) Moral perfection. Kshanti: (Patience) Endurance (of hardships etc.). Virya: (Vigor) Energy and perseverance. Dhyana: Meditation. Dharma Body: One of the three Bodies of the Buddha construed as ultimate Reality in Mahayana Buddhism. Nirmana Kaya: (Lit. Construction Body) The actual physical body of the Buddha. Sambhoga Kaya: (Enjoyment Body) The body which the Buddha acquires as a reward for his Bodhisattva activities. Madhyamika Sutras: A Madhyamika text written by Nagarjuna. Mulamadhyamika Karika: Another work by Nagarjuna. Vigrahavyavartini: A third work by Nagarjuna. Kalpana: Fabrication or construction (by the mind).

CHAPTER 12

ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF CHINESE PHILOSOPHY

1) Chinese Philosophy is practical: Just like in Indian Philosophy there are many systems of Philosophy in China. One thing that can be said to be common to all of them is their practical character. Any ideas, in order to merit consideration, must eventually make a difference in living. If philosophers in later times postulated any metaphysical ideas, it is only for the purposes of providing theoretical foundation and justification for ideas for living. For example, the theory of the five elements, or the theory of yin and yang or the theory of the Great Ultimate, postulated in later Chinese Philosophy have significance only in so far as they provided a theoretical foundation and justification in Neo-Confucianism for the ethical ideas in it. Purely theoretical investigations, with the possible exception of the School of Names (not to be confused with the Confucian doctrine of Rectification of Names) in later Chinese philosophy, have scarcely a place in Chinese philosophy. The Confucian theory of the Rectification of Names (a semantical and logical theory) is used by Confucius as a guide to human behavior more than anything else. For example, a prince's behavior must be true to the term 'prince'. It must be part of the true meaning of the term. He must follow the implications of the meaning of the term 'prince'.

2) Chinese Philosophy is basically humanistic: The center of Chinese thinking is man. Even when in Taoism Nature seems to be the center of thinking, it is still man in harmony with the Tao (or the way) of Nature that is the direction toward which Taoism moves. It is true that while Confucianism regards man as ultimate and Taoism considers Nature as ultimate, these are two poles of the same spectrum, one being emphasized in Confucianism and the other in Taoism. The concept of the Wise Man or the Superior Man, his characteristics and behavior, is at the center of both Confucianism and Taoism. Both are concerned primarily with human happiness.

3) Chinese Philosophy emphasizes harmony: Whether it is Confucianism or Taoism Chinese philosophy has a tendency to move between opposites and attempt to harmonize them. It sees the universe and man as a play between opposites which complement than oppose each other. It attempts to harmonize the opposites either by finding, as in Confucianism, a mean between the polar opposites, or becoming free from them as in Taoism, or by finding a synthesis between them, as subsequent systems of philosophy in China tended to do. For example, Neo-Confucianism tried to synthesize not only Taoism with Confucianism, but also Buddhism with both Taoism and Confucianism.

4) Although close to practical living and not ultimately severed from religion, Chinese philosophy must be distinguished from religion. It can indeed be said that religion did not have as much sway on the Chinese people as, for example, in India, primarily because the Chinese translated most of their philosophies into living, and where philosophy didn't answer some of their religious quests then they went to religion for answers and practices. The I Ching (the Book of Changes) which is one of the Confucian classics was used for the practical purpose of divination. Confucianism as an ethical code and manual for living gave rules and ceremonial practices (nothing to do with the supernatural) for living. Both Taoism and Confucianism developed their own specific yogas to enhance the quality of physical or psychological living. But ancestral worship and the quest for immortality are religious elements which developed independently and in the latter case even opposed to the philosophies (in this case Taoism which welcomed death as part of living instead of resisting it). However, in practice the Taoists as well as the Confucians and Buddhists went along with the native character of ceremonies and rituals and became part of the religious scene. So, you can find Taoist and Buddhist priests attending the same funeral together.

5) The Chinese, unlike the Indians, have no belief in rebirth and no metaphysical theory of karma which goes along with it, although they do believe in the existence of the spirits of ancestors after they have died. Confucius remained satisfied with harmonizing the individual human being with his society, while Lao Tzu emphasized a deeper transformation of the human being by reverting to his original harmony with the Tao of the universe. Any philosophy that had developed subsequent to Lao Tzu and Confucius remained subservient to these main interests. Confucius carefully avoided questions concerning the dead and the supernatural, although he acknowledged T'ien (Heaven) as a source of his inspiration and as a protective force. Later systems of Chinese philosophy struggled between a moral and a legal approach to human problems depending on which particular view of human nature they adopted--i.e., whether human nature is originally neutral or good or evil.

6) While the source of typically human problems and social evils is the corruption of human nature in Confucianism, in Taoism it is due to the corrupting influence of civilization and the consequent deviation of man from his original harmony with Nature. Accordingly, Confucianism sees correct individual and social action, including moral and social laws, as the means of solving human problems, while Taoism can only see the problems of conflict within man and between men as being fundamentally solved by the transformation of the individual. This idea Taoism shares with the rest of Eastern philosophy.

7) Reason or thought coupled with observation (and memory) are the means of knowing the world and what is right in Confucianism, although there are limitations to these. And where we don't know some matters through these means, we set them aside; and where we are in doubt, we proceed cautiously. In Taoism, on the other hand, there is a definite tendency to believe in the inadequacy of rational thought in knowing Ultimate Reality, inasmuch as it can only apprehend what is relative and limited, and hence there is an attempt to transcend it.

8) Similarly, while Confucianism advocates striving and education to correct our behavior and morals, Taoism along with the rest of Eastern philosophy emphasizes effortlessness, non-striving, and spontaneity in order to regain our harmony with the Tao.

Questions: What are some of the essential features of Chinese philosophy? Which of these are common to Eastern philosophy in general and which are special to Chinese philosophy?

Vocabulary: Yin; Yang; The Great Ultimate; Five elements; Rectification of Names; Semantical; Spectrum; Harmony; Complement; Synthesis; Ceremony; Ritual; Supernatural; Ancestor Worship; Transformation; Effortlessness; Spontaneity.

Glossary: T'ien: Heaven. Rectification of Names: (To "rectify" means to "make right".) The theory of Confucius which says the behavior of a person must correspond to the meaning of the term which properly applies to that person. (For instance, a prince must show the behavior proper to a prince.)

CHAPTER 13

HISTORICAL SURVEY OF CHINESE PHILOSOPHY

Chinese civilization, being at least 10,000 years old, is the most ancient living civilization on earth. It is customary to refer to the various periods of Chinese history by the names of the dynasties which ruled in those periods. In fact, more often than not, dates of individuals or of their works are not mentioned by the year as much as the periods to which they belong.

Chinese history can be divided into five periods: The first period dates from prehistoric China to the 6th Century B. C. The second period is the Classical period, i.e., from Confucius to the advent of Buddhism. The third is the post-Buddhist period, from the first century A. D. to the revival of Confucianism in the form of Neo-Confucianism. The fourth period is the late period which began with the Sung dynasty till the impact of Modern West (960 A. D. to 19th and 20th centuries). The last is the modern period.

The earliest recorded history in China dates back to the Shang dynasty, 1765-1122 B.C. From the bronze vessels and oracle bones that have been excavated from the ancient Shang capital at Anyang in north Honan, we can infer that there already existed ancestor worship in ancient China. The oracle bones were used to interpret communications from deities regarding mundane matters such as weather or illness. The religion was polytheistic, and one of the gods mentioned was Shang Ti who later became prominent in Chinese religion.

In the Chou period which followed the Shang period several "barbarian" tribes invaded the North Central part of China occupied by the Shang dynasty and overthrew it. These tribes acquired the culture of the Shang dynasty. The empire then was organized as a feudal empire in which different states were ruled by dukes or princes who owed allegiance to the king. This system functioned effectively and peacefully in the early stages, and as a consequence the Chou period was regarded later as the Chinese Golden Age. Duke Chou who is referred to as the ideal ruler in Chinese tradition belonged to this period. Soon, however, China disintegrated into a number of petty independent states, and by the time of Confucius there was chaos, disorder, and confusion in the empire.

Confucius was born in the State of Lu in the year 551 B.C. (The name "Confucius" is the result of latinization of K'ung-fu-tzu which means in Chinese "Master K'ung".)

Confucius' teachings which his pupils recorded were an attempt to set right the state of affairs in the society around him at his time. According to tradition, Confucius derived his inspiration from the "five classics" which existed before his time, and his own teachings are recorded in the Four Books. The Five Classics and the Four Books together are called the Confucian Canon. The five classics are: 1) Shih Ching, the Book of Poetry, a collection of verses from the Chou period; 2) Shu Ching, the Book of History, a collection of records, speeches and documents from 2000 to 700 B. C.; both these works contained moral teachings. 3) I Ching, the Book of Changes, containing formulae for explaining nature; in it there are 64 hexagrams which consist of arrangements of six broken or unbroken lines; these are used as means for divination. 4) Li Chi, Book of Rites or Ceremonial. 5) Ch'un Ch'iu, Spring and Autumn Annals, being a Chronicle of events from 722 to 464 B. C. Confucius himself is supposed to have written the last book.

While Confucius derived his inspiration from the Five Classics, his teaching is contained in the Four Books which are: 1) Lun Yu, The Analects, teachings of Confucius compiled by his pupils after his death; 2) Ta Hsueh, The Great Learning, contains Confucius' ideas concerning government; it contains Hsun Tzu's (see below) elaboration of Confucius' thought. 3) Chung Yung, Doctrine of the Mean, containing Confucius' teaching concerning regulation of life; and 4) Meng Tzu, the Book of Mencius, an elaboration of some Confucian ideas by a commentator of Confucius, Mencius.

The teachings of Confucius mainly center around how one can enrich one's humanness in one's own personal life and in relationships with others and ensure human goodness and happiness for oneself and for one's society.

Lao Tzu is supposed to be an earlier contemporary of Confucius. But it is not clear whether there ever was such a person. For one thing, the name was a generic name given to teachers of a certain kind subsequent to Confucius. For another, the work attributed to Lao Tzu, the Tao Teh Ching (The Way and Its Power) seems to have been composed around the 4th century B. C. It is a collection brief passages and may well have been written by several authors who shared the same outlook on life.

Lao Tzu advocated a simple living without greed, desire, cleverness, and selfishness, and a return to a living in harmony with Nature.

After Confucius and Lao Tzu Chinese philosophy proceeded along rather parallel lines, following the lines of Confucianism and Taoism, sometimes intermingling, until the advent of Buddhism. Even after that, Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism each retained their separate identities, although several attempts at synthesizing the various elements from these philosophies have been made to the present day. Some of the recent attempts at synthesizing include influences from Western Philosophy and Marxism.

The following is a brief account of the history of philosophy in China after Confucius and Lao Tzu.

After Confucius, his followers systematized his teachings. Many Confucians also acquired high official positions. Besides the Taoists, the Confucians also encountered the rivalry of Mohists, the followers of the philosopher Mo Tzu who lived probably in the latter part of the 5th Century B. C. Mo Tzu (468-376 B.C.) wished to go beyond the five relationships (the relationship between father and son, between elder brother and younger brother; between husband and wife; between elder and younger; and between ruler and subject) which Confucius thought formed the basic fabric of human society, and advocated rational human love as more basic than these relationships. This love goes beyond particular loyalties and looks to a solution of the problems of war and strife in a consideration of other people's interests and problems as one's own. The slogan of the Mohists was "promote general welfare and remove evil." The criterion of human happiness was utility which in turn is measured in terms of wealth, population, and contentment. Mohism added external sanctions and criteria to the internal outlook of Confucius.

One of the greatest followers of Confucius was Mencius who was born around 372 B. C. The central idea in his teaching is the innate goodness of human nature. What makes men evil is their environment. Thus Mencius placed a great emphasis on the right environment and education to foster man's innate goodness. One can perceive the Way of Heaven, the moral law of the universe, by looking inward into one's own nature. Here we can see a trace of Taoist influence on Confucianism already.

Hsun Tzu (320-235 B.C.?), contrary to Mencius, thought the basic nature of man was evil. He claimed that Confucian virtues must be practiced to root out evil in human nature and replace it with goodness.

The Book of Chuang Tzu, a work attributed to Chuang Tzu who lived in the 4th Century B. C. is a very influential Taoist work after Tao Teh Ching. It contains essays and stories which develop the same Taoist themes found in the earlier work. Chuang Tzu, like Lao Tzu, also emphasized the natural way as opposed to the artificial and contrived way of civilization. Chuang Tzu's work served as a common ground for Taoism and the Buddhism that developed in China later in the 4th or 5th Centuries A. D. (See Chapter 16, below for an account of Chuang Tzu's teachings.)

Hui Shi (380-305 B.C.?) and Kung-sun Lung (c. 380 B.C.) developed the School of Names whose main concern was the relationship between language and reality, or names and things. These philosophers seemed to be interested in knowledge for its own sake. This is probably a development of the Confucian idea of Rectification of Names (See below the chapter on Confucius) and became the basis for the development of metaphysical theories in both Confucianism and Taoism.

No specific names of philosophers are mentioned in the Yin-Yang school, but it was also influential in the classical period. The Yin-Yang philosophy supplied a theory as to the origin of the universe. The Five Agencies, Wood, Fire, Metal, Water, and Earth, according to an earlier theory, were forces which combined to give rise to the various natural phenomena of the universe. Wood, for example, is the dominant factor in spring, fire, in summer, metal in autumn and water in winter, and earth in later summer. In the Yin-Yang theory the universe is a result of the tensions between mutually opposing universal forces of yin, non-being and yang, being, the negative and positive forces. Everything in the universe, including the Five Agencies, is formed out of these. These are mutually complementary--for example, yang is the active, masculine energy and yin is the passive, feminine energy. Heaven is yang and Earth is yin. Even the schools of Confucianism and Taoism are described in terms of these principles: Confucianism is yang and Taoism is yin. One cannot exist without the other, and each easily passes into the other. This theory was influential in the formulation of Neo-Confucian metaphysical theories which sought to provide a theoretical foundation for Confucianism.

Following Hsun Tzu (see above) the philosophers of the Legalist school led by Han Fei Tzu (d. 233 B.C.) believed that human nature is originally evil. Therefore, they advocated law and authority as the basic means of ensuring order and welfare in the state. This school supplied a needed dimension of legality to the Confucian emphasis on morality to ensure that people are moral.

In the early Medieval Chinese Philosophy both the Taoist Hui-nan and the Confucian Tung Chung-Shu made use of the Five Agencies and Yin-Yang theory in their philosophies, thus finding a common ground between the two schools. This coupled with influences from Buddhism became the basis of the Neo-Confucian synthesis. Tung Chung-Shu was responsible in getting Confucianism adopted by the State as the official ideology. As a consequence, for the next thousand years Confucianism was busy consolidating its position rather than developing itself.

Buddhism: Buddhism was introduced into China in the 1st Century A. D. However, it did not become an influential philosophy until the 6th Century A. D. In its early history texts from the lesser vehicle (Hinayana) were translated into Chinese, but it was the Mahayana texts which were later translated that found a common ground with Confucianism and Taoism and thus became a major force in Chinese history. The former failed to take root in the Chinese culture because of their emphasis on the fleeting and momentary character of Reality.

Buddhism had appeal to the Chinese for several reasons: 1) Confucianism valued the educated elite while the Buddhist lay and monastic orders were open to everyone. This in spite of the considerable resistance which the Chinese had to abandoning families and renouncing worldly life to become monks. 2) Although the Idealist philosophy of the Yogacharas had no appeal to the Chinese, Taoist Yoga found kinship in their meditative

practices. 3) Buddhism tolerated the worship of spirits, gods and demons of the native religion, and its ancestor worship. It saw no need to protest against them. 4) The all-inclusive theory of reality of the Madhyamikas was not in conflict with the Chinese idea of the unity of the universe.

There are two major trends in Chinese Buddhism: one trend concerns the teachings and the other practice. Two schools of teaching were prominent: 1) The T'ien-t'ai school which is a synthesis of various Mahayana schools; 2) Hua-yen school, which is based on the Avatamsaka Sutra; (There were six other schools, but they soon disappeared before the 10th Century A. D. from the Chinese scene. The latter were either derived from the lesser vehicle (Hinayana) schools of India or were parallel to the Madhyamika and Vijnanavada schools.) The two prominent schools of practice were: 3) The Ch'an (precursor of the Japanese Zen) school ("ch'an" is derived from dhyana in Sanskrit, which means meditation); and 4) the Pure Land school derived from the Sukhavati-vyuha Sutra which developed later as Amida Buddhism in Japan.

The T'ien-t'ai school which had its beginnings in the 7th century A. D. called itself the "Round Doctrine." It regarded reality as Emptiness. According to this doctrine of Emptiness, particular things are empty of reality. They, however, had a temporary existence. Temporary existence is their Reality. This is their "True state of Being." The "rounding" consists in considering the Emptiness, temporary existence, and true Being as all identical.

The Hua-yen school is a counterpart of the Vijnapti-matra or "Consciousness-only" school of Indian Buddhism. The universe, according to this Buddhism, is a Grand Harmony of all opposites, not just opposites in consciousness, but real opposites as well, including the conscious and the unconscious, pure and impure, simple and complex.

The Ch'an school is rather a method of meditation than a system of philosophy. It derives its inspiration from the Madhyamika doctrine that we can have access to reality by negating all conceptual opposites, opposites such as production and extinction (of suffering), arising and ceasing (of things), being and non-being, unity and multiplicity etc. When a person gains such an access to reality he is enlightened.

This school claims that its teaching was first brought to China in the 7th Century A. D. by an Indian teacher called Bodhidharma. He is called the first patriarch of Ch'an Buddhism. (See below the chapter on Zen Buddhism for a biographical note on Bodhidharma.) Bodhidharma's teaching was passed on from generation to generation by various Patriarchs, the most famous among whom was the sixth patriarch Hui-neng (637-713 A. D.). After his death many disciples developed his teaching in different directions, two of the important and extant directions being the Lin-chi and Ts'ao-tung (what are called the Rinzai and Soto schools of Zen in Japan).

Zen Buddhism is a true blend of Mahayana Buddhism with Taoism. The Buddhist notion of Emptiness was similar to the Taoist notion of non-existence. Just as Taoism advocated identifying oneself with nature by clearing one's mind from all extraneous concepts which divide one from it, the Buddhists advocated freeing one's mind from all false notions of reality, particularly the notion of substantiality of things and seeing things as they really are. There is a parallelism between the passivity and spontaneity in Taoism and this "seeing things as they are." The Ch'an Buddhism incorporated the notion of spontaneity, which was not originally part of its conception of the enlightened life, in its methods of meditation, particularly in the technique of kung-an (which the Japanese later called Koan). The Koans presented a way of breaking customary molds of conceptual thinking and arriving at an open and spontaneous answer to a puzzle or a riddle. Thus was life given to the idea that Zen consisted in a non-verbal transmission of enlightenment.

In Ch'an Buddhism, however, there was always a controversy concerning whether or not enlightenment was sudden and spontaneous, or gradual. The Lin-chi (referred to above, also called Rinzai) believed that it was sudden. And the Ts'ao-tung (Soto) believed that it came about gradually. For this reason the latter did not make use of the kung-an method.

Ch'an also incorporated in it a strong feeling for nature which it lacked in its original form and which it now borrowed from Taoism.

In the middle of the 9th Century A. D. Buddhism underwent a royal persecution in which many monasteries were destroyed and monks and nuns were forced to give up their calling and revert to lay life. As a consequence Ch'an Buddhism because of its resilience became restricted to the life of the Sangha or the monastic order. Initiates came under the tutelage of the monks. On the other hand, Pure Land Buddhism, because of its emphasis on simple piety, became the religion of the populace.

According to the Pure Land school one cannot gain one's liberation through his or her own efforts. We must rely on the grace of the Buddha of Limitless light (Amitabha). It is enough to have faith in him and utter his name in order to be reborn in the Pure Land of the West, a kind of paradise. The Pure Land Buddhism developed rich mythology with its pantheon and elaborate ceremonial. Taoism too developed its own mythology and gods along with its interest in alchemy and elixirs to gain immortality.

Neo-Confucianism: Neo-Confucianism rose as a reaction against Buddhism, particularly its emphasis on suffering and the escape from it, its emphasis on renunciation of family and society, and its metaphysics which regarded all things as empty of reality. For the Confucian society and morality are absolute. The Neo-Confucian philosophy attempted to synthesize elements of Buddhism and Taoism with what they still considered valuable in the Confucian philosophy.

Neo-Confucianism had its origins in Han Yu (768-824), and was later developed in the Sung period (960-1279) in the School of Reason of the Ch'eng brothers (Ch'eng Hao, 1032-1085, and Ch'eng Yi, 1033-1108) and the philosophy of Chu Hsi. About the same time the philosophies of Lu Chiu-yuan (1139-1193) and Wang Yang-ming (1473-1529) constituting the School of Mind also arose. A further development of Neo-Confucianism took place in the Empirical school of the Ching period (1644-1911).

Chu Hsi's philosophy is a great example of the syntheses which Neo-Confucianism effected: In his philosophy the Great Ultimate (T'ai-chi) included ch'i (stuff) and li (principle). Both are needed for the constitution of things: the former supplied the matter and the latter the principle of their function. The Great Ultimate first gives rise to yang (the male principle) under the influence of ch'i, and then to yin (the female principle). Yang and yin through their interplay give rise to the many things and forces of the universe as we know it. The Great Ultimate is also the principle of goodness, thus providing the metaphysical foundation for the Confucian moral ideas.

Man has li which is the same for all men, while the Ch'i in men differs from man to man. If one's Ch'i is muddy or cloudy then his actions and character are inferior. To make his li shine forth and thus be ultimately united with the Great Ultimate one must practice purifying his Ch'i. This can be done by knowing the nature of desire and taming it. This is facilitated by regular meditation. Here we can see how Chu Hsi has achieved a synthesis of Confucian, Taoist and Buddhist ideas.

The School of Reason posited both Ch'i and Li as ultimate realities. Wang Yang-ming, however, followed Lu Hsiang-shan (1139-1192 A. D.) who thought that Li is the ultimate principle of reality. He claimed that Reason is what is ultimately real. Although the world is real, mind is the ultimate reality, for it is only through consciousness or reason that one becomes aware of things. The same Li that governs the universe also governs the human mind. If a person realizes the identity of the Li in his mind with the Li of the universe he will realize his unity with the universe. The essence of the Mind is love. Universal love is the basis for existence and relationships, since in it are united the mind, heaven, and earth. Wang thought knowledge gives rise to enlightenment, not knowledge in the sense of analytical investigation, but knowledge as a sort of contemplation, in the manner of Buddhist dhyana. The intuitive knowledge gained thus releases the goodness in man, Wang believed.

In the Empirical school of Tai Chen (1723-1777) neither Ch'i nor L'i is above the other. They cannot be separated from each other. Both are needed for the constitution of things. They are just different ways of looking at things. We must turn our attention away from metaphysical theories to the individual and his place in society.

Recent Chinese Philosophy: In the last century Chinese philosophy busied itself absorbing Western Philosophy and Marxism and integrating them with its traditional

philosophy. Questions: Mention the different philosophically significant periods in Chinese philosophy and some of their essential features.

Vocabulary: Oracle; Polytheistic; Feudal; Duke; Divination; Chronicle; Sanctions; Innate; Extinction; Multiplicity; Enlightenment; Substantiality; Riddle; Transmission; Monastery.

Glossary: Shang Dynasty (1765-1122 B. C.); Sung Dynasty (960-1279 A.D.); Anyang: Shang Capital in North Honan; Chou Dynasty (1000-600 B. C.), the period which followed the Shang Dynasty; Kung-fu-Tzu (Master K'ung), the Chinese name of Confucius of which the latter is a Latinization. Shih Ching: The Book of Poetry, one of the Five Classics of ancient Chinese tradition, the other four being: Shu Ching: The Book of History; I Ching: The Book of Changes; Li Chi: The Book of Rites and Ceremonial; and Ch'un Ch'iu: Spring and Autumn Annals. Hexagram: A pattern of six lines used in I Ching divination. Lun Yu: The Analects of Confucius. Ta Hsueh: The Great Learning, one of the four Confucian Books regarded as containing the teachings of Confucius, the other three being: Ta Hsueh: The Great Learning; Chung Yung: The Doctrine of the Mean; Meng Tzu: The Book of Mencius, a commentator of Confucius. Tao Teh Ching: (The Way and Its Power), Lao Tzu's great classic. Mo Tzu: (468-376 B. C.) A rival of Confucian philosophy; advocated rational human love. Mohists: The followers of Mo Tzu. Hsun Tzu: (320-235 B. C.) A Confucian philosopher who thought that human nature is basically evil. The Book of Chuang Tzu: Work attributed to Chuang Tzu, a follower of Lao Tzu; 4th Century B. C. Hui Shi (380-305 B. C.) and Kung-sun Lung (c. 380 B. C.): authors of the School of Names which was interested in the relationship between language and reality. Yin-yang School: A later Confucian school which believed that the universe is a result of the tensions between yang, the positive force and yin, the negative force. Five Agencies: Wood, Fire, Metal, Water, and Earth. Han Fei Tzu (d. 233 B. C.): Philosopher of the Legalist School who believed that law and authority are needed to ensure order and welfare in the state. Hui-nan: A Taoist philosopher. Chung-Shu: A Confucian philosopher. Tung Chung-Shu: A philosopher who attempted a synthesis of Taoism and Confucianism. Yogacharas: Idealist Mahayana Buddhist Philosophers. Madhyamikas: One of the Mahayana Buddhist schools which claimed that all things are empty of substance (or own essence). T'ien-t'ai: (The Round Doctrine) Mahayana Chinese Buddhist school which synthesized various Mahayana elements: regarded Emptiness, temporary existence and true Being as identical. Hua-yen School: Chinese Buddhist school based on the Mahayana Avatamsaka Sutra. Regards the universe as a grand harmony of all opposites. Vijnanavada: Same as Yogachara (see above). Ch'an: The Chinese version of Zen Buddhism (the word is derived from the Sanskrit work "Dhyana" meaning meditation). Pure Land School: A Mahayana school derived from the Sukhavati-vyuha Sutra, precursor of Japanese Amida Buddhism. Believes that one can obtain salvation by praying to Amitabha (a Bodhisattva) and reciting his name. Wu Liang: A Chinese Emperor of the 6th Century A. D. with whom Bodhidharma had a dialogue. Bodhidharma: An Indian teacher who is said to have brought Ch'an teaching to China in the 6th Century A. D. He is called the first patriarch of Ch'an Buddhism. Hui-neng: (637-713 A.D.) A

Ch'an teacher, the sixth patriarch of Ch'an Buddhism. Lin-chi: The Chinese precursor of Rinzai Zen, the sudden enlightenment school. Ts'ao-teng: The Chinese precursor of Soto Zen Buddhism, the gradual enlightenment school. Kung-an: Public document (Japanese - Koan) A riddle to contemplate on in meditation exercises in Lin-chi Buddhism. Amitabha: One of the semi-enlightened Buddhist Bodhisattvas who is worshipped in Pure Land Buddhism. Chu Hsi: (1130-1200 A.D.) A great Neo-Confucian philosopher who attempted a synthesis of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. Han Yu (768-824): A Confucian philosopher who presaged Neo-Confucian revival. Ch'eng Brothers (Ch'eng Hao, 1032-1085 and Ch'eng Yi, 1033-1108): Philosophers of the School of Reason who claimed that Reason is what is ultimately real. Lu Chiu-yuan (1139-1193) and Wang Yang-ming (1473-1529): Philosophers of the School of Mind which believed that Li or 'Principle' is the Ultimate Reality and governs both the mind of man and the universe. When man sees the identity of the Li in his mind with the Li of the universe he realizes his oneness with the universe. Tai Chen (1723-1777): Philosopher of the Empirical School of the Ch'ing period (1644-1911) which believed that we must turn our attention away from mere theories to individuals and their place in society. Tai Chi: The Great Ultimate. Li: Principle or function. Ch'i: Stuff or Matter. Li and Ch'i are both important concepts in the synthesizing philosophies of Neo-Confucianism. Lu Hsiang-shan (1139-1192 A.D.): Neo-Confucian philosopher of the School of Mind (see above).

CHAPTER 14

THE TEACHINGS OF CONFUCIUS

Confucius: Confucius was born in 551 B. C. in the province of Lu. His origins were rather humble. He made his living as a court official overseeing the granary, sheep, and oxen. He acquired considerable education and was well versed in the traditional education, studying the "Five Classics." He thought in his teaching he was editing and commenting these traditional classics rather than propounding any new doctrines of his own. Education being his passion, he set out to teach youngsters, rich and poor alike, in li or ceremonial. He believed in universal education, and so he made it possible even to students of the humblest means to receive instruction from him for very nominal fees. His pupils were "thousands" in number, and because of the skills in ceremony and government they received from him they became indispensable to the rulers of their times, and were very influential in propagating his teachings. His school had six disciplines in its curriculum: history, poetry, government, propriety, music, and divination. It became the traditional model for education in China.

Because of his reputation Confucius soon gained ministerial positions in the government of the Duke of Lu, but he was too honest and successful. So there was intrigue against him, as a consequence of which he resigned his position as Chief Minister. At age 55 he left the state of Lu and travelled throughout China, hoping to find princes who would implement his ideas of government. He was not successful in his efforts. In 484 B. C. he was invited to return to his province where he spent the rest of his life writing and teaching. He died in 479 B. C.

Even though in his own life he was not very successful, Confucius' teachings and the way of life he advocated have had a profound influence on the Chinese people and culture. Confucian classics became the basis on which even the civil service examinations were held in China for a number of centuries.

Teachings: Confucius set out to correct the chaos and confusion in the society around him. His own practical experience in political life gave him some insights into the problems. He thought the problems of people in the society arose from the rulers not ruling morally and not caring for their subjects. So he urged that the rulers should rule with

integrity, care for the needs and welfare of the people as they would care for themselves.

In his view knowing humanity is more important than knowing nature, for if we cannot know and regulate our own behavior we can far less understand and control nature. Humanity is the source of human goodness and happiness. The principles of action found within humanity itself must provide guidance for the happiness of man. The essence of these principles must lie in the characteristics of man which make him human. This is why his philosophy is to be characterized as social humanism.

What are these principles which make men human? The first of these is jen which simply means humanness or human-heartedness. The Chinese character for jen is composed of two characters, one which means 'man' and the other which means 'two'. Hence, the word jen does not refer to individual humanness as much as humanness in relationship to other men. Confucianism saw no separation between the individual and society. The individual exists only in relationship with other individuals, and society is a network of individual relationships. The word is also sometimes translated as 'goodness'. Jen or humanness is supported by several other principles as the following:

1) Li: Next to Jen this is perhaps the most important of all Confucian principles. It means 'ceremony' or 'ritual'. Ceremony or ritual can be understood in three different ways, all of which were probably meant by Confucius: a) First it means the specific ceremonies and rituals of the time honored Chinese tradition (particularly of the Chinese "golden age" of the Chou period which he respected a great deal) including religious rites which Confucius wished to preserve. b) Ritual and ceremony which defined social relationships five of which Confucius regarded as basic to the fabric of society: i) between father and son; ii) between elder brother and younger brother; iii) between husband and wife; iv) between elder and younger; and v) between ruler and subject. The son should show filial piety to the father; the younger brother should show respect to the elder brother; the wife should obey her husband; the younger person should show deference to the elder; and the subject should have loyalty to the ruler. Reciprocally, the father should be kind toward his son, the elder brother should show nobility toward his younger brother, the husband should show righteous behavior toward his wife, the elders should have humane consideration, and the rulers should be benevolent. c) The third meaning of 'ceremony' is propriety. In personal conduct one should be self-disciplined. Li provides harmony and balance in the individual as well as in relationships between men. By practicing Li ultimately there will be harmony between men, earth, and Heaven and it will be possible to incorporate the Tao or the will of Heaven among men.

2) Hsiao meaning 'filial piety' is the next basic principle. This expresses the Chinese emphasis on family as the basic rubric on which society is built. It connotes reverence and respect for the family. By extension Hsiao is also a moral and social virtue because the same

respect and reverence would also be extended to the other members of the family, and to humanity in general. When we act according to Hsiao we also act according to Jen.

3) Yi meaning 'righteousness' is to act according to what is right in situations because it is right and not because it profits oneself. It includes the ability to 'see' what is right and the inclination to do what is right.

4) Shu meaning 'reciprocity' is expressed as "Do not do unto others as thou shalt not be done." This is a negative version of the Golden Rule. While one should repay kindness with kindness, one should repay evil with justice.

The above virtues are embodied in what Confucius called Chun Tzu or the superior man. The Superior man acts according to the maxim of the golden mean avoiding extremes in all situations. He is a man of character. He does the right things not because of social sanctions, but because he is so inclined. He is proper in his behavior. He is sincere and self-disciplined. He has regard and fellow-feeling for others. In all senses of the term, he is a real gentleman.

Confucianism also makes place for a sort of logic in its philosophy: it is called the "Rectification of Names" (Cheng Ming). It consists in making relationships, duties and institutions conform to the meanings of the terms for them as they are supposed to be, in other words, their conceptual or ideal meanings. A prince must act like a prince and not like a servant or crook or a minister. A father must act like a father, or he is not a "real" father. He is not fulfilling the meaning of the term "father".

About matters of religion Confucius was mostly non-committal. He would ask people to participate in time-honored ritual and ceremonies, but handed out no beliefs concerning God, gods, heaven, or life after death. His primary concern was man in this life and in society. He did, however, believe that his own teachings had the support and protection of T'ien or Heaven, which is one of the ancient Chinese ways of talking of God.

The following passage from the Great Learning probably conveys Confucius' teaching more than any others:

The ancients [i.e., the ancient kings] who wished to cause their virtue to shine forth first ordered well their own states. Wishing to order well their states, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they first cultivated their persons. Wishing to cultivate their persons, they first rectified their hearts. Wishing to rectify their hearts, they first sought to be sincere in their thoughts. Wishing to be sincere in their thoughts, they first extended to the utmost their knowledge. Such extension of knowledge lay in the investigation of things. Things being investigated, their knowledge became complete. Their knowledge being complete, their thoughts were sincere. Their thoughts being sincere, their

hearts were then rectified. Their heart being rectified, their persons were cultivated. Their persons being cultivated, their families were regulated. Their families being regulated, their states were rightly governed. Their states being rightly governed, the whole kingdom was made tranquil and happy. --(from *The Great Learning*, excerpt reprinted in the *World Bible*, p. 509, Ed. by Robert O. Ballou, New York, The Viking Press, 1944.)

Questions: Mention the basic tenets and principles of the teachings of Confucius and explain how they illustrate some of the basic themes of Eastern philosophy.

Vocabulary: Propriety; Intrigue; Filial Piety; Righteousness; Rectification.

Glossary: Li: Ceremony or ritual. Jen: Humanness or benevolence. Hsiao: Filial piety. Yi: Righteousness; Shu: Reciprocity. Chun Tzu: The Superior Man. Cheng Ming: Rectification of Names.

CHAPTER 15

TAOISM

LAO TZU

Lao Tzu is a Chinese philosopher who lived in the sixth century B.C. His teaching and the philosophy based on it are called Taoism. Lao Tzu is a contemporary Confucius. Not much is known of his life except that Confucius and he are reputed to have met. Taoism, like Zen Buddhism, is a way of life rather than just a Philosophy. Lao Tzu's teaching had its roots in a more ancient literature and wisdom of the Chinese. It is the work attributed to him called Tao Teh Ching that will occupy our attention for a moment, and not the vast body of literature which his followers have produced. After Lao Tzu Taoism has fallen into disrepute because of its interest in alchemy, magic, ancestor worship, elixirs to attain immortality and so forth. Our main interest is in the teachings of Tao Teh Ching.

Tao Teh Ching means "The Way and Its Power." Tao is the way of Nature or of the universe or what might in other philosophies be construed as ultimate Reality. It could also be compared to the concept of Rta (the law) in the Rg Veda. It is what governs the universe. In Taoism man is considered an integral part of nature. He is originally in harmony with nature. But culture and civilization have estranged man from nature to the extent that he becomes alienated from himself as well as from nature. Much of typically human evil such as wars, jealousy, competition, hatred, is attributable to this estrangement. Part of this estrangement consists of man's self-centered thinking, his being proud of his possessions and actions, putting himself above others, and being selfish. Instead of going along with the course of things, he sets himself up against it and causes confusion and conflict within himself, and between himself and his fellow men. As a consequence, there is disharmony, conflict, and pain inside oneself, and competition, violence, crime, and wars outside of oneself.

The way to remedy this situation is by learning to act selflessly without desires, without setting oneself up above others, without making "much ado" about what one does, without brandishing one's possessions in front of others; and by disowning things and actions as soon as one has them or does them. The wise man learns to enjoy his living without having to possess things or people. He delves deep into his own emptiness. He sets himself as an example without appearing (or trying) to do so. He does not encourage competition and greed among people. Finally, he learns to live simply. The consequence of this is what

we might call "centering" within oneself, finding oneself in harmony once again with the Tao in oneself, and therefore with the Tao in the universe.

The Tao Teh Ching starts by talking about the Tao in itself. In itself the Tao is unnameable, much like the Nirguna (qualitiless) Brahman of the Upanishads. Yet when the human mind thinks of it it is thought of as the origin or source of all things. In that respect it is similar to the Saguna Brahman (Brahman with qualities) of the Upanishads. The distinction here is between the noumenal and phenomenal aspects of Ultimate Reality. The phenomenal aspect reflects human thinking through concepts. And it is also human thinking that can think of things only in terms of opposites, opposites such as good and evil, and beautiful and ugly. For thinking can only be carried out in terms of concepts, and concepts cannot be used except in terms of contrasts and opposites. In reality, no such opposites exist. (There is also a trend in Taoism and Chinese Philosophy in general to think that the universe is generated and controlled by opposite and complementary principles: yin and yang, the female and male principles which in a sense are opposite, but which are better construed as complementary. But these complementary principles as well as the phenomenal Tao must be the products of human thought. See the next chapter for more on yin and - yang.)

The Tao Teh Ching suggests that the good or beauty which the human mind can think of, since it can only exist in opposites, is in itself evil or ugly. This opposition Tao Teh Ching sees as the source of ego-centeredness and therefore of personal and social evil. Furthermore, the opposites generate each other: there is no good which the human mind can think of without at the same time thinking of something else being evil and vice versa. For instance, as soon as I am aware of my action as "good", I am aware of it as such only in contrast to someone else's (or my own previous) action being not so good or being evil; and this is bound to generate an ego-centric pride and sense of superiority which in turn produce jealousy, competition, interpersonal conflict, and other evils. Thus, as the Tao Teh Ching says, we make much ado about what we are, about what we have and about what we do.

The Tao Teh Ching thus talks about the Wise Man and how he leads his life: He knows the course of things, what their nature is, and how they naturally behave, and flows with them, without resistance, without effort, easily and not causing any conflict within himself or with the surroundings, environment, and people around him. He can taste the richness of life in his own emptiness, for he knows that when his cup is empty it is overflowing. He also knows that this empty cup of his can never be completely filled with all kinds of possessions, for no matter how much one fills it there is always a lack in it. He does what he has to do in life, and does not brag about it. When he does something for others, he takes no credit for it; instead, he gives others credit for it. He does not show off his possessions, for he knows that that only causes jealousy. He also knows that ultimate happiness, if there is any such state, is not something you can know or brag about, for as soon as you know it you become other than it. If all this discussion sounds awfully close to the concept of Nishkama karma in the Bhagavad Gita, well it is!

If the Wise Man happens to be a ruler, he would not cherish in oppressive rule of his subjects; he would not encourage competition among his people; people would feel his rule as if no one is in fact ruling, for he uses very little, if any, force or oppression. Nor does he cherish war or conflict with neighboring countries; for he takes no pleasure in killing fellow human beings, particularly for glory and victory.

Please read the whole of Tao Teh Ching: it is one of the most beautiful pieces of world literature you can read. Besides, the translation you are reading is one of the clearest I have come across.

Questions: Describe the basic teachings of Taoism as you find them in Lao Tzu's Tao Teh Ching. What similarities do you find between these teachings and the teachings of the Upanishads and Bhagavad Gita?

Vocabulary: Ado; Phenomenal; Noumenal.

Glossary: Lao Tzu: The ancient Chinese sage who founded Taoism. Tao Teh Ching: "The Way and Its Power." The work of Lao Tzu; the basic work of Taoism. Tao: "The Way". - Nirguna Brahman: "Qualitiless Brahman" in the Upanishads. Saguna Brahman: "Brahman with qualities" (the phenomenal Brahman) in the Upanishads. Yang: The "masculine" or positive energy. Yin: The "feminine" or negative energy.

CHAPTER 16

TAOISM

CHUANG TZU

Not much is known about the life of Chuang Tzu, except that he belonged to the fourth-third Century (399-295) B.C., that his real name was Chou, that he was a small official and that he turned down an offer to become the prime minister to keep his freedom. He not only popularized the teachings of Lao Tzu, but also took them to their logical limit. We can indeed say that he ranks among the greatest of philosophers, Western or Eastern.

The Book of Chuang Tzu is a compilation of works attributed to him, but probably also contains interpolations by later authors. It contains 32 small books, each containing an anecdote which Chuang Tzu relates or a conversation between him and a contemporary of his, or between Confucius or Lao Tzu and others.

Chuang Tzu is not a systematic philosopher. His writing is, however, highly suggestive, and contains witty and caustic remarks about and even arguments against his contemporaries. Some passages seem to be logical refutations of opponents' points of view. His writings are full of rich images and metaphors and read more like parables.

Chuang Tzu's teaching is full of paradoxes: "Great speech does not say anything. Great humanity is not humane (through any special effort). Great modesty is not yielding. Great courage does not injure. Tao that is displayed is not Tao."

Chuang Tzu suggests a total freedom, a freedom from all sorts of opposites which the human mind labors under--right and wrong, good and evil, and even happiness and suffering. A person who lives in Tao is not only in harmony or tune with Infinity and the infinite point of view, but he is also in harmony with the finite day-to-day world. So, Chuang Tzu advocates adopting the Infinite point of view: because the finite point of view is limited, it brings forth conflict, disharmony and pain. He advises resting or taking shelter in Nothingness or the Infinite Tao by eschewing all seeking, knowledge, virtue, civilization and polish. Central to his teaching is the notion of Wu-Wei or "non-action" which we will explore in the following essay:

The Infinite and the Finite: The Tao (meaning, "the Way") is one, infinite, nameless and formless. From Tao, by its transformations through Yin and Yang (the active and passive principles of the universe), all things in the universe are produced.

In the great beginning there was non-being. It had neither being nor name. The One originates from it; it has oneness, but not yet physical form. When things obtain it and come into existence, that is called virtue (which gives them their individual character). That which is formless is divided [into yin and yang] and from the very beginning going on without interruption is called destiny (ming, fate). Through movement and rest it produces all things. (Chang, 202)

Tao is everywhere and is in constant flux. "To speak of it as existing or as non-existing is a one-sided presentation of It" (Legge, 729). Tao is that which makes things what they are. The limits defining things do not pertain to the infinite Tao.

The wise man who penetrates the Tao, is identified with the infinite; he understands the principles of things and cannot be harmed by things:

The Record says, "When one is identified with One, all things will be complete with him. When he reaches the point of having no subjective feelings, spiritual beings will submit to him."

One who knows Tao will surely penetrate the principles of things and.... He who understands their application in various situations will not injure himself with material things. A man of perfect virtue cannot be burnt by fire, nor drowned by water.... It does not mean he puts himself in these situations.... It means that he discriminates between safety and danger, and remains calm...and is careful about taking or not taking an action...." (Chang, 207)

Nature: Nature is spontaneous and constantly changing, and transforming itself. Nature, being an expression of the Tao, is perfect in itself. It lacks nothing. The man who travels in the realm of the infinite is tranquil, because nothing disturbs him. To him life and death are equal. They are part of nature's transformations:

The pure man of old slept without dreams and awoke without anxiety. He ate without indulging in sweet tastes and breathed deep breaths.... He knew neither to love life nor to hate death. He did not rejoice in birth, nor did he resist death.... He accepted [his body] with pleasure, and forgetting [life and death] he returned to the natural state. (Chang, 192)

When asked by his friend Hui Shih why he didn't mourn his wife's death and instead went on singing and beating on an earthen bowl, Chuang Tzu replied:

When she died, how could I help being affected? But as I think the matter over, I realize that originally she had no life; and not only no life, but she had no form, she had no material force (ch'i). In the limbo of existence and non-existence, there was transformation and the material force was evolved. The material force ... was transformed to become life, and now birth has transformed to become death. This is like the rotation of the four seasons, spring, summer, fall, and winter. Now she

lies asleep in the great house (the universe). For me to go about weeping and wailing would be to show my ignorance of destiny. Therefore I desist. (Chan, 209)

Since by itself Nature is perfect, the best thing to do is not to disturb it. See what happens if one does:

The Ruler of the Southern Ocean was Shu, the Ruler of the Northern Ocean was Hu, and the Ruler of the Centre was Chaos. Shu and Hu were continually meeting in the land of Chaos, who treated them very well. They consulted together how they might repay his kindness, and said, 'Men all have seven orifices for the purpose of seeing, hearing, eating, and breathing, while this (poor) Ruler alone has not one. Let us try and make them for him.' Accordingly they dug one orifice in him every day; and at the end of seven days Chaos died. (Legge, 314-315)

How does corruption of human nature take place?

Now there are five things which produce (in men) the loss of their (proper) nature. The first is (their fondness for) the five colours which disorder the eye, and take from it its (proper) clearness of vision; the second is (their fondness for) the five notes (of music), which disorder the ear and take from it its (proper) power of hearing; the third is (their fondness for) the five odours which penetrate the nostrils, and produce a feeling of distress all over the forehead; the fourth is (their fondness for) the five flavors, which deaden the mouth, and pervert its sense of taste; the fifth is their preferences and dislikes, which unsettle the mind, and cause the nature to go flying about. These five things are all injurious to the life....(Legge, 376-7)

...in the setting up of (the ideas of) glory and disgrace, we see the cause of those evils; in the accumulation of property and wealth, we see the causes of strife and contention. (Legge, 563)

Chuang Tzu says that it is delight in benevolence and love of knowledge that produce great disorder.

...delight in benevolence tends to disorder that virtue (as proper to the nature); delight in righteousness sets the man in opposition to what is right in reason; delight in (the practice of) ceremonies is helpful to artful forms; ... delight in sageness is helpful to ingenious contrivances; delight in knowledge contributes to fault-finding. If all men were to rest in the instincts of their nature, to keep or to extinguish these ... delights might be a matter of indifference; but if they will not rest in those instincts, then those eight delights begin to be imperfectly and unevenly developed or violently suppressed, and the world is thrown into disorder.... Therefore, the superior man, who feels himself constrained in the administration of the world will find it his best way to do nothing. (Legge, 341)

So, Chuang Tzu advocates abolishing sageness and casting away knowledge to restore order to human nature. Lao Tzu asks Confucius in one of his dialogues:

..."to love all men" is not that vague and extravagant? "To be seeking to allow no selfish thoughts" that is selfishness! (Legge, 387)

In another he asks:

..."transforming others--is it not an excessive multiplication of your business? (Legge 636)

Knowledge: Knowledge means separation of oneself from oneself. If we renounce knowledge we may be unconscious, but we will not be separated from our roots. So, a wise man is not proud of his knowledge. He knows its limits and goes beyond into the unknown and can live in the unknown. Real knowledge is to see all in one. It's only our superficial knowledge that breaks the universe into many (Merton 40-41).

When Cloud-spirit was troubled and wanted to be advised, Energy simply kept on beating his thighs and dancing. When pressed, the latter simply exclaimed, "Ah! Ah!" and finally, "I do not know, I do not know." When they happened to meet again after three years, Cloud-spirit lost no time in demanding more satisfactory response from Energy. The latter, however, did not seem very enthusiastic about giving it: "I wander on without knowing what I want. I roam about without knowing where I am going. I live as if in sport, apparently keeping myself busy, but my eyes are fixed on the undecieving. What should I know?" This was not quite satisfactory for Cloud-spirit, for he was not all by himself, he had people following him, he belonged to a community from which he could not escape. He wanted to know how Energy would behave in a situation like this. Energy finally gave the following answer:

"Ah! Have your mind nourished! Just be abiding in non-doing, and things will go their way all by themselves. Demolish your body. Spit out your intelligence. Forget this and that. Identify with the Infinite (hsing-ming). Let the mind be loosened. Let the spirit be dissolved. Be unconcerned with everything as though in a trance. Multitudes and multitudes of things and each one of them returns to its root. Each returning to its root knows nothing of how and why. Utterly unconscious of itself yet never separated is it [from the root] till the end of its life. If it should have any knowledge of itself, that would mean a separation [of itself from itself]. It never asks its name. It is free from all motivations. Each has its reason to thrive by itself." (Legge, 27-28)

All opposites, concepts and values are relative to the point of view of the mind which views them. The mind is unable to judge which one of them is absolutely correct, because it cannot decide which is the most valid point of view. Things are such and such only because people say they are so and so.

Good and bad are also relative notions: What is good for one, at a certain time, for a certain purpose, in a particular context, is not good for another in another context.

These ideas have the consequence of not holding on to anything in life as absolute and fixed, and that non-holding alone enables one to repose in the Infinite where there is no attempt to know or fathom the limits of things. From that Infinite point of view all opposites, indeed all points of view are equally valid (that's why the wise man is ready to agree with anyone easily, for he has no particular position to maintain of his own), yet none are absolutely valid. Therefore, the wise man, being free from the world of distinctions and opposites, has no trouble living in this world. He does not press on any point of view as his own, and try to mould the world according to it. So, the wise man is a man of non-action. He is able to participate in life and death with complete equanimity. He does not move unless moved by circumstances. He remains passive and does not assert himself.

Just as Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu reminds us that opposites invoke and generate each other: Opposites are different ways of looking at the same thing. If something is A then it is not non-A. What is involves what is not. The that is produced by the this and the this by that. The this is also that when this and that have no opposites.

When there is life there is death, and when there is death there is life....Because of the right, there is wrong, and because of the wrong, there is the right.... Therefore, the sage does not proceed along these lines (of right and wrong, and so forth) but illuminates the matter with Nature. (Chang, 183)

All things are so and so only relatively speaking :

People say to each other, 'I am I.' How do they know that their 'I' is the real 'I'? Suppose you say you dream you are a bird and fly way up in the sky or you dream you are a fish and dive deep into the ocean. We cannot know whether the man now speaking is awake or is dreaming. As we reach the point of satisfaction, [we are so at ease with ourselves] that we do not even smile. When a smile does come forth, we do not even think of manipulating for it to come. We put ourselves at the manipulation [of Nature] and ignore all transformations. With this we enter into the realm of vacuous nature which is one. (Chang, 200)

All things are so and so because they are subject to limited perspectives. The same thing appears different from different perspectives. Things are relative because they are such and such only from a particular perspective. Since we cannot extricate ourselves from a perspective, we can never have an absolute knowledge of anything. If the same thing has many appearances depending on the perspectives, which one of these perspectives is correct? All knowledge, therefore, is of the relative.

Formerly, I, Kwang Kau, dreamt that I was a butterfly, a butterfly flying about, feeling that it was enjoying itself. I did not know that it was Kau. Suddenly I awoke, and was myself again, the veritable Kau. I did not know whether it had formerly been Kau dreaming that he was a butterfly, or it was now

a butterfly dreaming that it was Kau. But between Kau and a butterfly there must be a difference. This is a case of what is called the Transformation of Things. (Legge, 245)

Again:

If a man sleeps in a damp place, he will dry up and die. Is that true of eels? If a man lives up in a tree, he will be frightened and tremble. Is that true of monkeys? Which of the three knows the right place to live?" (Chang, 187)

But from the point of view of the Infinite, everything is true from its own perspective, and all perspectives are equal. In that sense the Tao is found in everything. The wise man sees everything as one. A scholar of limited views is bound to his own views and cannot be talked to about the Tao (Legge 423).

Words, Scholars and Disputations: Words cannot express the Tao. The wise do not speak and those who speak are not wise. Chuang Tzu spurns disputations and debates. He announces:

Disputations are clear indication of not seeing things clearly. (Legge, 237)

In fact, Chuang Tzu makes fun of logicians and philosophers who indulge in disputes:

Since you made me enter into this discussion with you, if you have got the better of me and not I of you, are you indeed right, and I indeed wrong? If I have got the better of you and not you of me, am I indeed right and you indeed wrong? Is the one of us right and the other wrong? Are we both right or both wrong? Since we cannot come to a mutual and common understanding, men will certainly continue in darkness on the subject. (Legge, 243)

Whom shall I employ to adjudicate in the matter? If I employ one who agrees with you, how can he, agreeing with you, do so correctly? And the same may be said, if I employ one who agrees with me. It will be the same if I employ one who differs from us both or one who agrees with us both. In this way I and you and those others would not all be able to come to a mutual understanding; and shall we then wait for that (great sage)? (Legge, 243)

Chuang Tzu argues in the manner of his contemporary logicians:

Take the case of some words. I do not know which of them are in any way connected with reality or which are not at all connected with reality. If some that are so connected and some that are not so connected are connected with one another, then as regards truth or falsehood the former cease to be in any way different from the latter. However, just as an experiment, I will now say them: If there

was a beginning, there must have been a time before the beginning began, and if there was a time before the beginning began, there must have been a time before the time before the beginning began. If there is being, there must also be not-being. If there was a time before there began to be any not-being, there must also have been a time before the time before there began to be any not-being. But here am I, talking about being and not-being and still do not know whether it is being that exists and not-being that does not exist, or being that does not exist and not-being that really exists! I have spoken, and do not know whether I have said something that means anything or said nothing that has any meaning at all. (Waley, 24-5)

...if there were indeed only one thing, there would be no language with which to say so. And in order that anyone should state this, there must be more language in which it can be stated. Thus their one thing together with their talk about the one thing makes two things. And their one thing together with their talk and my statement about it makes three things. And so it goes on, to a point where the cleverest mathematician could no longer keep count, much less an ordinary man. (Waley, 25)

Philosophers get worked up about differences which in reality are the same much like the monkeys in the story of Three in the Morning:

What is meant by Three in the morning? In Sung there was a keeper of monkeys. Bad times came and he was obliged to tell them that he must reduce their ration of nuts. 'It will be three in the morning and four in the evening,' he said. The monkeys were furious. 'Very well then,' he said, 'you shall have four in the morning and three in the evening.' The monkeys accepted with delight.

Self and the Will: Speaking of the self, Chuang Tzu says, that it exists only through the feelings of pleasure and pain yet we do not know their origins:

Pleasure and anger, sorrow and joy, anxiety and regret, fickleness and fear, impulsiveness and extravagance, indulgence and lewdness come to us like music from the hollows or mushrooms from damp. Day and night they alternate within us but we don't know where they come from. Alas! these are with us morning and evening. It is here where they are produced! Without them (the feelings mentioned above) there would not be I. And without me who will experience them? They are right near by. But we don't know who causes them. It seems that there is a True Lord who does so, but there is no indication of his existence. (Chang, 181)

There is no weapon more deadly than the will. (Legge 524) What produces the impulse of the will?

Honours and riches, distinctions and austerity, fame and profit; these six things produce the impulses of the will. Personal appearance and deportment, the desire of beauty and subtle reasonings, excitement of the breath and cherished thoughts; these six things produce errors of the mind. Hatred and longings, joy and anger, grief and delight; these six things are the entanglements to virtue. Refusals and approachments, receiving and giving, knowledge and ability; these six things obstruct the course of the Tao. When these four conditions, with the six causes of each do not agitate the breast, the mind is correct. Being correct, it is still; being still, it is pellucid; being pellucid, it is free from preoccupation; being free from preoccupation, it is in the state of inaction which it accomplishes everything.

The opposition between the `I' and `not-I' and the limited points of view we take on the basis of them create conflict and dispute. On the other hand, direct intuition includes both points of view, yet frees us from both:

If I begin by looking at anything from the viewpoint of the "not-I," then I do not really see it, since it is "not I" that sees it. If I begin from where I am and see it as I see it, then it may also become possible for me to see it as another sees it. Hence the theory of reversal that opposites produce each other, depend on each other, and complement each other.

However this may be, life is followed by death; death is followed by life. Right turns into wrong and wrong into right--the flow of life alters circumstances and thus things themselves are altered in their turn. But disputants continue to affirm and to deny the same things they have always affirmed and denied, ignoring the new aspects of reality presented by the change in conditions.

The wise man, therefore, instead of trying to prove this or that point by logical disputation, sees all things in the light of direct intuition. He is not imprisoned by the limitations of the "I," for the viewpoint of direct intuition is that of both "I" and "Not-I." Hence he sees that on both sides of every argument there is both right and wrong. He also sees that in the end they are reducible to the same thing, once they are related to the pivot of Tao.

When the wise man grasps this pivot, he is in the center of the circle, and there he stands while "Yes" and "No" pursue each other around the circumference.

The pivot of Tao passes through the center where all affirmations and denials converge. He who grasps the pivot is at the still-point from which all movements and oppositions can be seen in their right relationship. Hence he sees the limitless possibilities of both "Yes" and "No." (Merton, 42-3)

Happiness and Misery: What is taken away by transient things cannot be true enjoyment. Men bring misery to themselves by seeking happiness:

I cannot tell if what the world considers "happiness" is happiness or not. All I know is that when I consider the way they go about attaining it, I see them carried away headlong, grim and obsessed, in the general onrush of the human herd, unable to stop themselves or to change their direction. All the while they claim to be just on the point of attaining happiness. For my part, I cannot accept their standards, whether of happiness or unhappiness. I ask myself if after all their concept of happiness has any meaning whatever.

My opinion is that you never find happiness until you stop looking for it. My greatest happiness consists precisely in doing nothing whatever that is calculated to obtain happiness: and this, in the minds of most people, is the worst possible course.

I will hold to the saying that: "Perfect joy is to be without joy. Perfect praise is to be without praise."

...Contentment and well-being at once become possible the moment you cease to act with them in view, and if you practice non-doing (wu wei), you will have both happiness and well-being. (Merton, 101)

Misery arises from wanting the unnecessary. Seeking wealth etc. has to produce unhappiness:

When their wealth is amassed till they cannot use it, they clasp it to their breasts.... In-door they are apprehensive of pilferage, and out of door they do not dare to go alone, ... in a state of constant alarm, ... they could not bring back one day of untroubled peace ... striving for (such an end as) this; is it not a case of great delusion? (Legge, 624)

The sage looks on what is deemed necessary as unnecessary; and therefore is not at war (with himself). The mass of men deem what is unnecessary to be necessary; and therefore they are often at war (in themselves)! Therefore, those who pursue this method ... resort to it in whatever they seek for. But reliance on such war leads to ruin. (Legge, 646)

Non-action or Wu-Wei : Chuang Tzu's idea of wu-wei or non-action has become proverbial and has a great influence on Chinese thought, particularly in transforming Confucianism into Neo-Confucianism (see the chapter on Historical Survey of Chinese Philosophy), on Chinese painting and poetry, and on Zen Buddhism. Wu-wei is a passivity which allows Nature to take its course without offering any resistance to it, yet it is the ability also to flow with the incessantly changing course of Nature. As Chuang Tzu says, "He who knows the activities of Nature lives according to Nature" (Chang, 191).

It is the absence of any self-centeredness which offers no resistance to the course of Nature. The wise man is without desires or passions. He needs no wisdom. He lays no plans for future. His mind is free from thought (Legge, 285-6). Profit and injury are the same to him (Legge, 287). He is able to banish from his thought of all worldly matters, men and things. He counts his own life as foreign to himself and as an appendage. He has no thought of past, present or future. All distinction disappear in his mind:

After studying nine years under his teacher Lao Shang, Lie-tzu came home riding on the wind. At the time, he felt the distinction of inside and outside was all gone. The eye was like the ear, the ear was like the nose, and the nose was like the mouth--they were all the same one with another. The mind was in a state of complete identity [literally, "frozen," ning], while the form was dissolved and the bones and flesh melted away. "I was not conscious of how my form was being sustained, what my feet were treading on, I just followed the wind as it blew, east or west. I was like a leaf fallen off the tree or like dried-up chaff. I did not know whether I was riding on the wind or whether the wind was riding on me.... (Legge, 36)

Here is another description of the wise man or the sage:

The sage is evenly balanced and at ease. Therefore it is also said: He does not take initiative in producing either happiness or calamity. He responds to the influences acting on him and moves as he feels the pressures. He rises to act only when he is obliged to do so. He discards wisdom and memories of the past.... Suffers no calamity from Heaven.... His life seems to float along; his death seems to be

a resting... No doubts; no plans. His light is without display. ... His sleep is untroubled by dreams. (Legge, 413-4)

He who practices the Tao, daily diminishes his doing. He diminishes it and again diminishes it, till he arrives at doing nothing. Having arrived at this non-action, there is nothing that he does not do. (Legge, 499)

The sage does not put himself above the masses:

Who can rid himself of (the ideas of) merit and fame, and return and put himself on the level of the masses of man?... He obliterates the traces of his action, gives up position and power and aims not at merit and fame... The perfect man does not seek to be heard of. (Legge, 473)

The wise man remains calm in mind and reflects the Tao:

Personally realize the infinite to the highest degree and travel in the realm of which there is no sign ... be absolutely vacuous (hsu).... The mind of the perfect man is like a mirror.... It responds to things but conceals nothing of its own. (Chang, 207)

He remains silent about the nature of the Tao:

Those whose (knowledge) is complete do not discuss it; such discussion shows that their (knowledge) is not complete. Even the most clear-sighted do not meet (with the Tao); it is better to be silent than to reason about it. (Legge, 505)

His wisdom consists of "forgetting everything." And this brings forth his Transformation:

Yen Hui said, 'I am making progress.' Kung-ni replied, 'What do you mean?' 'I have ceased to think of benevolence and righteousness,' was the reply. 'Very well; but that is not enough.'

Another day, Hui again saw Kung-ni, and said, 'I am making progress.' 'What do you mean?' 'I have lost all thought of ceremonies and music.' 'Very well, but that is not enough.'

A third day, Hui again saw (the Master), and said, 'I am making progress.' 'What do you mean?' 'I sit and forget everything.' Kung-ni changed countenance, and said, 'What do you mean by saying that you sit and forget (everything)?' Yen Hui replied, 'My connexion with the body and its parts is dissolved; my perceptive organs are discarded. Thus leaving my material form, and bidding farewell to my knowledge, I am become one with the Great Pervader. This I call sitting and forgetting all things.' Kung-ni said, 'One (with that Pervader), you are free from all likings; so transformed, you are

become impermanent. You have, indeed, become superior to me! I must ask leave to follow in your steps.' (Legge, 304-5)

He also knows the usefulness of the "useless":

Hui Tzu said to Chuang Tzu: "All your teaching is centered on what has no use." Chuang replied: "If you have no appreciation for what has no use you cannot begin to talk about what can be used. The earth, for example, is broad and vast. But of all this expanse a man uses only a few inches upon which he happens to be standing. Now suppose you suddenly take away all that he is not actually using, so that, all around his feet a gulf yawns, and he stands in the Void, with nowhere solid except right under each foot: how long will he be able to use what he is using?"

Hui Tzu said: "It would cease to serve any purpose."

Chuang Tzu concluded: "This shows the absolute necessity of what has 'no use.' (Merton, 153)

The wise man is happy to be "left alone:"

Chuang Tzu with his bamboo pole was fishing in Pu river. The Prince of Chu sent two vice-chancellors with a formal document: "We hereby appoint you Prime Minister." Chuang Tzu held his bamboo pole. Still watching Pu river, he said, "I am told there is a sacred tortoise, offered and canonized three thousand years ago, venerated by the prince, wrapped in silk, in a precious shrine on an altar in the Temple. What do you think: Is it better to give up one's life and leave a sacred shell as an object of cult in a cloud of incense three thousand years, or better live as a plain turtle dragging its tail in the mud?" "For the turtle," said the Vice-Chancellor, "Better to live and drag its tail in the mud!" "Go home!" said Chuang Tzu. "Leave me here to drag my tail in mud." (Merton, 93-4)

The wise man "fasts the mind:"

The goal of fasting is inner unity. This means hearing, but not with the ear; hearing, but not with the understanding; hearing with the spirit, with your whole being. The hearing that is only in the ears is one thing. The hearing of the understanding is another. But the hearing of the spirit is not limited to any one faculty, to the ear, or to the mind. Hence it demands the emptiness of all the faculties. And when the faculties are empty, then the whole being listens. There is then a direct grasp of what is right there before you that can never be heard with the ear or understood with the mind. Fasting of the heart empties the faculties, frees you from limitation and from preoccupation. Fasting of the heart begets unity and freedom. (Merton, 53)

...Look at this window: it is nothing but a hole in the wall, but because of it the whole room is full of light. Being full of light it becomes an influence by which others are secretly transformed. (Merton, 53)

And, there are no paths to this state of being free:

To exercise no-thought and follow no-way of meditation is the first step toward understanding Tao. To dwell nowhere and rest in nothing is the first step toward resting in Tao. To start from nowhere and follow no road is the first step toward attaining Tao. (Merton 119)

Effort and resisting one's temptations are certainly not the way:

Then one sets the proper value on his life, gain seems to him unimportant.... The prince rejoined, "I know that, but I am not able to overcome (my wishes). The reply was, "If you cannot master yourself (in that matter), follow (your inclinations so that) your spirit may not be dissatisfied. When you cannot master yourself, and try to force yourself where your spirit does not follow, this is called doing yourself a double injury; and those who injure themselves are not among the long-lived. (Legge, 599)

Acting effortlessly, the superior man achieves everything:

Khing, the master carver, made a bell stand of precious wood. When it was finished, all who saw it were astounded. They said it must be the work of spirits. The Prince of Lu said to the master carver: "What is your secret?" Khing replied: "I am only a workman: I have no secret. There is only this: When I began to think about the work you commanded I guarded my spirit, did not expend it on trifles that were not to the point. I fasted in order to set my heart at rest. After three days fasting, I had forgotten gain and success. After five days I had forgotten praise or criticism. After seven days I had forgotten my body with all its limbs. By this time all thought of your Highness and of the court had faded away. All that might distract me from the work had vanished. I was collected in the single thought of the bell stand. Then I went to the forest to see the trees in their own natural state. When the right tree appeared before my eyes, the bell stand also appeared in it, clearly, beyond doubt. All I had to do was to put forth my hand and begin. If had not met this particular tree there would have been no bell stand at all. What happened? My own collected thought encountered the hidden potential in the wood; from this live encounter came the work which you ascribe to the spirits. (Merton, 110-111)

This sort of action surely reminds one of both the selfless (or disinterested) action of the Bhagavad Gita, and the practice of archery etc., in Zen.

In this living there is neither misery nor happiness:

Can you rest (where you ought to rest)? Can you give over thinking of other men and seek what you want in yourself (alone)? Can you flee from the allurements of (desire)? Can you become a little child? It walks it knows not where. It has neither misery nor happiness. (Legge, 520)

Right Conduct: How does a man living in Tao act? Just like Lao Tzu, Chuang Tzu's idea of a wise man's conduct is not "making much ado":

If a man steps on a stranger's foot in the marketplace, he makes a polite apology and offers an explanation ("This place is so terribly crowded!") If an elder brother steps on his younger brother's foot, he says, "Sorry!" And that is that. If a parent treads on his child's foot, nothing is said at all.

The greatest politeness is free of all formality. Perfect conduct is free of concern. Perfect wisdom is unplanned. Perfect love is without demonstrations. Perfect sincerity offers no guarantee. (Merton, 138)

Society: Chuang Tzu does not believe in changing society by reform or force. Such attempts are doomed to fail, in his view:

When Yen Hui was about to take a position in the State of Wei, he came to take leave of Confucius. Confucius told him: "You will never do, you will simply end in bringing evil upon yourself.... You think you can reform the Duke and do some good to the people.... But do you know that the intelligence you prize so much is the instrument of rivalry and contention, and that the moral values in which you put so much confidence merely serve to make you famous, so that you become an object of envy and hate? ... You may try to imitate wise men of old, but the Duke is used to wielding a despot's power and carrying out his capricious ideas. He is sure to be offended by your good intentions and will not accept your sincerity. It goes without saying that the outcome of it all will bring disaster not only personally upon you but also upon the people." (Legge, 31-32)

The true object of the Tao is the regulation of the person. Quite subordinate to this is its use in the management of the State and the Clan....(Legge, 594)

Conclusion : Chuang Tzu's teaching exhibits all the essential features of Eastern Philosophy. In fact, it's the measure of all other Eastern philosophies. His idea of a fundamental transformation of the human being, his notion of transcending all limited points with which we identify ourselves and get into conflict within and without ourselves, his idea that thinking and logical disputation cannot grasp ultimate truth or reality, his idea of the Infinite or Nothingness as the source of all existence, his idea that opposites produce and depend on each other, his idea of transcending pleasures and pains, gain and loss as a mark of true existence, his notion freedom as non-seeking of happiness, his eschewing knowledge, polish and our so-called morality, character, and civilization, his idea of passivity (Wu Wei or non-action) which is renouncing all self-centered action and flowing along with the flow of life, and finally his idea of there being no path or method to attain freedom (for it's a matter of discovering the Tao within us by relinquishing desire, and it's not a goal to be sought)--all these represent truly the essentials of Eastern philosophy.

To a wise man who has realized Tao, the whole of life may seem like a dream (like Maya in Advaita Vedanta):

Those who dream of (the pleasure of) drinking may in the morning wail and weep; those who dream of wailing and weeping may in the morning be going out to hunt. When they were dreaming they did not know it was a dream; in their dream they may even have tried to interpret it. And there is the great awaking, after which we shall know that this life was a great dream. All the while, the stupid think they are awake, and with nice discrimination insist on their knowledge; now playing the part of rulers, and now of grooms. Bigoted was that Kiu! He and you are both dreaming. I who say that you

are dreaming and dreaming myself. These words seem very strange; but if after ten thousand ages we once meet with a great sage who knows how to explain them, it will be as if we met him (unexpectedly) some morning or evening. (Legge 242-3).

Questions: Describe the essential teachings of Chuang Tzu and show how they illustrate the main themes of Eastern Philosophy. Vocabulary: Infinite; Contemporaries; Paradoxes; Non-action; Flux; Transformation; Destiny; Chaos; Righteousness; Benevolence; Perspective; Relative and Absolute; Appearance; Disputations; Pellucid.

Glossary: Wu-wei: Non-action. A basic idea in Chuang Tzu's Philosophy. Yin and Yang: The basic complementary principles derived from the Tao which are the source of all things in the universe.

CHAPTER 17

ZEN BUDDHISM

The word Zen is Japanese for the Sanskrit Dhyana which means meditation. Zen Buddhism is a prominent sect of the Mahayana Buddhism which first arose in China and later spread to Japan and Korea. Buddhism started going out of India from the time of Ashoka the emperor who lived in the 4th century B. C. and who sent his own relatives as ambassadors to maintain peace with his neighboring countries and kingdoms. He also sent scholars and teachers to propagate Buddhism in neighboring countries. Buddhism was thus carried to countries outside of India, particularly to Tibet, Burma, China, and Ceylon. A man called Kumarajiva is known to have first translated some Mahayana Buddhist works into Chinese around the fifth century A. D.

Bodhidharma: Bodhidharma travelled from India to China around the 7th Century A. D. to propagate Buddhism. Japanese tradition attributes the beginning of Zen Buddhism to him. He is thus called the First Patriarch. The legend has it that Bodhidharma had an interview with the Chinese Emperor Wu Liang. The Emperor was proud of his many charitable deeds and sponsorship of Buddhism. He asked Bodhidharma what merit would he have for his good deeds. Bodhidharma said, "None at all." This got the Emperor worried and he asked, "What is the first principle of the holy doctrine?" Bodhidharma replied, "It is empty; there is nothing holy." Thereupon the Emperor banished the monk.

Bodhidharma is said to have retired to a cave in the mountains and meditated incessantly for nine years facing a wall in the cave and achieved enlightenment. In order to keep himself awake he is said to have peeled off his eye lids!

Zen Buddhism is a Mahayana sect and therefore shares some of its basic ideas. The Mahayanas, and particularly its Zen followers claim that their teachings were transmitted by the Buddha in an esoteric fashion to a select few pupils composing his inner circle and that therefore they are not part of the public teachings. Besides, they were, according to them, transmitted without any external scriptures, and without the means of words. The Buddha is said to have raised a flower in his hand, simply looked at Ananda, his foremost disciple, and smiled at him. Then Ananda got the message and smiled back and thus was the first Zen teaching transmitted.

Zen is perhaps the most radical of all the Buddhist sects. In China where it was called Ch'an Buddhism it mingled with the teachings of Taoism and developed rather as a way of living than as a philosophy or religious sect. It certainly derived its main inspiration from Madhyamika Buddhism from which it borrowed its radical ideas, as for example, the

idea that everything constructed by the mind or thought is an illusion, and the idea that the Buddha is not to be sought outside of oneself in the external world, as well as the idea of there being no path. It added to them a certain passivity or quietism which it borrowed from Taoism. But most important, it developed its own ways of meditation and ways of living which can now quite uniquely be called Zen.

In Zen temples Buddha worship takes place. There are also Zen monasteries in Japan. (There were many such in China, but most of these are now defunct). In both the temples and monasteries there is a strict monastic discipline which the monks or inmates follow. In Japan Zen teachers do marry, and they are vegetarians. In the temples and monasteries the followers of Zen recite some favorite Buddhist Sutras, the most important of them being the Heart Sutra, the next most important being the Diamond Sutra.

The Heart Sutra is short for The Heart of the Perfection of Wisdom Sutra (-Prajnaparamita Hrdaya Sutra in Sanskrit) which is chanted in many Zen temples in Japanese (or in the U.S. in English!) and is one of the "Wisdom Sutras". There are dozens of these Sutras, all originally written in Sanskrit, and all of which propagate different varieties of the Mahayana doctrine, some Vijnanavada and some Madhyamika, but each doing it quite uniquely in its own fashion. Some of them contain paradoxical teachings. They may appear contradictory only because they speak from different points of view at the same time, much like the two-tier truth (the empirical and the absolute points of view) in Nagarjuna's Madhyamika doctrine. The emphasis in these Sutras, however, is not as much ideas or doctrine as the realization of their truth.

The Heart Sutra, for instance, emphasizes that all things of existence--senses and their objects, the five skandhas (body, sensation, perception, impulses to action, and consciousness), the twelve links in the chain of Becoming, and their dissolution etc.--are all "emptiness", meaning that from the absolute point of view, since they have no self-subsistence, they are all unreal; they are "empty" of reality. But once again, "Emptiness", which is its term for Ultimate Reality, is nowhere else except in these things. It does not reside in a transcendent reality. Only when these same things of the world are regarded not as those particular names and forms (in which case they are empty of reality), but as expressing ultimate reality, these same things are Emptiness (with a capital `E').

When of course a person realizes this truth, he would not seek a Transcendent reality outside of this world, nor would he place any transcendent value on any individual things of existence as though they were absolute reality. Thus one achieves one's liberation, which does not consist in "acquiring" any particular wisdom but rather in letting one's grasp over or clinging to things go. The Sutra couches these teachings in a very short, paradoxical sounding text. The Diamond Sutra is similar in content. (Please read here the text of the Heart Sutra.)

Zen Buddhism has several subsects in Japan, the chief ones being Rinzai and Soto. Each developed its own texts, stories, teachers, and methods of meditation. The Rinzai school emphasizes meditation with a Sutra in mind (contemplating on the truth of it), or practice on solving what are called the Koans (lit. public documents) which are apparent riddles designed to act as meditation exercises, while the Soto emphasizes what is called the "Just Sitting" type of meditation. Of course, whatever be the method of meditation, the principles involved in it would probably be the same. Let us take the Koan type of meditation for example:

The pupil goes to his Roshi (a Zen teacher in a Zen temple or a monastery) and requests instruction. The Roshi gives him a Koan, which is a sort of riddle, and asks him to tell him the meaning of it or answer the riddle by meditating upon it. There is no fixed number of hours one has to meditate upon, as long as one keeps the general discipline of the monastery or the temple. On special occasions, an intensive meditational group session called sesshin is arranged. The pupils or monks in these sesshins do nothing except do the daily routine such as cleaning, eating, sleeping, and worship, and meditate. They sit for a number of hours at a stretch and try to solve the koan with whatever means they have at their disposal.

Examples of Koans are, "What is your original face before you were born?" "What is the sound of one hand clapping?" and "What is a dog's Buddha nature?" The answers to these are not readily obtained by ordinary intellectual approaches. The pupil, however, tries out various solutions and either himself is dissatisfied with them, or takes them to the Roshi only to be told, usually by a poke with a stick in his stomach, "mu" (meaning emptiness). The pupil is asked to go back to his meditation and try some more. This process is repeated until the pupil totally exhausts his resources. When at last he gives up the attempt to solve, (meanwhile he has been constantly told that there is a solution to the problem, he just has to find it), then a solution might simply dawn on him without his having to seek it. Then there is a breakthrough. The pupil then not only solves his problem, but has an awakening, an intuitive and immediate awareness of "Reality". When the next time the Roshi asks him for the answer, he may give what to us may sound like a trivial or ridiculous answer, such as "Your hair has started graying," or "The clouds in the sky are white today." These answers may seem to have no connection with the question or problem on hand, but the Roshi knows when the pupil has had his breakthrough, and when he is aware of that he passes his disciple.

This breakthrough is called Satori and can be translated as enlightenment. Once the pupil has arrived at this, he may need to establish this insight firmly in himself by doing some more Koans. Also, from then on his life is transformed in such a way that he no longer seeks enlightenment, and whatever he does or is is full of significance. He lives as though every thing and every act in his life has meaning, and as though the meaning of life does not lie outside of them. He is full of peace within himself and there is harmony between himself and his environment or society.

A second type of meditation in Zen is that practiced by the Soto Zen. It consists simply of sitting on your knees, usually in a meditation hall, and emptying your mind. You can do this by observing your breathing or counting the number of your breaths say from one to ten and repeat the process for about forty five minutes. The Roshi or his appointee occasionally strikes on your back with a stick, at your request, to keep you awake. There is really no goal or aim to this process of meditation. You do it for its own sake. The concentration on breathing (much like in Yoga) is only for helping you keep your mind empty. And of course, all kinds of thoughts, ideas, emotions and feelings arise and pass away meanwhile. You pay scant attention to them, attach no significance to them, and come back to attending to your breath. And when the time is ripe, when your mind ceases to be active and becomes silent, when all seeking ceases, then there will be a breakthrough to Reality much like in the previous type of meditation.

In either of the above types of meditation, or in other types like the one of reciting a sutra or a mantram or questioning your thoughts, what goes on in the process of meditation is essentially the same. The background mind, your past experiences, thoughts, fears, hopes, worries, seekings, etc., all come to your mind, but because you pay only scant or background attention to them, they lose their strength and life in course of time, and you become deconditioned to them, i.e., become released from them. This deconditioning is primarily the means by which enlightenment takes place.

Zen developed in Japan as an art and a way of life and spread into various walks of life such as the sword fighting of the Samurais, archery, painting, the tea ceremony, Shakuhachi (Bamboo flute) playing, Judo, flower arrangement, etc., besides plain meditation. Whatever be the walk of life, the essential principles of Zen remain the same. Take archery, for example. The archer so intensely concentrates on the target that he not only loses consciousness of himself as an archer, but also is no longer aware of the arrow or the bow, but becomes, as it were, one with the object he is trying to shoot. There is no effort involved in the attempt to shoot the target. The person, the bow and the arrow, the hand, string, and the target are all held in one unity, and the arrow ejects itself, as it were, out of the bow. There is no thrower of the arrow, for there is no consciousness of the arrow as separate from oneself. One may call this the Yoga of action. What is the advantage of this action? It lies precisely in this: that in Zen practice one transcends any effort or conflict in action, and therefore achieves a perfection which can only be achieved by intense concentration without any effort or distraction.

Such a life manifests itself in day-to-day routine matters as well. There is no resistance to whatever has to be done in life. One does things with ease, yet with full attention, with care and without concern either for one's self-interest or selfish outcome of the action. When one spends a whole day thus in a relaxed fashion, there is no fatigue; instead there is a harmony within and without oneself, and a peace which does not result from effort and struggle. Does this remind you of the Nishkama Karma of the Bhagavadgita? It is quite similar. Whether this constitutes enlightenment or liberation is anyone's guess.

What is important to notice here, just like in the Bhagavad Gita, is that there is no hard and sharp division between the means and the ends. How you use the means will color the outcome of what you do; and the outcome, the end of your action, is at the very beginning. That is, you start being undistracted, peaceful and harmonious in order to arrive there.

Note on the martial arts: Zen never claimed to be pacifistic, although the Buddha himself talked about non-violence and compassion to fellow beings. Japan, as any other country, had to face political realities from time to time, and in the process developed a whole military culture into which Zen entered. Much like in the Bhagavad Gita, the Samurai (the warrior) would use what outwardly seems like violence where there is no other alternative, but in a precise, dispassionate, and what is internally truly non-violent way, that is, without any conflict.

Questions: What are some of the main features of Zen Buddhism? How does it differ from Madhyamika Buddhism? What are the different sects in Zen Buddhism? How does meditation differ between these sects? What is Satori? Is it the same as enlightenment or liberation?

Glossary : Kumarajiva: An Indian translator of Buddhism into Chinese (fifth century A. D.). Bodhidharma: The first patriarch in Zen Buddhism who went to China from India around the 7th century A. D. Dhyana: Sanskrit term which means meditation. Origin of the word `Zen'. Prajnaparamita Hridaya Sutra: The Heart of Perfection of Wisdom Sutra. An important Zen scripture. Diamond Sutra: (Vajracchedika Sutra) Diamond Cutter Sutra. Another important Zen scripture. Soto: A sect in Zen. Rinzai: Another sect in Zen. Roshi: A Zen teacher. Koan: (Lit. Public document.) A Japanese term used for riddle-like exercises for meditation. Sesshin: A prolonged meditation session. Mu: (Lit. Emptiness). A term which is used by a Roshi to reject a pupil's erroneous answers to a Koan. Satori: The Zen term for a breakthrough in meditation or enlightenment. Mantram: The Sanskrit term for a set of sounds, sacred syllables etc. supposedly endowed with magical powers, and used either to utter aloud or within oneself in meditation. Shakuhachi: Japanese bamboo flute. Samurai: A traditional Japanese warrior. Judo: A Japanese martial art.

CHAPTER 18

J. KRISHNAMURTI

Krishnamurti's philosophy is of interest to us for two reasons: first, he is a contemporary Indian teacher who not only talks to people about his ideas, but also lived (lived, in the past tense, because he is no longer alive) what he taught. Second, his philosophy is free from all religious elements of belief in the supernatural etc., and yet has all the essential elements of Eastern Philosophy.

Krishnamurti is an Indian teacher who was born in India in 1895, and was raised by the leaders of the Theosophical Society, Annie Besant and Col. Leadbeater, to be a world teacher, for which purpose Annie Besant established an organization called the Order of the Star of the East. Krishnamurti courageously abolished the Order when he was 34 years of age, declaring that Truth cannot be found through teachers and organizations. He is said to have attained "Samadhi" (enlightenment or liberation) in Ojai, California, in 1931, and died there in February 1986.

Krishnamurti's chief concern is man and his problems. Man's present condition is one of sorrow, turmoil, strife and conflict. There is conflict and suffering within man, and strife, violence, and wars among men. Man has tried various solutions for his suffering: religious solutions, political reforms, revolutions, moral codes, wars (to end wars), self-improvement techniques, and escapes of different kinds such as achievement, alcohol, entertainment, work, etc. But none of these have solved his problems fundamentally. Either they only change the surface of the problem or they provide temporary and piecemeal solutions; but they have not changed problems at their roots. Religions and their beliefs only divide men and supply escapes from day-to-day living, without offering a fundamental solution to his problems.

Thought and the Fragmentation it creates are the Source of man's Problems: Externally man is fragmented in terms of groups, nations, races, etc., and men identified with these fragments conflict with one another. Internally, man's consciousness is identified positively with some objects which have given him pleasure in the past, or negatively with things which have given him pain in the past. Each of these fragments of consciousness becomes a center, which is his self, and opposes itself to other fragments, acting as if it were an active and independent entity, on its own, utilizing all the mental abilities and functions the person possesses. These fragments, say a person's positive identification with Hinduism and his negative identification with Christianity, conflict within himself generating tension, anger and animosity. And outwardly they are projected as conflicts between groups, say between the Hindus and the Christians, when several individuals having the same identifications group together.

For Krishnamurti, the problems of the world are nothing more than a projection or reflection of the problems within man. Man's violence in the world is an outward expression of the violence within him. For example, a person is afraid, insecure within, having a need

to prove himself, and he or she expresses this outwardly by being violent, bullying his peers, or dominating others.

Thought is responsible for this fragmentation: it has not only made possible the fruits of human civilization, but also created the problems of man. Thought is the ability humans have to use and manipulate symbols by abstraction and generalization. It gives us the facility to respond to situations as if they are present although they are in fact absent. Often an image of an object or a situation is used as a symbol to represent to ourselves the situation we have experienced in our past. Thus, in our thought we can, without having to actually manipulate a situation, combine and recombine elements of the situation according to our wishes, and attempt to produce them in the actual world. Because of the functions which thought bestows on us we are able to rise well above the level of merely animal existence to build enormously abstract and complex structures of civilization including art, architecture, literature, mathematics, medicine, science, and technology.

Human beings, however, not only use thought, but also identify themselves with the symbols which thought manipulates. This is indeed how we fragment our consciousness. Thought creates a wholly different way of experiencing and relating to our world from the way we experience the world without it. Each situation, after it is initially experienced by us as pleasant or unpleasant, leaves a residue in us in the form of an image. The remembrance of the situation in the form of its image, however, is not just a replaying of the situation. I, the thinker, finding the situation as pleasant or unpleasant, in that very moment turn it into a goal to be achieved or a prospect to be avoided. In fact the thought of the situation as something to be desired or avoided is simultaneously also the awareness of myself as someone lacking the desired goal or being threatened by the undesirable prospect. Because of this thinking, the division between the thinker (myself), the thought, and what is thought of, is already created.

Thought, as Krishnamurti puts it, creates the center of the I, and the space around it, that is, the distance between the thinker and the object thought about. Time, with its psychological distinctions of past, present, and future, exists only through such a division. Each time thought creates an I, we tend to assume, although without justification, that it is the same I operating in all situations of thinking. Each time a single identification occurs, it claims to be the whole of myself. Thus begins a life of search for pleasure and avoidance of pain, the pleasure principle which governs all our lives. (It is interesting to note here that for Krishnamurti thought is a material process based on memory recorded in the brain cells. When the organism dies, thought dies with it.)

We cannot even imagine happiness except as represented through images. An imaginary situation is often regarded as even more real than the actual of which it is a surrogate. For instance, the idea or image of sex is often more exciting to us than the act of intercourse. Because of this identification process, we are willing to regard mere symbols like a flag, the Constitution, or a nation as real entities, and are prepared to fight for them, consider their safety as synonymous with our personal safety, and defend them even at the

risk of our own lives. Similarly, we are willing to sacrifice thousands of real men for the sake of our ideas of mankind, race or God, not realizing that the latter are mere abstractions.

Even more fundamental than all the conflict that thought creates in us through the division between the thinker and thought is the tendency to believe that our true happiness can only be found in achieving all the endless goals we are conditioned to by the process of identification, as if it always lies in something outside of us. Contrary to what experience sometimes teaches us, we also believe that we cannot be happy without seeking or striving for happiness. We always feel inadequate in comparison with the goals which we hope will fulfill us. But this happiness is never completely attained, as thought keeps recreating our past, thereby creating further goals to be sought. Even if it is attained, thought, by contemplating such happiness, by even recognizing it as such, must turn it into a further goal. For one of the requirements we have for our happiness is that we recognize that we are happy, so as to be certain that we have it. This recognition is possible only through thought, and therefore never occurs without turning the happiness we are aware of into a further goal. In the very act of recognizing, contemplating, and cherishing our happiness we wish its continuance and furtherance. Because of its very nature thought cannot end this goal-setting and goal-seeking process. Thus thought is the ultimate source of all typically psychological problems as well as social, religious, and political problems of man: problems of insecurity, loneliness, boredom, depression, fear, personal and interpersonal conflict, group conflict, and so forth.

Collectively and individually all our attempts to change, either by self-improvement, political or social reform, or even revolution, only change the surface of a problem, its superficial symptoms, without touching the substructure, the disease, which is the root of the problem. Reform only creates a need for further reform. Revolution only creates another status quo. And self-improvement only creates a need for further improvement. These are never-ending tasks.

Krishnamurti advocates a revolution, not in the external, outward structures man has created, but in the very centers of the psychological structures which constitute the self of man. Fundamental changes in man cannot be brought about from outside, by force, or by conforming to an authority. They can only occur effortlessly when one dispassionately observes the total psychological field of man as it operates in everyday life. Krishnamurti calls such observation meditation. Only through meditation is there a possibility for man to act creatively, harmoniously and spontaneously. Only then can there be true happiness which does not create a need for further happiness. A man who is free from his past will be able to use thought to aid his survival in the world, yet not be driven by it through identification and the consequent self-centeredness.

Meditation: If most human problems are a consequence of the fragmentation within man, then it follows that the way to end human problems is to end conflict within him. Can

be this be done without generating further conflict? Can one end conflict instantly without the effort which implies resistance, and therefore further conflict? Krishnamurti's answer to this question is to offer what he terms choiceless awareness or meditation. This is an awareness in which one passively observes not just what one likes or dislikes to see in a conflict, but all the elements involved in it. In thus becoming aware of all the fragments of a conflict, he becomes other than them, unidentified with them, and therefore, totally free from them.

For instance, I have a habit of smoking and the scientist or the doctor tells me that I ought to quit smoking, because if I keep the habit I might get lung cancer. I am afraid of dying and of cancer, so I want to quit smoking. But my old habit of smoking keeps forcing me to smoke; or so it seems. Now I have a conflict between wanting to smoke, because smoking gives me (or has given in the past) pleasure, and wanting not to smoke, because I am afraid smoking will cause cancer and therefore my death. How do I resolve this conflict?

First I stop avoiding the problem and attempting to escape from it through various means. I also stop all programs of self-improvement and behavior modification, etc., for I realize that none of them touch the core of the problem. I turn my attention to the problem, the conflict itself. I become aware of myself, my desire for smoking, the particular pleasures I get from smoking--the pleasant physical sensations, the feeling of masculinity, etc.--on the one hand, and of my fear of death, of the loss of my life or body, of pain occurring through cancer, of the fear of being disabled, of being a burden to or dependent on others, of the fear of being left alone, and so forth, on the other. I observe whatever are the concrete contents of my problem, all the elements of my conflict.

I must observe these without attempting to change the facts I am observing, for to try to change them would introduce further conflict into the situation, the reason for this being that then I am still operating under the conditioning (or identification) of wanting to smoke but being afraid of the consequences (these are actually two sides of the same coin). To be so aware of the contents of one's consciousness, there must be no residue of identification left in the observer, no 'knowledge' through which one observes, no particular point of view from which to observe, no plan of action or conclusion to be arrived at, and hence no attempt to change, or even judge, accept or condemn what one observes. According to Krishnamurti, it is identification which creates the division or separation between the observer and the observed. In meditation there must be no division or separation between the observer and the observed--the observer must become the very observed. Meditation, says Krishnamurti, is attention in which there is no 'registration', and in which there is total 'understanding'.

Meditation, for Krishnamurti, is not a prayer to some unknown deity or the concentration on a mantram, but the passive observation and the resultant emptying of the contents of one's consciousness. This observation Krishnamurti also calls the "awareness of the structures of daily living." It is not an attempt to improve oneself or achieve some

superior experience or state of mind, but is looking at the very instrument which creates havoc in one's daily life, causes conflict, misery, self-alienation, and the isolation of oneself from one's fellowmen and the world.

This separation between the self and other, between man and the world is also the catalyst for man's religious quest. For most of what we call religious quest is born out of attempts to escape the turmoils and meaninglessness of daily life and the feared oblivion of ultimate death, out of a search for some ultimate meaning in life which is either a search for an ultimate pleasure, or merely an escape from deep-rooted conflicts and frustrations. True meditation, for Krishnamurti, then, is to turn one's attention away from the other world to life in this world, and to become aware of how divisiveness, conflict and problems are created by each of us in this world. When we are free from divisiveness or duality, we don't have to seek God or the Other, we are the Other. (In fact, the more we seek God, or ultimate happiness, the further we are from It.) The meditative mind is what Krishnamurti calls the silent mind.

Transformation: In the `total' awareness of meditation, Krishnamurti claims, the observed (that is, one's conflict, fear, anger, desire for pleasure or whatever one is observing) undergoes a transformation. The result is that one is not only free from the particular conflict--in the case of smoking one is free from both the desire to smoke and the fear of the consequences of smoking--but, if one does this right, from all conflict whatsoever, for all human conflicts are basically one conflict, all problems are one problem, namely, the human being living in fragmentation, and the fragments within him conflicting with one another. The result is an integration of the individual, which is a blossoming of harmony, creativity, and spontaneity, uncorrupted by the conditioning of the mind which has made him compulsively mechanical.

A question might arise here: what if I am transformed and the whole world remains the same? What good does that do to human problems, particularly the collective problems of man? What can one man being transformed here and there matter? Krishnamurti replies to this by saying that when I change, it is not just an individual that is changing, but "the human being" is changing. That means that the possibility of transformation is once again realized. He would also perhaps say that this is bound to create a ripple effect in the rest of mankind, yourself being an example or leader.

God and Religion: We noted above how for Krishnamurti the religious quest is born out of an attempt to escape from the meaninglessness, boredom, and turmoil of daily existence, and from the fear of the unknown or of death. (The fear of death is for him really only a fear of the loss of the known, the experiences, the identifications or conditioning one has accumulated over one's lifetime.) To escape from one's own emptiness or nothingness one creates a heaven, God or an after life, something permanent, whereas everything in life is changing, moving, and transitory. Since we have (and can have) no experience or knowledge of Reality we create a belief in the unknown Reality. But such a religious belief not only divides man from man, a Hindu for instance, identified with his belief in Hinduism,

conflicting with a Moslem identified with his belief in Islam, but also actually prevents man from ever in fact discovering such a thing as Reality or God, if there be one, by providing one a sense of false security and making his inquiring mind fall asleep in the belief.

It is not that there is no such thing as Reality or God, but that man cannot stumble upon it as long as he takes shelter in belief which becomes another part of his conditioned mind. As long as man is conditioned, the conditioned background creates a division or separation between oneself and one's God or Reality. Furthermore, once this separation is created, a person keeps seeking, trying to know and arrive at this Reality, while in reality, God cannot be something separate from us. Krishnamurti sometimes talks of what is or is not truth. He says Truth or God or Immensity or the Immeasurable or whatever you call it is not something you can know by your limited mind, thought, by seeking or believing in it. Belief at best will deliver you what you already know, but cannot let you discover the unknown. When belief, the conditioned mind, and the known cease to be, when they are quiet, then there is a possibility of Truth happening to us, or of our stumbling upon the Unknown. When we do so in what Krishnamurti calls the silent mind, in it there is no separation between the self and the other, and there is no knowledge of it by the conscious mind. This Krishnamurti equates with the transformation of oneself.

So, it turns out that for Krishnamurti, the transformed mind which is free of the problems of conflict in day to day living is also at the same time a silent mind which discovers the Unknown or God.

So far one might get the impression that Krishnamurti's teaching is purely descriptive, negative, and pedagogical: he may seem merely to describe, analyze, and diagnose human problems. About the many 'positive' notions such as meditation, love, and creativity he only tells us mostly what they are not. And his main mode of communication with people is one of teaching: almost everything he says is in the form of prodding the listener to discover ("to see together," as he would put it) the truths he is pointing out, to arrive at the 'positive' by rejecting the negative or realizing its falsehood or illusoriness. But we get a different impression from his Notebook and more recent dialogues of his, particularly those with the physicist David Bohm (see *Wholeness of Life*, pp.129-134, for example), in which occur what might seem to the listener to be 'positive' or speculative elements in Krishnamurti's thought.

For example, Krishnamurti says that there is not only the sorrow which individuals experience, but a deeper kind of sorrow which perpetuates itself in spite of man's efforts and his abilities to learn. It is not that your thought or my thought makes images in us, but there is a universal, impersonal process which produces images in individual men. To understand and become free from the deeper sorrow, a deeper meditation or awareness is required, to delve into that which "the mind has not touched before." Beyond the "energy of compassion" which is generated in meditation, there is something else, which Krishnamurti calls the Sacred or the Source.

How is Krishnamurti's meditation different, say, from meditation upon a mantram, or "just sitting" meditation as is practiced in Zen Buddhism? First, the difference is in his diagnostic approach: Krishnamurti speaks to the modern man in his idiom and gives commonsense psychological explanations as to how problems arise. Not that the notions of identification, conditioning, etc. are new in Indian or Eastern philosophy--one could find similar ideas say in the philosophy of Samkhya-Yoga. His descriptions of the formation of desire and how suffering arises from them are also similar to Buddhist descriptions in the "Twelve-fold Wheel of Becoming." His refusal to indulge in any speculative metaphysics and his belief that the human personality or ego is illusory and a mere 'put-together' are also ideas parallels for which one can easily find in the Buddha's teachings. The idea of man's suffering being a result of his 'dualistic' existence (based on conflict between the self and the other) is not unfamiliar to students of Vedanta and Buddhism. But he puts all these ideas together so clearly that for the modern mind his descriptions and analyses of human problems seem insightful, challenging, and fascinating. Particularly his analysis of human thought is revealing: how it is responsible on the one hand for the superiority of humans over animals in terms of survival, and how, at the same time, by being a vehicle for man's identification with items from his past experience and the consequent self-centeredness, it is responsible for typically human problems.

What is also unique about Krishnamurti is that he can relate all these ideas to his discussion of the means to attain freedom, of how in meditation the means cannot be different or be separated from the ends. If freedom from the self is the end, it is also the means, or simply there are no means to this freedom at all in any ordinary sense. (This may be frustrating to his listener--but be that as it may). Perhaps the same ideas are conveyed in the Bhagavad Gita in the notion of 'selfless' or 'disinterested' action, but the ideas are made much more clear in Krishnamurti's teachings than ever before.

Readings : Please read Part II of the Wholeness of Life.

Questions: Explain the concepts of identification, fragmentation, conditioning, and thought in Krishnamurti's Philosophy. How are they responsible, according to him, for our problems? How do we become free from them? What is desire? What is pleasure? How does Krishnamurti present a way of living which is beyond pleasure and pain? How can you understand such a life? What meaning can life have without desire or pleasure? What is meditation in Krishnamurti? How is it related to thought and the known? How can we live without thought? Does he say we can or we ought to? What are the prerequisites of meditation? Explain with a concrete example how meditation helps us solve our problems? How is Krishnamurti's analysis of human problems related to his discussion of our search for Reality or God? Do you find any similarities between his philosophy and any other Eastern Philosophy? If you do, in what respects?

Vocabulary: Theosophy; Annie Besant; Leadbeater; Identification; Fragmentation; Conditioning; Status quo; Deconditioning; Choiceless Awareness; Transformation; Observation; Prerequisite; Registration; Immensity; Immeasurable; Self-centeredness.

CHAPTER 18

A NOTE ON MEDITATION

To my mind there are a few important prerequisites for any kind of meditation: 1. - Passivity: The very essence of meditation consists in being passive to what you observe within yourself or without. Although it is a very hard thing to achieve, until the moment you become passive, you can hardly be said to be meditating. Meditation cannot possibly involve battling yourself, attempting to change what you observe for a certain result. Meditation is a process of "dying" to the contents of your mind.

The ability to remain passive to the contents of your mind, in particular to the sources of your problems (see below) may free you from them, by virtue of the fact that in this passivity your mind is "disengaging" itself from the contents or the sources it is passively aware of. But if this is done with any effort, (i.e., with a view to achieve any result), then some interest is coloring your observation; hence the observation is no longer disinterested (or passive). That means that you are still involved with what you observe and therefore to that extent you are still not free from the contents or sources of your problems.

2. For its own sake: For the above reasons, meditation is not something you do for the sake of something, but for its own sake, or because you have no choice, or because you simply want to understand what you observe. If you can succeed in doing that, then meditation becomes rather a way of life than some activity you do for a certain purpose. Meditation is not a self-improvement technique.

3. Openness: Being open completely to whatever you are observing, all the facts, without trying to magnify, distort, exclude, justify, improve upon, defend, criticize or judge is also very important to meditation.

4. Nothing else: If you can succeed in the above, there is nothing else you have to do in meditation.

To achieve the above you can do various things: a) Letting go (or being detached), if your mind is distracted by goals, and letting things be, if your mind is bothered by "negative" emotions, such as depression or fear, is definitely helpful. b) You can perhaps concentrate on your breathing; merely watch your thoughts; or watch the surroundings in a passive fashion. c) Relaxing will definitely help meditation and meditation in turn will help you relax (although that's not the aim of meditation--there is no aim to meditation: if you think there is, and if you seek that aim through meditation, then it is not meditation). Some things may or may not happen to you when you meditate, but there are no promises or guarantees.

It is not something you do for the sake of anything. And as long as do it for the sake of anything, it is not meditation.

You can use the meditative process to have a better understanding of your mental problems (including those of relationship), but again if you do this with an aim to change yourself or solve a problem, you may not succeed! When you look at a problem, it is always a good idea to ask specific questions, although this may not sound like a very passive thing to do. If you ask questions with an intention to understand the sources of your problems, listening passively to yourself sympathetically, not condemning or judging or justifying yourself, I think you can get to the source of your problem. For example, the question you ask may be: "Why am I so reluctant to get up from bed in the mornings?" or something like, "Why I am reluctant to go out with this boy (or girl)?" or "Why I am not interested in school work?" or "What do I really want in life?" or "What do I really know about happiness?" and so on. You pursue the questioning till you seem to have reached the end or rock bottom, till you seem not to be able to go any further.

The source of your problem may be, for example, your insecurity, fear of being a nothing, feeling inferior to someone (which feeling you are trying to compensate by the present behavior), fear of dying, the threat of something painful, loneliness, etc. When you confront the sources of your problem, which are not very hard to arrive at, you do nothing, absolutely nothing. You sit with them and don't expect anything to happen. If something happens fine, if nothing, then you still sit. If, in spite of your seeming to understand the sources of a problem the problem still persists, it may be that you are identifying yourself with the sources once again, or it may be that there are deeper sources than what you have stumbled upon that are at the bottom of the problem. To my mind solving problems which we confront in daily life is the easiest thing. That does not mean of course you have solved the fundamental problem of living! (For further discussion of the problems you confront in meditation please read the Conclusion, paragraph 4 onward.) Then what do you do? Nothing! You keep meditating for the rest of your life. There are no goals and, as far as you know, no end to it.

HAPPY GOING!

CHAPTER 19

CONCLUSION

In the following I will arrive at some ideas which will express my own philosophy and how I apply it to my life. The ideas are meant to be useful to you and something you can take away and use, if you find them meaningful. If not, they will at least give you an idea of how I think personally and try to live. As you can notice, many of these ideas are derived from various sources in Eastern Philosophy, but the putting together of them is my own responsibility.

1. Man's Condition (or my own condition): These are some basic facts (or problems) I observe about man's (or my own) basic condition: a) Man's condition is basically one of unrest or "disease". Any particular state of mind which he or she may think he or she is in for any length of time is there only because it is put there by some belief, or idea or thought, and will disappear as soon as one is aware of it in a questioning way. Or a state of mind is conditional to whatever is the cause of it and will disappear as soon as the cause disappears, or some other cause replaces that state with another state of mind. For example, your being content and satisfied thinking that you have a certain piece of property, or your son has graduated will disappear as soon as you find the causes are no longer there, the causes here being your desire to acquire property or your desire to see your son get ahead in life.

The basic unrest in man is such that we are constantly seeking a state of permanency of some kind or other: it may be a permanent state of happiness, God, heaven, an expanded state of consciousness, fulfillment, realizing our own potentialities and what not. No matter what we already have or do not have, it does not seem to matter--we still continually seek something other than what we are or have. Our desiring and achieving particular goals does not change this basic situation either, for soon we take for granted what we have already achieved, or compare it with what someone else has (or we ourselves have had), and seek again for something which we now do not have.

For most of us this is not a problem: We take the seeking for granted. When we are in the process of seeking we would rather achieve our particular goals, or satisfy our particular desires, than examine the process of seeking or unrest. We do not become aware of this seeking nature until we are hurt, disappointed or frustrated in one or a few basic desires of ours. Even then, we become depressed or look for various ways of finding satisfaction, or escapes from the pain of disappointment in different ways, rather than come to think of this as a basic problem and come to grips with it. (Inherently built in our thinking is our assumption that desiring is necessary for living, and that without desiring, i.e., seeking, we would become vegetables or animals, and be dead). I think it does not really matter whether these assumptions are true or false, as long as we are stuck with the seeking, and the

restlessness it generates as a problem. (Of course, if you do not find it a problem, perhaps this whole course may be irrelevant to you.)

The seeking is not only done with the help of thought, but thought seems to be the source of it. When there is no thought there is no seeking; and whenever there is thought there is seeking. Thought is nothing but my past experiencing repeating itself in the present and wanting a continuance in the future. Each thought (or experience) when it is aware of itself or something else (whether it be an object or another thought) creates a sense of the I, and self-consciousness. This self-consciousness which is itself another thought creates its own seeking either in the form of the continuance or furtherance or in the form of avoidance of what it is aware of.

2. There is also a basic dissatisfaction built into my life: I do not know many important things about life or the world, and I seek an answer to those questions and I don't find it. For example, the questions of "Who am I?" "What was before I was born?" (Or "Was I there before I was born at all?"), "What will happen to me when I die?", "What is the meaning of all this existence?" "Why is there this existence or anything at all?" "Is there such a thing as God or Energy or Consciousness as the ultimate reality of the universe or myself?" "Does it matter if what I do hurts myself or other people?" I am frustrated because I cannot find answers to any of these (and many other similar) questions.

I am told in Eastern Philosophy that it is thought that generates these questions by its dualistic consciousness and approach, and without thought there won't be any questions. Besides, Eastern Philosophy tells me that not only thought creates these questions, but thought is incapable of answering these questions. At best, these questions are dissolved when thought is dissolved. The history of Philosophy tells me that human thought or reason is incapable of answering these questions; for one thing, our experience is limited to our sensory world, and for another, thought can only provide speculative answers and paradoxes, and it has no way of either settling the disputes between conflicting answers or resolving those paradoxes. So, here too I am back to having to understand the process of thinking itself.

While my fundamental unrest and dissatisfaction are going on, I still have to live my life as best as I can: (any attempt to commit suicide presupposes either that this life is so painful that I cannot withstand it or find a solution to the pain in it, or that there is a better solution elsewhere--none of which may be true). Things, events or people grab my attention momentarily at different times. I make a living as best as I could with this dragging, drifting kind of consciousness. My attitudes to things and people change from time to time and therefore my responses to them change: it is anyone's guess if and why I ever give a ride to a hitchhiker on the highway or I am nice to my student today or fulfill some of my obligations, or cheat people behind their back particularly when I know they don't know I am cheating or when I know they are not looking. Morality really does not seem to have any basic grip over me. No principle of conduct, moral or otherwise, seems to stay with my consciousness for any length of time. All things that happen to me are temporary,

momentary and changeable. (It does not mean I will go around doing intentionally foul things to people--that would surely be one way to complicate my life, as if it is not complicated enough!)

The above applies to my beliefs as well. I don't seem to be capable of any belief: not that I would not wish to believe in some things. But everything in my mind is so temporary that my mind starts questioning any belief as soon as it is aware of having one. Moreover, knowing the history of Philosophy and of religion, there is no way I can follow any particular faith or belief in a supernatural entity. It does not mean that I may not have some unconscious beliefs; but then they are not something that I am aware of having. I cannot consciously worship or pray any God or take shelter in any ritual, except in some very rare moments of helplessness or despair or for appearance sake when I am under social pressures. I cannot even ask favors from a guru, for that presupposes some amount of faith, on the one hand, and, on the other, also presupposes that I encourage this self-centered activity of trying to get favors from some higher authority. (Is it my pride that comes in the way?) I may in fact be screwing up my "path" if there be such a thing, by being so pretentious and arrogant. If I do, so be it!

Political action (such as Nuclear Freeze or joining political parties), social service etc. are meaningless things to my mind, for we only try to patch up the symptoms and wasting our time away, while the disease is constantly being nurtured by human self-centeredness. It is not that on a momentary impulse I might not, due to whim or social pressures, donate money to some cause or be charitable to someone on the way, but again on an impulse of the moment I may do many things; but those are not the things I think of doing as a matter of policy. In fact, I am dubious of running my life on the basis of any policy. The same is true of any discipline: no matter what policy or discipline I try to adopt, I have to remember it all the time to put it into practice, and my consciousness I know is such that it is never, never just any one thing. It is constantly changing. That's one thing I can count on for sure. The thoughts that occur to my mind, states of mind, feelings, etc. are all so transitory that I cannot say I am any one particular idea or state of mind or thing, except, again, for my basic state of unrest or dissatisfaction. Furthermore, any policy that I adopt seems to be a put on and artificial. It does not seem to be and can never be an integral part of me (and this includes any moral rules I may give myself--particularly vis-a-vis my various selfish interests, temptations, fears, goals and so forth. It is not that I am always a victim to my selfish interests either. That depends on whether or not at the time I am conscious of my motives and fears in a self-critical way; and that is not very predictable. It may happen, on the other hand, it might not!

3. Now, what about meditation? What of all these different methods of meditation I am taught in the various Eastern religions or philosophies? Can I practice them and somehow find a solution to my problem? The problem with any practice of meditation I have is that I have to force my mind into some kind of discipline, and my mind is very reluctant (for the above mentioned reasons) to undergo any discipline. Another problem I confront is when I sit down to do any meditation, and try to concentrate on a mantram, or

on the tip of your nose, or just keep the mind blank, my mind (and body) relax in a minute or so, and I invariably fall asleep! Some meditation! And if I sit down to observe my thought processes, as Krishnamurti asks us to do, then soon I develop an internal battle, because I find myself soon doing the very things Krishnamurti asks us not to do, namely observe myself with a motive, and find myself expecting a certain result out of the observation and being disappointed at not finding the result, or start building up a castle (or a story if you wish, or a fantasy) as soon as my mind catches some kind of result happening etc. This in itself becomes a never-ending process.

Out of this process of observation or meditation I am sure of this thing at least: there is not a single thing that happens to my mind, including being in a state of pure consciousness, or bliss or what not, that my mind is not aware of and does not recognize it as such (as consciousness, for example). As soon as I recognize it, I know I am no longer in that state! Whatever my mind is conscious of is not a unitary state, for in the very recognition it creates a duality of the subject and the object. It is already building up on it, modifying, attempting to do something to it. It attempts to change the given in some fashion to create something else out of it. It is always in a constant movement away from the present (or really the past it is aware of in the present) into the future. (Or it may be trying to get rid of the past it is aware of in the present. It does not matter. It is always trying to change the given in some fashion or other.)

On the other hand, in all meditational practices I see something in common: namely, that there is an attempt to quiet (is that the right word?) the thought process by disrupting it by some gadget or other (upaya meaning 'skillful means' in Sanskrit). You could perhaps accomplish this by concentrating on an innocuous or neutral object with which you are not involved, or a meaningless mantram, or by keeping your mind empty of thoughts (if you can succeed in doing that!), or by observing your thoughts. The idea seems to be that if thought is responsible for the creation of our basic problems, our seeking, our Gods and future states and what not, it is only by dissolving or breaking the process of thought that we can be liberated (if that's the right word). In other words, even the very idea of liberation is a creation of thought, for in the first place, the dissatisfaction that I am trying to escape from through liberation is itself thought-generated (just as Nagarjuna so rightly pointed out). And whatever my thought does, whether in recognition, knowledge, or awareness itself, it can only perpetuate the seeking; by itself it can never solve it. Nothing that thought does, including trying to break the thought processes, is without a motivation, namely, a perpetuation of the seeking. And as far as we know there seems to be nothing else in our conscious minds except thought that does anything. If this is the hopeless situation I find myself in, can I use any meditation whatsoever, either as a practice or anything else?

4. Suppose I try detachment of myself from all the things that bind me and renouncing all goals, as for example, detaching myself from or renouncing money, power, sex, importance, authority over people, relationships, even life itself. Suppose I try to accept death, and try to live as if nothing in life really matters. However, even this idea of detachment, assuming that detachment or renunciation (or disinterested action in the sense

of the Bhagavad Gita) will free me from myself (or from my thought-generated seeking), is full of problems: for in order to detach I must think of detachment; and thought never is truly detached. Whatever it gives up it does for a motive! We cannot consciously and deliberately give up anything without having an implicit motive of gaining something, even if it be our own liberation.

5. On the other hand, I cannot just go back to my old life and take my seeking life for granted: how can I not be conscious of the gnawing dissatisfaction that eats through my whole existence and yet innocently pursue all the goals which I would normally have pursued? Life has lost its sweetness for me. I must, come what may, go on in the same direction as I have been, namely, one of eating myself up! My life so far has made me less and less innocent, and more and more conscious (of myself). I am gripped by thought in its snares, and the more I try consciously to get out of it, the more entrenched in it I seem to become. (Isn't that the meaning of my increased self-consciousness?) Only instead of being carried away by concrete, minor particular goals of this and that, I am now governed perhaps by one Grand Illusion, namely, that of liberation or becoming free from seeking.

6. The only meditation I am now capable of is to continue, perhaps with redoubled energy, in the same direction of eating my own tail, knowing full well that everything I do is still part of the same activity of goal seeking. I become not only aware of my particular goal seekings, but also aware of the awareness of my goal seekings, knowing full well that it is itself the result of my seeking consciousness and knowing that knowledge is itself still seeking the end of seeking and so on and so on.....

I jump on my consciousness each time it is arising, and I jump on my jumping and so on and so on. Where does all this lead? Perhaps nowhere. (I notice that in this process, sometimes, my body, being temporarily released from the grip of particular identifications or goal seekings, relaxes...but what does that mean any way?) I have nowhere to go (because as far as I know nowhere exists), nothing to be or become (because there is nothing in the future, anyway), and nothing to do for anything. Yet I have no choice except be conscious...be conscious.... Perhaps all this is spiritual suicide...so be it! Om Swaha! All this is total nonsense to you? That's what all this Eastern Philosophy has come to?! So be it!

7. In the midst of all this struggle a question arose in my mind: what does it matter if I do seek? What does it matter if I do get frustrated in the process? If I am prepared for death and nothing in life matters any way, why should seeking or non-seeking, or for that matter, even liberation matter? I have learned to resist my seeking because seeking has landed me in the trouble of frustration. But then resistance to seeking, inasmuch as it too is an expression of seeking, lands me in double frustration. And that is why I have, now, thanks to Eastern philosophy, learned to resist seeking. Now that the resistance is landing me in more trouble, I am now resisting the resistance to seeking, and so on. Perhaps this is all there is to life. Let resistance, and the resistance to it, etc. be!

8. Then suddenly something snaps! There is no problem with seeking any more (nor with the resistance of it). I am now in a state ("state" is probably a wrong word to use) which is neither seeking nor non-seeking or resistance to seeking, and in which either of them (or both alternatively) can take place. Release! Did I achieve the impossible? Is this finally what Krishnamurti calls "choiceless awareness"? Is this liberation? I don't know and I don't care. But there is no struggle. Or, if there is, there is no struggle concerning that struggle. Sometimes, as occasion demands, I seek; sometimes I notice my seeking and try not to seek or resist to seek. But it does not matter what I do. I soon come back to myself. My previous self-stultifying self-consciousness is now being used to snap out of things as and when occasion seems to demand. The basic struggle, however, seems to have ended. There is no practice any more, nor is there any need for practice, for I don't have to go anywhere, nor achieve anything, and nothing to change in myself or in the world. This, however, does not prevent me from living and doing anything I have to do in my life. Thoughts come and go, and are used for planning and doing various things in life. Yet thought does not go after various goals in order to fulfill itself. And experiences, awareness of them, knowledges can all happen. Yet, I am none of them. There is at the bottom only living, neither freedom nor bondage. Is this liberation? Who knows? Who cares?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Koller, John M.: *Oriental Philosophies*, Scribners, 1985.
2. Hiriyanna, M: *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*, George Allen & Unwin, 1975.
3. Radhakrishnan, S. & Moore Charles A.: *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*, Princeton University Press, 1957.
4. Waley, Arthur: *The Analects of Confucius*, Vintage, 1938.
5. Smart, Ninian: *The Religious Experience of Mankind*, Scribners, 1969.
6. Noss, John B.: *Man's Religions*, Macmillan, 1969.
7. Hutchison, John A.: *Paths of Faith*, McGraw Hill, 1975.
8. Yu-Lan, Fung: *A Short History of Chinese Philosophy*, Free Press, 1948.
9. Robinson, Richard H: *The Buddhist Religion*, Dickenson, 1970.
10. Conze, Edward: *Buddhist Wisdom Books*, Harper, 1958.
11. Conze, Edward: *Buddhist Meditation*, Harper, 1956.
12. Eliade, Mircea: *Patanjali and Yoga*, Shoken Books, 1975.
13. Aranya, H.: *Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali*, Calcutta U. Press, 1963.