

THE PRIMACY OF SCIENCE IN PHILOSOPHIZING

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“The sciences have developed in an order, the reverse of what might have been expected. What was most remote from ourselves was first brought under the domain of law, and then, gradually, what was nearer: first the heavens, next the earth, then animal and vegetable life, then the human body, and last of all (as yet very imperfectly) the human mind” – Bertrand Russell

This paper looks into the importance of science in philosophizing. Science and technology cannot be thought of apart from the power of human reason. But what exactly does reason or rationality mean? The notion of rationality cannot be taken in the univocal sense. The notion of rationality is used in different ways in different contexts, like science, politics, ethics, economics, religion, etc. In contemporary understanding, science is considered as the refinement and representation of reason. Science is the most rigorous way of acquiring knowledge and transforming this knowledge into technical gadgets. As Hilary Putnam observes, “...if what impressed the few about science from the start was its stunning intellectual success, there is no doubt that what has impressed the many is not its overwhelming material and technological success. We are impressed by this even when it threatens our very lives.” (Putnam 1990: 176) Every moment of human life is highly influenced by science and technology. The integration of knowledge acquired by the practice of science in philosophizing is not anything new; this is the best model ever presented by a scientist-philosopher. It is none other than the Aristotelian **model** presented in the beginning of thought itself; around 500 B.C. Aristotelian philosophy, if we scrutinise, can be seen that it is built upon the common sense science and cosmology developed by Aristotle and the thinkers before him. Thus, philosophy is something that explores beyond physics, metaphysics. In this paper, therefore I am presenting the inextricable interwovenness between science and philosophy.

What Is Science and Its Methodology?

Science can be understood in terms of its specific methodology and domain. The Logical Positivists at the fag end of the nineteenth century drew a methodology from the practice of science. They claimed that the certainty of knowledge could be arrived at through this methodology. A casual observation of a phenomenon is the initial stage. This observation induces curiosity to probe further and the observation is repeated under the specified initial conditions, which is known as experiment. From the available data collected from the repeated experiments, an assumption for the cause of the phenomenon is guessed. When this assumption seems to be fairly correct due to the repeated experiments, it is designated as a hypothesis. This hypothesis is verified under critical conditions and if it passes the crucial test favourably, the

hypothesis is confirmed as a law. A series of such laws inextricably connected under a philosophical vision is known as a physical, chemical or biological theory. This theory is capable of explaining the present phenomenon as well as any future phenomena that humanity may encounter.

The methodology of science can be explained through an example. Henry Becquerel observed that the photographic plate kept air and light tight in the drawer of his table was spoiled. Curious to see the destruction of the photographic plate due to light exposition, Becquerel started investigation and discovered that the ores of uranium kept inside the table was the culprit. He assumed that uranium ores emanated certain rays that exposed the photographic plate. His continued experiment confirmed the hypothesis leading to the discovery of radium and other radio- active materials. The oft spoken story about Newton is that the curious observation of the falling of an apple led him to discover the law of gravity, namely $F = \frac{GMm}{d^2}$ where F is the force that attracts between two bodies whose mass is M and m and the distance between them is d . G is known as the universal constant of gravity. This law of gravity is capable of explaining the cohesion of solar system, falling of bodies on the earth, the ebb and tide of seawater and various other phenomena. So a rigorous way of acquiring data and processing knowledge is the basic foundation of science. Karl Popper further refines this Positivist definition of the methodology of science through the introduction of the notion of falsification. If a theory can withstand falsification, according to Popper, it is a robust theory. Popper shows an example that the general theory of relativity of Einstein could withstand such a falsification process because it predicted the bending of stellar light near the sun. In case that bending is not observed, then the theory of relativity could have been falsified. In a very simple way this can be explained as having a theory that all swans are white and in discovering a black swan, the theory gets falsified.

This methodology has certain characteristics. If anybody doubts the law or the theory, he can always test it. The testability and repeatability of experiments beyond space and time eliminated any adhocism in the acquisition of knowledge. Anybody can test it for any number of times. Thus it acquires universality. A further build up of knowledge is possible; i.e., there is no way any methodologically acquired verified knowledge could be thrown away; but to build on what is already acquired. The scientific knowledge is thus cumulative. Moreover, this knowledge can be utilised to fabricate instruments and thus facilitate life. Due to this transformation of knowledge into technology, today we have mobiles, world-wide web, i.e., internet, television, modern travel facilities, etc.

Domain:

The domain or content of science can be defined narrowly or broadly. The chain of being can be divided into various concentric circles beginning with matter. Matter is studied by the disciplines such as physics, chemistry and mathematics. Beyond the physical realm comes the plant life that can be studied by biology, microbiology etc. The plant life transcends the physical; but it incorporates the physical as well. Beyond the plant life lies the animal life which could be studied by zoology, biochemistry, genetics etc. The animal life transcends the plant life and also incorporates the preceding ones. The next domain is mind and it is studied by psychology, the philosophy of mind. Then the soul or the spirit is placed which can be studied by theology. Beyond this comes the ground of being, the **Spirit** or **God** that can be experienced in mysticism. In this chain of being, till the animal level we can strictly apply the scientific methodology. Beyond that domain, the scientific methodology collapses or we need to have a

different yardstick or methodology. When we mix up the domain and the methodology, category mistake arises. When the methodology of science is brought into examine the transcendental domain, problems arise. When the transcendental domain comes to explain the scientific domain, dogmatism can be the result of such crossing of borders. Both dogmatism and scientism is detrimental to progress and human existence. Dogmatism explains everything in terms of an outside force, named God, even in understanding and interpreting the material phenomena, while scientism denies all transcendental phenomena since it cannot be experimented with the scientific methodology because it is based on only the observables. Scientism overemphasises reason while dogmatism highlights faith. There is thus the need of avoiding a category mistake in developing a philosophical methodology.

Aristotelian Cosmology

Man from his very inception tried to unify and comprehend the pluralistic phenomena through reason and intuition. This process continued irrespective of time and context. In the early history of civilization this unification was tried from an experiential level. Thus air, water, fire and the like seemed to be the basis of the pluralistic reality. As thought and experience matured, philosophical conclusions were intuitively drawn from sense experience and theories like form and matter were developed. Man was never satisfied with these theories and his urge to comprehend the reality forced him to pursue new avenues, methods, and to formulate new theories. In this process, science was born with its critical, experimental, and rationalistic tendencies. The search for comprehending the pluralistic world continued through different paths, both by philosophy and science with mutual distrust, though both were born out of man's quest for knowledge. Occasionally science announced that a solution to this perennial problem was at hand. But always the much desired unification escaped the grip of man's quest. The need for a unified approach of science and philosophy was strongly felt ever before. Data of science and the metaphysical visions could be fused to have a unified approach in understanding the reality.

Aristotle's scientific and cosmological treatises are a fusion of such vision and can be detected mainly from the following books, *On the Heavens*, *Dialogue on Philosophy*, *Physica*, *De Caelo*, *De Generatione et Corruptione* and *Meteorologica*. (O'Neill 1923: 78-93) In this cosmology the centre of the universe was earth, and Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn and even Sun revolved around the earth while stars are fixed. He divided the cosmos into celestial and terrestrial. The celestial bodies are made up of ether and they revolve around the earth in perfect circles. (Solmsen 1960: 288-291) There is no change in the celestial world. "In the whole range of time past, so far as our inherited records reach, no change appears to have taken place either in the whole scheme of the outermost heaven or in any of its proper parts" (Aristotle 1.4.270b 13-16). While the terrestrial motion is linear and the bodies are composed of air, fire, water, and earth. Their tendency is to go up and come down and all things come to rest. The heavy bodies will fall faster to the ground than the light bodies. Aristotle also denied the concept of atoms and empty space proposed by the Atomists. Aristotle also introduced a structural force to bind together the elements. They are the opposites, namely, wet and dry and hot and cold, etc.

In the account of our knowledge of objects Aristotle in his *Topica* started with the discussion of predicables. "We must say what are definition 'property', 'genus' and 'accident'. A definition is a phrase signifying a thing's essence (McKeon, (ed) *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, p. 191, *Topica* Book 1, Ch.5.102). In the very description of the definition

Aristotle makes a distinction between the thing that is existent and its meaning or signification, which has universality in the epistemological order. The individual object that is existing is describable with the aid of categories because object is in the explicate order. "Next, then we must distinguish between the classes of predicates in which the four orders in question are found. These are ten in number: essence (substance), quantity, quality, relation, place, position, state, actuality, passivity. For the accident and genus and definition and property of anything will always be in one of these categories" (McKeon, 195, Book.1, Ch. 9). The distinction between essence (substance) and accident is central in the philosophy of nature (cosmology) of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas. All the categories, i.e., substance and the nine accidents, are both modes of being and modes of thought for Aristotle. Substance is something existing by itself and distinct from the others. Since Aristotle accepted the possibility of the plurality of substances the philosophical standpoint he took is realistic pluralism. Plainly therefore in the science of nature, as in other branches of study, our first task will be to try to determine what relates to its principles ... The principles in question must be either a) one or (b) more than one (or many). If one, it must be either 1) motionless or (2) in motion. If more than one, then either (1) a finite or (2) an infinite plurality" (McKeon 219); (*Physics*, Book.1, Ch. 9). Aristotle argues that reality is not one in the way that Parmenides and Melissus supposed. Nor is it actual infinite principles (McKeon 268-9); (*Physics* Book III Ch. 8). Hence physical reality is actual finite plurality. He did not envisage a common substratum, in the physical level of reality. A key notion in the cosmology of Aristotle is the fact of motion or activity. According to him a motion can not be understood without referring to three factors namely 1) a substrate 2) a 'before' and 3) an 'after' the change. Changes bring in new qualities, which are accidents. Here the whole operation is in the physical order.

Aristotle moved from the empirical to the transempirical order only when he took up the issue of the cause of motion. But in his philosophy of Nature he did not find any place for the study of a motionless unique reality. "Now to investigate whether Being is one and motionless is not a contribution to the science of Nature" (McKeon 219, *Physics* Book 1, Ch. 1 & 2). Things we experience in the physical universe are in movement or are subject to change. "Everything that is in motion must be moved by something. For if it has not the source of its motion in itself it is evident that it is moved by something other than itself, for there must be something else that moves it" (McKeon 340, *Physics*, Book, VII, Ch.1). let us take the case in which a thing is in locomotion and is moved by something that itself is in motion and that again is moved by something else that is in motion, and that by something else, and so on continually: then the series can not go on to infinity, but there must be some first movement (McKeon 340, *Physics*, Book, VII, Ch.1). Aristotle did not speak of the origin of physical objects in time. It might have been existing. But he spoke of a cause of motion which itself is not in motion. He concludes his arguments in *Physics* (Book. VII, Ch. 5) in favour of an unmoved movement thus: "From what has been said, then, it is evident that....in all cases of things being in motion that which primarily imparts motion is unmoved" (McKeon 373-374). He also argues that the first movement must be something that is one and eternal.

A cause that is unmoved, one and eternal, has to be something distinct and different from the order of beings, which are subject to activities or movement. This division of the being into unmoved and moved, one opposed to many, eternal in opposition to the temporal refers to the radical incompleteness of the understanding of the physical world from a purely

scientific point of view. Hence metaphysics (philosophy) has to come in to complete the picture of the physical world, which physics or any other science could not do due to the limitation of its methodology. Aristotle after having established the fact that the reality that is subject to change, real, many and finite, treated at length the modes (categories) under which they are known; from a philosophical standpoint he examined what is motion, space (place), void, and time. It is in connection with the definition of 'Nature', motion is defined. "Nature has been defined as a principle of motion and change". We must therefore see that we understand the meaning of 'motion', for if it were unknown, the meaning of nature too would be unknown" (McKeon 253). By 'Nature', essence or substance is understood. Motion is defined as the fulfilment of that which exists potentially" (McKeon 254). "What exists potentially" is also in space and time. Motion both in the form of locomotion and increase in dimension, involves variation of place or space. Concerning the reality of place Aristotle writes: We assume then: 1) Place is what contains that of which it is the place. 2) Place is no part of the thing. 3) The immediate place of a thing is neither less nor greater than the thing. 4) Place can be left behind by the thing and is separable. 5) All place admits the distinction of up and down, and each of the bodies is naturally carried to its appropriate place and rests there, and this makes the place either up or down. Moreover there is no necessity "that place should be a corporeal interval: for what is between the boundaries of the place is any body which may chance to be there, not an interval in body. Further place is also somewhere, not in the sense of being in a place, but as the limit is in the limited; for not everything that is in place, but only movable body..." (McKeon 279). In other words place is not in a place. The innermost motionless boundary of what contains is place (McKeon 278). In this discussion a body with a measurable quantity, or a body that can occupy a place is taken for granted, and in the absence of such a body place or space becomes inconceivable. As regards the description of the reality and experience of time Aristotle has also taken recourse to a world of measurable units which are in space and are in motion. "Now we perceive movement and time together;...But what is moved is from something to something, and all magnitude is continuous, the movement too must be continuous, and if the movement, then the time, ... But we apprehend time only when we have marked motion, making by it 'before' and 'after'; and it is only when we have perceived 'before' and 'after' in motion that we say that time has elapsed" (McKeon 291, *Physics Book. Ch.II*). Movement, magnitude and countability of a magnitude in units are the basic factors on which the perception of time depends. The picture of time that emerges from the three factors of time, namely 'before' 'after', and 'now' is that of a universe in which 'discreteness' or limited unit-type existence holds good.

A theoretical discussion of those categories such as substance, accident, quantity, quality, relation, habit etc., is given in the 5th Book of the *Metaphysics*. Aristotle's philosophy of nature (cosmology) gets distinctive features from the position he has developed in the *Metaphysics* concerning the eternal mover. In Book XII, chapters six and seven he tried to establish the following points: 1) Since movement must be eternal, there must be an eternal mover, and one whose essence is actuality. To account for the uniform change in the universe, there must be one principle, which acts always alike, and one whose action varies. The eternal mover originates motion by being the primary object of desire (as it is of thought); being thoroughly actual, it cannot change or move; it is a living being, perfect, separate from sensible things, and without parts.

The Concept of Prime Mover:

After a long analysis on physical change Aristotle concludes in *Physica* that the physical change cannot be explained without reference to an extra-physical cause – a being which does not change and has no physical magnitude, and yet is the final cause of perpetual change in the physical world. Thus from the concept of a physical change, Aristotle proposes a being which is subject to no change or movement, but a source of perpetual change in the world which is popularly and philosophically known as ‘unmoved mover’ (Allen 1957: 54). Thus Aristotle derives a philosophy from his science. His metaphysics emphasized this prime mover or unmoved mover as a necessity and is the first principle. And this prime mover is outside of the universe, which has no extension. This supreme mover “initiates its change as an object of love; and other things initiate change by changing themselves”. (Barns 1985: 64) Thus Aristotle moves from his physics or in general from his science to metaphysics or philosophy. So for Aristotle, the ground of philosophising is his science or cosmology. Similarly St. Thomas Aquinas transformed Aristotelian metaphysics into a stunning explanation for faith. Thus he was able to integrate Christian faith and reason in the most beautiful way. Thus it is our role today to follow the methodology of these great personalities and integrate the faith vision with the scientific discoveries into metaphysics and theology. So I propose that this methodology is the best to be followed today in philosophising. Basing itself on the epochal discoveries by the modern science and technology, a metaphysics that is touching the life and spirit of humanity is definitely possible and it is the need of the times because science is encroaching now the problems tackled by philosophy itself: about the origin of the universe, about the origin of life, human consciousness, the process of knowing, life as a biological continuum, matter as a physical continuum are some of the philosophical questions that are now answered by sciences.

A Philosophy Based on the Epochal Discoveries of Science

Genetic Engineering, Human Genome Project, Nanoscience, Quantum Relativistic Science and Neuroscience—in all these areas, there are ground breaking new discoveries that provide the context for the development of a philosophy of nature as Aristotle had developed a metaphysics from his cosmology. Let me summarily explain some of these ground breaking scientific discoveries that have significance in the twenty-first century.

Neuroscience—Brain-Mind Problem

What is mind? How is it related to the body? It is an ancient problem that baffled the human mind from time immemorial. People from all disciplines and all walks of life tried to answer the question from their perspectives. From the very beginning of thought itself, from Plato onwards, great minds like Aristotle, Spinoza, Descartes, Russell, Dennet, Quine etc., medical experts like Hippocrates, Galen, etc., theologians like St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, psychologists like Freud, Jung, Adler etc., and physicists like Turing, Penrose, Einstein etc., are a few eminent scholars who tried to solve the mystery of the mind and its intricate relationship with the human body or brain. Many isms were born as a result of the various solutions proposed by these eminent minds. Philosophers like Ludwig Wittgenstein warned that any connection of mind with the brain is something dangerous; namely, the concept that ‘we think with the brain is one of the most dangerous of ideas for a philosopher’. After having found that the complex mind is not yielding to any particular discipline, recently, philosophy, psychology, artificial intelligence, computer science, mathematics, cognitive neuroscience and theoretical linguistics which are disciplines having different methods and aims are combined as a research cluster in order to comprehend the complex mental phenomena. From the time thought blossomed in human being, she was grappling with this

complex phenomenon within herself. It was always evading human grip, slipping into unknown horizons raising newer problems rather than solving any of them. Theories were developed depending on the epistemological and cultural milieu and grounding on the data about the human anatomy available at that time. The cognitive research cluster confronts the phenomena from different fronts in an effort to understand it and may be able to manipulate it. The goals of the present research are not yet clear but it has certainly bearings of the new technological culture. It replaces the phenomenological, existential categories of mental phenomena with new technical terms like computational, vectorial, state space etc., which are borrowed from the experimental sciences. The traditional view holders resist this take over of science, accusing it of iconoclasting the niceties and sacredness related with human mind, making it dreadful and mechanical. But the research group is pushing ahead proposing new hypotheses integrating mathematical concepts, neuroanatomy and philosophical perspectives to reduce the mystery and sacredness of mind into a neuro-chemical automation in terms of hard science.

The mental features of a normal human person interest the philosopher too. Sensation, perception, thinking, memory, belief, intention, decision, purpose, action, pain, pleasure, emotion, mood, generosity, courage, ambition, dream, sleep, illness, curing, etc.: all these life experiences encompass the mind and that attracts any thinking person to understand the mental phenomena. From a philosophical standpoint, several solutions or explanations are given to the mind-body problem. The idealist school considers that everything is mental or constructed by the mind. The supporters of idealism are the famous thinkers like Berkley, Fichte, Kant, Hegel, Mach, William James, Whitehead, Teilhard de Chardin etc. Spinoza, Feigl, Schlick and others observe that mind and brain are the two aspects of the same material substance and hence their position is known as neutral monism. Eliminative materialists like Turing, Skinner, Watson and others consider that nothing is mental and everything is material. They want to reduce every mental phenomenon into a matter. A more strict form of materialist reduction is followed by Epicurus, Lucretius, Hobbes, Pavlov, J.J.C. Smart, D. Armstrong, W.V. Quine and others. They try to reduce mental events to physical or physio-chemical changes and hence known as physicalism or reductionist materialism. Autonomists like Bradley and Wittgenstein were of the view that the mind and brain are unrelated. Psychophysical parallelism considers that every mental event is accompanied by a synchronous neural event. Behaviorism was prominent in the mid-half of the last century, ascribing mental descriptions to patterns of behaviorism. Since behaviorism could not distinguish the real and imitation of behavior it was discarded. Leibnitz and early Freud held this view. Plato and Augustine held that mental events are caused by brain or neural events, and hence this position is known as epiphenomenalism. Interactionism suggests that mental events are caused by neural or physical states and the brain is the basis for any mental event. Descartes, Popper, Chomsky are the proponents of this theory. Functionalism proposes that mental states are just functional states of complex systems. A computer model of the brain is proposed where the mind is considered as the function of the hardware brain. A mental state ends just like a functional state ends and another begins. As many functions are kept in the hardware of the computer, according to requirements we are retrieving various functions of the mind. Turing, Dennet, Putnam, Lycan, etc., are the proponents of functionalism. However, all these philosophical solutions and positions indeed did not resolve the mind-body problem but made it murkier.

In her search for a real mathematical, simplified, unified theory explaining the functions of brain, Patricia Churchland encountered a theoretical vacuum. There is sufficient understanding about the behaviour of an individual neuron—its membrane properties, the spiking frequencies of the axon, the synaptic phenomenology, its patterns of organization, the migration of intercellular chemicals and its metabolism. Though many unanswered questions remain, and major breakthroughs are yet to be made, neuron is not a mystery now. But a general theoretical framework is lacking. Neuroscientists are not in favour of making hypotheses. The reasons behind are pragmatism and humility that we have not yet reached a stage to develop theories on computing neural phenomena. What is really playing the role of theories are metaphors advertised as theories. The examples are the suggestions of Van Heerden and Karl Pribram that brain functions as a hologram. When a portion of hologram is projected, the whole is visualised making theorists running after it claiming as the ultimate explanation of brain function. It failed to explain information storage and retrieval of the phenomena. Though aroused wide enthusiasm across various fields it failed to give a credible account of the brain processes and the mathematics of the hologram never tallied with the mathematics of the neural ensembles. But it inspired research in parallel modelling of brain function. Another is computer model, brain functioning as hardware and cognitive software. In an abstract sense brain acts as an input-output processor. It is not a theory but a metaphor drawing again the dualistic distinction. But it catalyses theorizing.

First of all it is necessary to point out the fundamental things a nervous system must do and grounding on the basic operations a hypothesis can be proposed. Refinement of the theory will be done in several stages through simplifications, idealizations, approximations and generalizations. In the build up of a theory there are different choices in the input-output organization. Motor control, visual perception and memory are a few selections. Each has its merits and demerits. Much data have been collected on the visual perception. The psychology of perception, the physiology of retina, the lateral geniculate nuclei, and the visually responsive areas of the cortex. Knowledge about the characterizations of the output at various levels are not yet found. But about motor behaviour, neuroscience knows much about the output organization while missing the input organization and its structures. Generally a theory must successfully link input-output organization.

There are certain constraints felt in the theory build up. Time factor plays a key role in theory formation. The conduction velocities of chemical components, synaptic transmission delays, frequency modulation are a few examples showing the importance of the time factor. In the visual recognition if a person takes generally 500 milli seconds then a theory hypothesizing large fluctuations in this field would not survive. That is it must be able to explain the input-output relay within the range of 100 steps since a step normally takes three to four milliseconds. A few breakthroughs like that of Patricia Churchland are available as modest beginnings in theory formation.

Genetic Science

While officially announcing the completion of Human Genome project on 26 June 2000 at White House, Bill Clinton, the President of the United States observed prophetically that “today, we are learning the language in which God created life”. As he has observed, we are living through the greatest intellectual triumph of human reason in the history of all times in understanding the instructions for how to build and run human body unleashing an

enormous power of information. John Sulston, director of Sanger Centre in England, said that “we ‘have got to the point inhuman history where for the first time we are going to hold on our hands the set of instructions to make a human being. That is an incredible philosophical step forward, and will change, I think, the way we think of ourselves.” (Indian Express, 27June, 2000) Through this research, human rationality is penetrating the thoughts of God as Einstein has once dreamt of. This project comes as a climax of human search for unravelling the ingrained secrets of life itself; it is a kind of cataloguing of human genes and discovering the molecular nature of cancer and other diseases such as ‘Alzheimer’s disease that diminishes the quality of human life. It also sheds light into diseases like ‘Huntington’ which attacks humans with a clock work precision. As Pope John Paul envisioned that “through the knowledge of genetics and molecular biology, scientists can look with the penetrating gaze of science into the inner fabric of life and the mechanisms that characterize individuals, thus ensuring the continuity of living species.”(Vial Correa 1999:7) This informative power, epistemological advancement can easily be converted into technological power; both constructively and destructively. Thus, genetics enables human genius to reconstruct dead animals of the bygone era and to sustain the diversity of life by cloning a number of endangered species. This new technology can be a curse because of developing new forms of germ warfare even in contaminating and destructing the entire humanity itself. Genetic engineering in general, is, thus a treasure trove of philosophical implications making an unending assault on ignorance; but bringing home unanticipated social effects such as discrimination, stigmatisation etc. Or more concretely, payment of unequal insurance payment, genetic screening before permanent appointment for jobs, before starting emotional relationships, before membership is given in clubs can happen due to the availability of genetic information. Genetic technology has also tremendous religious significance because the dynamics of life – creation – is cracked by human reason and unless care is taken in handling and manipulating this knowledge ‘death’ can prevail upon humanity instead of the promised ‘immortality’ as the metaphor from the Book of Genesis reveals. The prenatal diagnosis, stem cell research, can enhance the culture of death prevailing at present in our society by selectively culling the defective unborn child. Manipulation of genes, cutting and pasting genes from one organism to another can dehumanise the human person because there is an underpinning belief that human person is nothing other than his or her genome. A new concept of personality is derived from this genome research. Genome, either of a plant or of an animal, including that of the rational animal is the fundamental matrix of human ontic development and of its functionality. Genetic research and engineering has to be examined, thus, in its two fold processes; as an object of scientific pursuit and as an object of ethical judgement that enable in creating a philosophy of life for the contemporary technological man. *Techne* without *Poesis* is destructive; technology without the aid of wisdom cannot be constructively administered. As a background to this moral and ethical analysis, let us examine this epochal intellectual discovery that asserts once again the evolutionary molecular origin of human life (Darwin 1859) from the unicellular organism or the nature of biological continuum and its revolutionary social and religious impacts on the human society in general. At this stage human reproduction is genetically manipulated. By just knocking off the nucleus of the ovum and replacing it with the nucleus of another cell, even from the same animal can fertilise it. Artificially cultured and then implanted in the womb a clone of the animal with all its characteristic features is born. This is known as cloning. This methodology when perfected can be applied in artificially cloning a person. The technology is available and there are many technically equipped scientists vowed to make clones. Another important scientific discovery

of the twenty-first century is the sequencing of the human genetic code, which is known as human genome project.

Human Genome Project

In our human body, cells are the basic unit of biological life. One hundred million cells are there existing in human body, roughly around in 200 different forms by 47 doublings of a sperm and ovum fused to a single cell. The cell is divided into the nucleus and the cytoplasm. In the cells we find DNA, genes and chromosomes the vital powers of life. DNA has three fundamental constituents: a phosphate molecule, a sugar molecule, and a base molecule. The three components are linked together by chemical bonds in the order of phosphate-sugar base, and this combined unit is called a nucleotide. The four bases occurring in DNA are identified as Adenine (A), Guanine (G), Cytosine(C), Thymine(T). These are the fundamental biological units of life. These four bases are like the letters of a language. With these four letters genes are constituted. Genes are responsible for the individuality of the person, colour, texture, size, etc. The HGP roughly estimate that there are 30,000 genes in a human person. Chromosomes are thread like structures carrying genes. A human cell has 23 pairs of chromosomes. When a new offspring is produced, the male and female parents contribute the same number of chromosomes, and there is a fixed number of them in each cell. A DNA is made up of a large number of nucleotides stitched together like beads in a necklace, which is stranded. The DNA constitutes the amino acids whose long chains are called proteins. In a DNA there are 3.1 billion varying combinations of the four bases named as Adenine (A), Guanine (G), Cytosine (C), Thymine (T). This sequencing is not arbitrary or random. Each combination contains vital information in the production of proteins. According to this complex manual of genes human biological life is governed from conception to death. The complete mapping of the 3.1 billion sequences of the bases is known as the Human Genome project. This Himalayan project was completed by the co-operation of the National Human research institute, Bethesda, Maryland, USA and the Craig Venter of Celera Genomics of Rockville, Maryland, USA. Though the project is said to be completed, only the sequence of ordering of the basic four bases of the DNA are only complete. The difference between one individual and another is very narrow. Only 3 million proteins out of 3.1 billion make the difference. Or two individuals differ on the average only in one nucleotide per one thousand. Moreover, we share almost 70% similarity of DNA with fruit, flies, and much more with our mammalian brothers and sisters. 30% with yeast, 75% with mouse and with cow 90% and, 98.4% DNA we share with chimpanzees. Thus humans are part of the biological continuum of God's creation (Kozhanthadam 2001).

Based on the available data scientists interpret that only 5 % of the DNA controls the protein-producing activity of the genes and the rest 95% is junk. But this remark perhaps might be due to the lack of complete knowledge since nature never wastes anything. This fact must truly pose a challenge for future research. Some 50, 000 genes are related to different forms of cancer. Disease causing genes could be discovered and eliminated. The disease causing genes can be discovered and hence foreknowledge about death itself can be made known and people can plan. The success of human genome project raises many moral and philosophical issues. The most conspicuous one is that of reductionism. Human person is reduced into biological units and its interaction. The trend is to eliminate all religious and spiritual dimensions of the human reality and to represent it as a mere machine having parts and governed by specific physical and chemical laws. A reductive materialistic philosophy is on the offing. The divide between the rich and the poor will also be very evident from the

specialised genetic treatments available only for the rich. However, positively, the human genome project results can be used against caste, individual, discrimination, settling parental disputes etc. Common genetic sharing with the other life forms shows the import of having an ecological consciousness. Moreover, the genome project reveals the mastery of the creator and the complexity and mystery of creation.

Nanoscience

Another breath taking discovery on the offing is nano-technology, an area of science that holds the promise to dramatically change the way we live in the new century (Scientific American September 2001). It is the study and manufacture of structures and devices with dimensions about the size of molecule that offers a very broad stage on which the scientific research community can play. To give you an idea, a nanometer is 1,000 times smaller than a micron, a micrometer is thousand times smaller than a centimeter and a bacteria is 1,000 nanometers long. This is an area bordering fact and fiction, it is an art of building small. This technology envisages creating tiny things, as small as one billionth of a meter, of the size of a molecule. At present the research is going on in the micro level, and the next stage is nano level or nano world. As an example a nanomotor propelled instrument can just skate, walk or float on water surface; a camera can be injected through your veins and show the blocks in your blood vessels and come out through the tears as you might have seen in a science fiction film called 'Fantastic Voyage'. It is not imagination, but on the process of developing. Nanometer-scale physics and chemistry might lead directly to the smallest and fastest transistors or the strongest and lightest materials ever made. But even though the programme is given emphasis to the physical sciences and engineering, it has something for everyone. Nanotechnology could supply instrumentation to speed gene sequencing and chemical agents to detect tumours that are only a few cells in size. It can also create robots that can multiply uncontrollably and also create deadly chemical and biological weapons. DNA in cells, including humans could be employed in computing. An artificial hip that is smeared with nanoparticles might bond tightly. Nanotechnology is serving as a rallying point for physicists, chemists and biologists to work together as a single research community. However, science is only at the beginning stage of the technology for the future. They are going to revolutionise and transform society in an unthinkable manner. Nanotechnology will not only be to the 21st century what microelectronics was to the 20th century, but it will impact all aspects of our lives, from materials to health to communication.

Quantum Relativistic Science

Relativity theory and quantum mechanics have revolutionised the whole concept of our universe (Artigas 2000). Relativity theory showed that matter-space-time is a continuum and our earth is a tiny planet revolving around a mediocre star that moves around 30,000 light years away from the centre of milkyway galaxy which has one billion stars. The Milky Way galaxy is part of local group of a tiny galactic cluster and there are billions of such galactic clusters. The transformation of the stars, or the life cycles of the stars into red giant, white dwarf, neutron, black hole stages are also baffling. The search for extra terrestrial life reveals human's quest for discovering whether he is alone in this universe. The concept of matter-space-time continuum and the relationship between past, present and future in the theory of relativity has so many implications. Quantum mechanics brings the human search into the world of the atom and nucleus, namely the micro world. The breaking and fusing of an atom unleashes immense power. Humanity transformed this knowledge in negative and positive ways. The discovery of controlling the electron beam brought the computer technology and

which in turn fostered the information technology that brought the whole world from being inhabitants of a global village to players on the same screen.

The Theory of relativity and quantum mechanics cannot solve the basic problems of today. However both of these theories are founded on two opposing philosophical positions: quantum mechanics is anti-realist and indeterministic, while relativity is deterministic and realistic. Discoveries like nonlocality, quantum teleportation, etc., show the direction of science into a deeper level. Thus the asymptotic process of acquiring knowledge about nature fascinatingly never ends.

Philosophy of Reductionism and Determinism

An underpinning tendency in these scientific developments is the rise of a philosophy of reductionism and determinism. In the research areas of mind-body or brain-mind research, nanotechnology, Genetic Engineering, quantum relativistic cosmology, the main trend is the elimination of the religious and the spiritual values and reducing the human and the universe into a mere dynamics of material forces. The transcendence we experienced in Aristotle is lacking in the modern science. For him the cause of the motion cannot be placed with the material. He went beyond the natural to a realm of supra-natural or transcendence or to a meta-physics. There is a serious danger hovering over us: the religious and the spiritual dimensions will completely be eliminated by the reductionist approach. As an example, I am presenting the attitude of scientist in the field of genetic engineering.

The editorial in *Nature* with the title “Not Everything is in the genes” criticised the tendency of some researchers in identifying genes as the cause of personal traits like alcoholism, depression, homosexuality, violence etc. The editor was sincerely afraid of the deviations that is taking place in the genetic research. Ideological interpretation, social discrimination and human rights violations are according to him rampant in this way of research. He was calling the attention of the researchers in interpreting the scientific data in a more ethical and responsible way. Modelling on the other research fields such as brain-mind studies, biological research is reducing life into mere deterministic genetic model. Molecular genetics as the foundation and by correcting the gene coding or the altering the script diseases can be eliminated for ever and qualitative changes can be introduced into all forms of life, including that of human life itself. This reductionist paradigm of the bio-medical research was indicated by Miguel Moreno Munoz and called for an immediate evaluation of the research programmes (Miguel Munoz 1997:207). The problem with the reductionist approach is that it relies only on observable phenomena and processes denying any unobservable realities in the paradigm of reductionism. The positivist tendencies that are almost eliminated in the research of matter are still the invisible engine in the genome project.

The corollary of reductionism is determinism. The idea that catapulted determinism is that by manipulating a structure one can control the whole organism. In the genetic research by modifying the genes, the organism's function can be manipulated to a predetermined one. A disease like asthma is determined to be linked with a specific gene and by correcting that gene the organism can be eliminated of asthma or genetically determined. By correcting the structure, the function is altered or determined. Here the research might not have discovered the cause holistically or by discovering the prevalent cause and manipulating it an overarching claim is established. The whole dynamics of the organism is not at all taken into account.

Another aspect of the determinist ideology is sidelining certain diseases as inherited or hereditary and considering them as unalterable without taking into consideration the overall effects of the psychological, environmental and medical aspects. Such diseases are often in the light of this deterministic model are considered as untreatable and uncontrollable. There is a strong tendency to identify the 'genetic self' as the personifying identity of the human person rather than the product of the cumulative life experience. The personality that is created earlier through introspection, insight and actions are to be sidelined and the scientific tools of genetic engineering are to be defining the human person. That is why cloning is creating so much of debate. In a way, genetic engineering is pathologizing the human person in terms of diseases, illnesses, genes and the ability to improve in terms of gene transfer. The unique individuality of the human person is singled out by specifying the genome structure of its parents. Thus every aspect of humanity is geneticized and made to become the blue print for any organism and especially human life. As well indicated and commented by Dorothy Nelkin, the genome has become a contemporary metaphor for the soul and consciousness (Dorothy Nelkin 1995). Genes are shared and it is passed on to the next generation and they survive the individual and almost is in the verge of being interpreted as life after death. A gene survives the individual person and moves on to the other one as a stream linking many lives, which could also be interpreted as the transmigration of the soul or of the personality. The result of this overarching reductionism is bringing discrimination, stigmatisation and other eugenic concerns. The easy power to acquire genetic information leads to discrimination against the individual. Individuals who are easily prone to diseases can be screened away for jobs and insurance premiums. Like race, age, sex, behaviour, etc., gene can also thus become a type of differential consideration. The value of the human person is weighed according to one's physiological and pathological characteristics. As an example, it is observed that the Afro-Americans are prone to sickle cell anemia and the insurance companies raised their insurance premium though they were healthy and not prone to any disease at all (Andrews 1987).

Certain people can be stigmatised by knowing their genetic code like prone to Huntington disease. Parents can be sued or hated by the children for giving inherited diseases like the Huntington. If the embryo is tested and found having such genes, the child in the womb would be forcefully aborted creating another moral dilemma. Genetic conditions that are unalterable become a factor of social conditioning. People who are suspected or borderline for such genetic conditions could be both discriminated and stigmatized and thus autonomous and responsible decision-making will be affected by public opinion and personal attitudes of those who are handling power. The genetically designed perfect body and perfect baby will be encouraged and will become the obsession of the masses endangering the natural life.

A colonial attitude is also prevailing in the sequencing of genetic materials from the developing nations. Researchers will be recruited from such countries by multinationals and then patent the results discovered by these researchers on the genetic materials taken from the developing and underdeveloped nations. Numerous examples are citable like that of patenting the Basmati rice, medicinal effects of neem, of turmeric etc. If the poor nations are not conscious a large amount of such genetic sequencing are to be acquired by the rich developed nations. The poor nations will not be in a situation to argue their cases systematically and thus ultimately losing their claims.

The epistemological input given by the Genetic engineering is going to deeply affect our human life as a social and religious being. The reductionist and determinist approach will eliminate the spiritual, philosophical, psychological and religious values and will count a human person as a genetic self. The genetic conditioning is going to stigmatize and discriminate the person socially. As Pope John Paul advised a group of biologists that “man is also for you the ultimate term of scientific research, the whole man, spirit and body, even if the immediate object of the sciences that you profess is the body with all its organs and tissues. The human body is not independent of the spirit, just as the spirit is not independent of the body, because of the deep unity and mutual connections that exist between one and the other. Hence the great importance for the life of the spirit, of the sciences that promote the knowledge of corporeal reality and activity.” The indivisibility of the human person as an embodied spirit is emphasised by Pope John Paul and exhorts the biologists and the researchers not to reject the religious and spiritual dimension of the human person.

Another consequence of the human genome project is the creation of genetic ghettos. People belonging to a certain genetic make up will come together and cling as a group developing into a ghetto. The selection and screening of human person in terms of their genetic material will really dehumanize them and the celebration of the diversity of human nature will be curtailed.

Conclusion

Science, as reason, presents itself in each culture as a corrective to the mystical and mythical world-picture, and aims to improve it with a new-world view eliminating superstitious beliefs and bringing understanding about the universe and life and transforming that knowledge into technology in improving the life style. However, faith gives meaning and purpose to the world-view created by science and science in turn becomes a corrective to the mythical world-view. As Jan Hilgevoord correctly observes “the cosmology of the Old Testament is essentially mythical in character. The world is viewed as a three-storied structure, with the earth in the centre, the heaven above and the underworld beneath. All this is the language of mythology, and the origin of the various themes can be easily traced . . . To this extent the kerygma is incredible to modern man, for he is convinced that the mythical view of the world is obsolete” (Hilgevoord 1994: 115). As we reflect about the future of philosophical and theological pursuit in the twenty-first century, my position is that the role of reason is to be highlighted. Reason can be almost identified with that of the contemporary science. Science is revealing in its epoch making discoveries about nature. Along with the book of revelation, the book of nature is to be adequately studied. As Aristotle and St. Thomas showed us the way in developing a synthesis of reason and faith, now philosophers and theologians must come out in understanding the discoveries of science and the world vision it offers. The Aristotelian metaphysics and the Thomistic philosophy and theology is based on a common sense view of the world, almost 2500 years old world vision that was prevailing in the medieval period. A sound encounter of science and theology did not happen due to the mutual suspicion and the initial hegemony of religion and the later arrogance of science. The common sense view of the world was eliminated by Galileo, Kepler, Newton, Faraday, Maxwell and thousands of other scientists. This classical vision of nature are refined by quantum mechanics and the theory of relativity in the twentieth century. Today in the twenty-first century, human genome project, nano-technology, genetic engineering, brain-mind artificial intelligence are revolutionising human conceptions. When this new world vision is integrated into and reformulated philosophy, it will become intellectually

stimulating and will be in touch with the reality of today capable of tackling the unsolved problems of today arising out of a lack of value and meaning. I do not say that there were no such attempts; there were great science-spiritual stalwarts like Teilhard de Chardin. If the Church wanted to produce great minds like Chardin who integrated science and theology in the present century, instead of being terrified on the onslaught of scientific discoveries, Church should dynamically engage science or faith should courageously encounter reason. For this there should be an opening from the philosophers and the theologians and a thirst and a quest for understanding the dynamics of science. Also the philosopher can effectively contribute to the problems of science and new perspectives. For this there must be more and more interactions between scientists and theologians in an academic fashion. Suspending prejudices and with an open mind, both scientists and theologians should meet. *The supposed to be existing gap between theology and science can be bridged by philosophy*. Through this process, the speedy advent of a new culture and environment for humanity envisaged by Aristotle and St. Thomas, can be made possible. A new culture will unfold from this interaction where science will pose challenges to philosophy and philosophy will guide scientific pursuits.

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A MARXIST METHODOLOGY FOR THE INDIAN CONTEXT

-DR. JOSE ELAMPASSERY, S.J.

INTRODUCTION

For more than a century Marxism has been a vital current in the political culture and intellectual life, first of Western Europe and then of the entire world. A Marxist presence in the intellectual circles of the colonized and developing worlds was ubiquitous and longstanding, having begun just before and during the 1920s, when communist parties were formed in India, China, Turkey and other countries. However, for many people today, including many who would have called themselves Marxists not so long ago, this tradition seems largely spent. As a political tendency, Marxism is so deeply in crisis that many erstwhile Marxists nowadays eschew even the label (*Wright 179*). Today the major part of the left in advanced capitalist countries and in the developing world appears to have largely shed its historical affiliation with the Marxist tradition. Not only have Marxist revolutionary aspirations been marginalized, but programs of social reform inspired by Marxist understanding of the social world and Marxist vision of ideal social arrangements no longer shape left political practice (*Wright 1*).

However, I believe it is too early to write the obituary of Marxism. One of those who wrote this obituary, Francis Fukuyama argued in *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992) claimed that a remarkable consensus concerning the legitimacy of liberal democracy as a system of government had emerged throughout the world during the past few years, as it conquered rival ideologies like hereditary monarchy, fascism, and most recently communism. He argued that liberal democracy may constitute the ‘end point of mankind's ideological evolution’ and the ‘final form of human government,’ and as such constitute the ‘end of history.’ That is, while earlier forms of government were characterized by grave defects and irrationalities that led to their eventual collapse, liberal democracy was arguably free from such fundamental internal contradictions. For Fukuyama the alliance of liberal democracy and of the ‘free market’ constitutes the good news of the last quarter of the twentieth century (*Derrida 43*). Today ‘civilization’ has become a synonym of capitalist democracy, while anything critical of the current state of affairs is branded as ‘radical’ and dismissed as irresponsible romanticism (*Adamson 135*). Even Francis Fukuyama was made to reassess his views after September 11. In an article, “History Restarts since Sept 11,” he quotes the French sociologist Jean Baudrillard who published a long piece in *Le Monde* in which he argued that ‘Ultimately, it is they [i.e., the terrorists] who’ve done the deed, but it is we who have wanted it. . . . Terrorism is immoral, and it responds to a globalization that is itself immoral.’ Fukuyama goes on to say that Baudrillard’s image is one of France, and more generally, Europe, as an island of civilization caught in a struggle between two morally equivalent fundamentalisms—that of the United States and the radical Islamists. Fukuyama does not agree with the view of Baudrillard. However, I feel that there is an element of truth in it and many around the world agree with it. Liberal democracy, which is at the service of corporate capitalism and imperialism has to rethink its democratic credentials.

After witnessing one of the most irrational wars in history, i.e., the war against the people of Iraq, I find it difficult to believe in Fukuyama’s thesis that the existing liberal

democracy of the capitalist countries is a rational form of government, governing with the consent of the people to ensure their welfare. The war against Iraq was fought without taking into consideration the wishes of the peoples of the world at large and against the will of the people of the nations that went for the war. People were brainwashed by the so-called free press controlled by vested interests, which refused to see the truth and stand for civilized norms of behavior. Consensus was elicited among the invading forces in the most undemocratic manner possible by making use of threats, bribes and blackmails. The real interest of the war was, as many think today, control over Iraqi oil. The lip service to freedom and democracy was a cover for aggression and occupation. In the post World War period there has hardly been a dictator who was not created and protected by the CIA. The justification of the second Gulf war is the doctrine that any means used against anyone who challenges American hegemony is justifiable. Though the war negated every norm of democratic behavior, the votaries of colonialism and imperialism see the victory over the Iraqi people as one more step in the triumphant march of capitalism. This, added to the collapse of the economies of the so-called socialist states, has challenged many of the beliefs and convictions of the socialist left. As a result, the left today finds itself back at its original starting point in the last century. Like then, it now faces a form of capitalism that is in ascendance. There would seem to be greater 'consensus' today, more than at any other time in history, that capitalism is the only valid form of economic organization. The present belief that capitalism is synonymous with social order and progress means that any search for an alternative to capitalism is an irrational and a reactionary project. As the global order extends beyond the West, we find political opponents are labeled "terrorist" and "evil." Thus those opposed the IMF policies are terrorists and those who oppose the US hegemony belong to the axis of evil.

According to Chomsky, what is called "capitalism" today is basically a system of corporate mercantilism, with huge and largely unaccountable private tyrannies exercising vast control over the economy, political systems, and social and cultural life, operating in close cooperation with powerful States that intervene massively in the domestic economy and international society. Even in the US more than 80% of the population regard the economic system as *inherently unfair* and the political system as a fraud, which serves *special interest groups*, not *the people*.

With respect to the current state of things, Marx's analysis of capital appears nothing short of prophetic. Virtually everything he attributes to capital—from its unceasing expansion to globalization, commodity fetishization and automated production, to the increased rapidity of transport and communication—has become a reality. As Marx foresaw, the wealth and power of those who control the means of production continue to grow disproportionately. However, rather than the "revolutionary consciousness" that Marx believed would result from this, the political climate we currently see is closer to the opposite, despite the widening gap between the rich and the poor. 'Class struggle' appears to be in decline. (Adamson 107). Generally speaking, it appears that ignorance rather than enlightenment and apathy often promoted by brainwashing mechanisms like those that led many to endorse the Iraq war rather than activism are growing in tandem with the advance of capital. Although the present social climate questions the validity of some of the concepts of Marx, it does not necessarily undermine the relevance of Marx's thought as a whole.

Today Marxian theory and practice has to confront the critique of postmodernism, too. In providing a critique of positivism and macrotheory, postmodernism has established an intellectual tradition that has challenged a variety of intellectual viewpoints, most notably Marxism. By arguing for subjectivism and microsociological analysis, leading postmodern thinkers have instituted a theoretical and practical shift away from the once dominant Marxist tradition. For the traditional Marxist thinkers, this shift has necessitated a reassessment of thought regarding the fundamental structure of theory, the construction of discourse, the theoretical approach to social phenomena, and the nature of reality (*Barnhart*).

Though the Marxian dream of a classless society, a society without alienations, looks a distant dream or even an impossibility, this dream is still superior to capitalistic structures which have failed to bring about a more equitable society. What we witness is the helplessness and despair of the ordinary men and women of the world when confronted by large corporate interests and the military might that protect them. We also see the more intolerant among the exploited and marginalized turning to violence and terror. To believe that there is no alternative to the present corporate capitalism and leave the vast majority of people to the marginalized state, deprived of the power to shape their own lives, is to deny their humanity. We need to look for political and economic alternatives that will bring about a better future to the marginalized of society. These alternatives need methodologies to understand reality and get organized.

Marxist methodology can, perhaps, offer us help in this process of critiquing corporate capitalism and developing alternatives. In fact, Marxist methodology and critique still remains the best tool to understand and analyze the present day scenario and its implications. As Oswald Nell-Breuning, S.J. wrote in his commentary of *Quadragesimo Anno*, “This analysis of economic society and—for what it says concerning the industrialized countries—of society as a whole is the imperishable achievement of Marx. All subsequent critiques of capitalism are based, to one degree or another on it” (*Miranda xiii*). He goes on to say that ‘we are all riding on Marx’s shoulders’ (*Miranda xiii*). According to Derrida, “We all live in a world, some would say a culture, that still bears, at an incalculable depth, the mark of this [Marxist] inheritance, whether in a directly visible fashion or not”(33). Therefore, in this paper I propose to explain some of the methodologies of Marxism and point out some of the areas in the Indian context where concepts derived from these could be used to understand and critique the existing situations, ideologies and hegemonies with a view to bring about transformations in society.

The way we are using the phrase “Marxist methodology” requires certain clarifications. By “Marxist” we mean the thought patterns and practices that have developed since Marx, thought patterns which have been inspired by Marx and his vision. So we will be looking into the developments that have taken place in different parts of the world since Marx. When we look at these developments, one of the first things we notice is that there is nothing that could be called *the* Marxist methodology, just like there is nothing that could be called *the* Marxism. Opinions vary regarding the number of versions of Marxism present in society today. Some have suggested that there are two Marxisms inherent in the classical tradition—one a science of revolutionary practice, the other a philosophical critique of capitalist modernity. A further breakdown is offered by Therborn, who distinguishes the thinking of the Comintern and Communist Parties affiliated to the Third International, the dissident argumentation of Trotskyism, and the Marxisms of the non-European worlds.

(*Therborn 1996, 77-79*) There is nothing untoward about having several Marxisms, since it belongs to the very spirit of Marxism to assume different manifestations, each answering the unique social situation of the time. Thus, writing in the early 1970s, Jameson remarked that it was “consistent with the spirit of Marxism that there should exist several different Marxisms in the world today, each answering the special needs and problems of its own socio-economic system” (*Parry 135*). And this shows that the postmodern critique of Marxism as a grand overarching theory is not accurate.

Though Marxism is not monolithic, we can discern certain common themes characterizing all its various manifestations. One such characteristic is that Marxist methodology is not a value-free, disinterested affair, but an attempt to look at history from the underside, from the perspective of the marginalized, the excluded other. It is also an attempt to construct knowledge required for the liberation of the dalits, the minorities, the poor, the unorganized sectors and women.

Another important characteristic of Marxism is said to consist in the fact that Marxism embodies distinctive methodological doctrines that sharply distinguish it from ‘bourgeois’ social theory. While the substance of such claims has varied considerably, there has been virtual unanimity among Marxists that Marxism and its rivals are separated by a deep, and philosophically irreconcilable, methodological fissure. However, this consensus no longer exists. Analytical Marxists reject claims for Marx’s methodological distinctiveness, insisting that what is valuable in Marxism is its substantive claim about the world, not its methodology (*Wright 104*). As a historical phenomenon Marxism claims to be both a science and a guide to socialist action i.e., a theory meant to explain the process of history, traditionally known as historical materialism and a revolutionary movement. In other words it is both a theory and a praxis (*Therborn 37-8*).

It would immensely enrich our understanding of Marxism and its methodology if we look into the ways in which this theory and praxis have been understood and practiced by different interpretations of Marxism such as the traditional Historical Materialism, Critical Theory and Dialectical Phenomenology.

Historical Materialism

Orthodox historical materialism advances the following two very general claims: (a) The level of development of productive forces in a society explains the set of social relations of production, in other words, the “economic structure,” of that society; and (b) the economic structure of a society, i.e., its “economic base,” explains that society’s legal and political “superstructure” and forms of consciousness (*Wright 16*).

Thus the tasks of a Marxist critique could be formulated as the following: First of all it seeks to insert given systems of values and norms into a historical totality, so that we are able to understand them within the context of the forces and relations of production. It also seeks to demonstrate how the ideologies, groups, organizations, institutions and societies are structured by the class struggle, constituting different examples of unity of opposites, contradictory unities of the values and norms of opposing classes (*Therborn 1980: 429*). To demonstrate that the forms and values of the society are in the last analysis determined by the economic structure of society means that changes are brought to society by transformations in

the economic structures. Traditional Marxist analysis considers historical materialism and class struggle as the underpinnings of Marxist theory. It also considers history a teleological process leading to a classless society.

However, we should keep in mind that dialectical materialism is a method of analysis and not in itself a science. Marxism as a methodology is also in need of "critical reappraisal," because Marxism is often employed not as a method of critique related to actual struggle, but as a theory, which, having assumed an autonomy of its own, is disputed in terms of an inner 'logic' and its reality. This can lead to dogmatism. There are not many takers today for such a science of dialectical materialism and its methodology.

There were three major efforts at elucidation of the scientific basis of historical materialism, which deserve to be noted—two from Western Europe by Galvano Della Volpe and Louis Althusser and one from the Eastern Sector, by Jindrich Zeleny. They located themselves in the Marxist-Leninist tradition. Their common effort has been to defend, clarify and develop the scientificity of Marxism (*Therborn 1980 : 41*).

Della Volpe and Zeleny both belong to the important and versatile tradition of the method of "historical materialism." The objective of Della Volpe's main work *Logic as a Positive Science* is the emancipation of thought from all aprioristic speculation and metaphysics, and the establishment of logic and theory of knowledge as a science. According to them, there is only one method and one logic, namely, that of the modern experimental science. In this perspective, Della Volpe defines Marx's critique of Hegel as the third major step in the development of non-dogmatic, scientific logic, the first being Aristotle's critique (in the political philosophy, for instance) of Plato's classification of concrete species and the second being Galileo's critique of the scholastic conception of the fabric of the world. The common core of these critiques is their attack on a priori reasoning, the philosophical foreclosure of the empirical world. The scientific logic of historical materialism involve "concepts, achieved by means of the methodological circle, concrete-abstract-concrete, the method of induction-deduction." Della Volpe has described the logic of method of historical materialism as a 'moral galileism.' 'Moral' refers to the 'moral' or human sciences, and 'galileism' is employed to distinguish the method 'historical materialism' not merely from the idealist, with its hypostases, but also from the positivist method, with its 'idolatry of facts,' and its distrust of hypotheses or ideas (*Therborn 1980: 44*).

Zeleny was interested in the contribution made by the new science of historical materialism to the existing, already scientific logic of science (*Therborn1980: 45*). He distinguishes three types of relations: "relationships of surface appearances, especially quantitative relationships," "inner substantial relations," and "relationship between essence and surface appearance." The first type of analysis was used by both Marx and Ricardo. The novelty of Marx's work hinges on its distinctive treatment of the other two types of relation. Marx's study of capitalism is not primarily concerned with what happens in a fixed system of market exchange when the values of variables of the system (productivity or the availability of land, for example) change, but rather with the laws of development and change of the system itself.

Louis Althusser refers to a "necessity for a theory which defines itself dialectically, not merely as a science of history (historical materialism) but also and simultaneously as a

philosophy... therefore capable of accounting for itself,” of taking itself and its scientificity as an object (*Althusser* 39). In order to emphasize its scientific aspect as strongly and provocatively as possible, Althusser had described Marxism a “theoretical anti-humanism,” humanism being a non-scientific ideology, bourgeois in character (*For Marx*, part 7). Althusser lists three constitutive elements of a science—a materially existing object, a theory and a method.

All three thinkers insisted on the scientific character of Marxist analysis, against an idealistic, romantic mode of thinking. For them Marxist methodology was scientific methodology, and knowledge freed from aprioristic reasoning and ideologies could help in the construction of theory that will lead to revolutionary praxis (*Therborn* 1980: 45-49).

Antonio Gramsci

Antonio Gramsci perceived the need for greater interpretative sensitivity in Marxian analysis. His work simultaneously addressed two lacunae in Marx’s own thinking—the neglect of politics and the neglect of culture. Gramsci’s work is important precisely because it points to the links between politics and culture, and socialist strategy. In his *Prison Notebooks*, he argued that domination was not simply rooted in the economic sphere, but also had a major political and cultural component. He placed culture and intellectuals in the center of analysis, politics and class power (*Therborn* 1996, 75). Culture comes into the picture when it is realized that a major component of state power was the control of ideas as well as the use of physical force (e.g., by the police). The key concept here is ‘hegemony.’ Hegemony expresses the consent of the subordinate classes to the bourgeois dominance, which comes as the other face of the power: the face of the domain of consciousness and of the reproduction of ideology. The bourgeoisie uses its political, moral and intellectual leadership to impose its vision of the world as something comprehensible and universal, which in this way molds the interests and needs of the subordinate groups. Gramsci claimed that the activities of organic intellectuals were central to the propagation of hegemonic beliefs and the establishment of a hegemonic bloc. Gramsci argued that breaking down hegemony is a fundamental precondition for mobilizing latent socialist tendencies and initiating a revolutionary consciousness.

Jürgen Habermas’s Critical Theory

According to *Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* critical theory is “primarily a way of doing philosophy, integrating the normative aspects of philosophical reflection with the explanatory achievements of the social sciences. The ultimate goal of its program is to link theory and practice, to provide insight, and to empower subjects to change their oppressive circumstances and achieve human emancipation, a rational society that satisfies human needs and powers....Habermas' analysis of communication seeks to provide norms for non-dominating relations to others and a broader notion of reason (*Audi* 278-79).

Habermas sees critical theory as a way to recognize the *telos* of society and to normatively evaluate society's current state as it relates to the fulfillment of that *telos*. As Braaten puts it, "For Habermas, this *telos* is the end of coercion and the attainment of autonomy through reason, the end of alienation through a consensual harmony of interests, and the end of injustice and poverty through the rational administration of justice" (*Braaten* 111). Habermas's reconstruction of Marx can be seen as more humanistic, more philosophical

and less positivist in orientation than other strands of neo-Marxism. Habermas wants to introduce into Marxism the importance of knowledge and ideas in the shaping/development of history and a theory of culture that cannot be reduced to economic processes alone.

In *Knowledge and Human Interests* (1968) he identifies three 'quasi-transcendental' or 'anthropologically deep-seated' cognitive interests with reference to which distinct forms of knowledge can be delineated, viz., (1) a technical interest; (2) a practical interest, and (3) an emancipatory interest. Habermas' epistemology then becomes grounded in the discourse that should transpire according to ideal speech situations. Habermas suggests that the Enlightenment project (which saw reason as leading to emancipation) could be saved if reason was redefined in a novel way as communicative reason, consisting of the undistorted activities of people attempting in a genuine way to attain clear mutual understanding. He seeks a way of revitalizing the life-world and allowing it to fight back against the colonizing forces of commodification and bureaucratic rationalization. The answer lies in his theory of communicative rationality which consists of open, honest, and informed debate, which is free from the distorting constraints of ideology and power.

Dialectical Phenomenology

The usual formulation of Marx's method, dialectical materialism, stresses the anti-idealistic aspect of his work. However, given the developments in the social sciences, a stress on the anti-positivistic, phenomenological aspects of his work makes more sense today. Dialectical phenomenology could be said to be the method used by Marx in *Grundrisse* to analyse and critique the economics and economic theories of his time (*Bologh 1*). This method of theorizing, i.e., dialectical phenomenology, assumes that an object's meaning or sense can only be known in its relation to a knowing subject. It is not internal to the object, nor is it internal to the subject. This approach is in its nature dialectical. The object takes on its meaning from a 'form of life' (Wittgenstein) within which the knower stands. A method of theorizing may be reformulated as a mode of production. Marx's work on capital inquires into the mode of production of capital and does not simply treat capital as a thing in itself. Marx's text also should be understood in terms of its mode of production. This search into the mode of production and method of theorizing could be considered dialectical phenomenology (*Bologh 12*).

Roslyn Wallach Bologh distinguishes four rules of dialectical phenomenology:

Rule 1: Treat concepts as grounded in a historically specific form of life (34).

Rule 2: Treat individuals as grounded in an historically specific form of life (46).

Rule 3: Treat a form of life as a totality of internal relations (51)

Rule 4: Treat a concrete form of life as contradictory (61)

These four rules together constitute a method of theorizing that is a critique of an un-self-conscious form of life. As a way of reading Marx, it is a critique of readings that are either purely objective (positivist) or purely subjective (idealist), readings that fail to ground Marx's text in a subject-object unity. Marx's *Grundrisse* gives us insights into the working of Marx's mind and provides us with a model to deal with social phenomena. Contemporary social problems and conflicts could be understood from a dialectical phenomenological perspective by formulating concepts and treating them as grounded in a historically specific form of life, a totality of contradictory internal relations.

Marxism and the Construction of Knowledge

Today more than ever we live in a knowledge society. The positions of authority, economic status, political power and influence, etc., depend on the amount and quality of knowledge and access to knowledge that the individuals and society have. However, human beings do not discover knowledge of the social world; they constitute it in their practical everyday activity. There are, in capitalist, elitist, bureaucratic and casteist societies several important obstacles to the knowledge constitutive activities of human beings.

The different stratifications that exist in the society on the basis of class, status, caste, community, sex, language, etc. prohibit, restrict and put constraints on the production of knowledge. The tasks of the Marxian methodologist are the following:

- 1) learn how human knowledge is constituted, so that social revolution in all oppressive societies, including both capitalist and bureaucratic "socialist" societies could be advanced;

- 2) identify the blocks to the construction of knowledge such as the false consciousness and ideologies of domination;

- 3) destroy the obstacles to collective knowledge-constitutive activity by making visible the structural obstacles to the collective production of knowledge, through concrete field research;

- 4) help establish the procedures by which the knowledge-constitutive process may proceed without distortion, by clarifying the practical ends toward which the human process points;

- 5) oppose the displacement of history by theory. All statements about social life must be qualified and bracketed by the existing historical totality. (*Young, T.R*)

Clinical versus Scientific Marxism

Two stylized analogies of medicine can illuminate the Marxist intellectual tradition and its methodology in the context of India. Medicine functions both as clinical practice and as scientific research. Clinical practitioners use scientific methodology to treat illness. Scientific medicine is committed to advance understanding. By analogy we can distinguish clinical and analytic Marxism as analytically distinct poles of Marxist theoretical practice. Clinical Marxism attempts to diagnose and address the 'pathologies' of social situation using the tools in the Marxist medical kit. While clinical Marxism employs the achievement of scientific Marxism—and is therefore scientific in the way that clinical medicine is—it does not aim to develop or reconstruct Marxist theory, but to understand the (class) forces and (systematic) constraints at work in specific cases, and to prescribe treatments, and, where possible, cures. Scientific Marxism, in contrast, is concerned precisely with the development and reconstruction of Marxist theory. Marxism is espoused to the ideal that these clinical and scientific modes should mutually reinforce and enrich each other. The clinical practice of Marxism, particularly when it is deployed politically in the actual practice of socialist movements, helps to identify anomalies, i.e., failures of the theory to diagnose social situations adequately. These anomalies provoke reconstructions of the theory through scientific practice of Marxism. And the reconstructed theory is then applied more effectively in future struggles. This 'dialectic of theory and practice' should engender an open and creative dialogue between these two sides of Marxist practice. Only such a dialogue can be an effective instrument of social change (*Wright 179-81*).

Indian Marxists in the past have failed to diagnose the pathologies of the Indian situation. Even today they have not been able to organize the people or to present an alternative to the governing ideology of reactionary religious fundamentalism and corporate capitalism, and this remains a serious defect of Indian Marxism.

The Indian Context

We can only highlight a few areas in contemporary India to which a Marxist critique could be applied. A recent example, the political abuse of history that is currently on with NCERT textbooks, where, in the words of K.N Panniker in 'Rightist History is Communal History,' "the past is being invented in the pretense of depicting it," is an attempt to deny history to the non-dominant groups.

Romila Thapar's recent work *Early India: From the Origins to AD 1300* is a daring example of how history should be written in contrast to the NCERT attempt. She uses a Marxist approach to the interpretation of history, as did D. D. Kosambi before her. In an essay on the late Dr D. D. Kosambi in her book *Cultural Pasts*, she says that when Sartre said "Marxism was the necessary philosophy of our time," what he meant was that though particular conclusions of Marx might not be acceptable, the method of analysis which he worked out is virtually unavoidable in social sciences. What Kosambi did was neither to justify nor to prove anything, but use Marxist methodology creatively to investigate a possible pattern and suggest a new framework. This critical and creative approach is required of our present historians.

I shall sum up by pointing out a few areas where Marxist methodology, i.e., scientific, rational, practical, critical and transformative methodology could be used to unmask the deceptions of ideology, religious fanaticism, capitalist domination, Hindutva and Aryan hegemony.

1. The creation of the existing hegemony is something to which we have all contributed a great deal. Most of our Indologists have labored to give respectability to upper-class Hindu practices and beliefs. A glorification of irrationality has been the distinguishing mark of our scholarship. We need to search into the mode of production (e.g., Indology for export) and construction of these knowledge systems. A rational, scientific approach to the problems is the need of the hour.
2. Our educational institutions have been at the service of the hegemonic bloc. They have served the interests of the elite, the upper castes, and the bourgeois for too long. A critique of the hegemony and creation of a solidaric bloc would be one of the tasks of the Marxist critique of society.
3. The creation of knowledge that would liberate the marginalized is another task of the Marxist critique. There are many blocks to this in contemporary society. Traditionally, knowledge has been denied to the lower castes in the country. Now that it seems no more a possibility, the upper castes led by Joshi and others speak about the greatness of Indian systems of knowledge, of astrology, Vedic mathematics, temple rituals and native medicine—all of which are now open to the dalits and the poor. The children of the votaries

of Hindutva opt for computers and the knowledge that comes from the materialistic West. Many Indians seem to be taken up by this deceptive game. The unveiling of this hypocrisy and double speech and our part in it, is an urgent task.

4. A critique of the world of media and the myths they propagate (what Chomsky calls “brainwashing under freedom”) is a must. The coverage of the recent war against Iraq was a clear example of this sort of brainwashing. We still do not know the number of Iraqis who were killed as a result of the aggression. All the leading newspapers and TV channels faithfully adopted the aggressors point of view and reported their versions of the war; hardly any of them dared to criticize the government or the powers that are. The prominence given to SARS in a world, where more than three million people die of malaria every year, is another example of the myth-producing character of the media. In this context, we have to ask anew what the meaning of freedom of the press and free flow of information is.

5. Since our society is class and caste based, we have to ask whether there is a possibility of ever creating an ideal speech situation, a non-dominating discourse. If the answer is negative, we have to further ask what the ideological and cultural factors that block the human development of the individuals are.

6. Real socialism means the creation of a society where “the condition for the development of each is the condition for the development of all,” where economic and social development of all irrespective of class and caste is assured, and where people enjoy the right to shape their life free from the restrictions placed by class and caste. Today in the name of globalization, structural adjustment, and efficiency the government and the elite are leaving the marginalized to fend for themselves while extracting labor from them. Commercialization of education, because the government is not able to provide quality education to the people, is blocking large sections of people from empowering themselves. These actions and practices need to be located in the complex relationship that exist in the society and analysed.

7. A critique of the so-called spiritual values and culture of India, a spirituality that prohibits cow slaughter but sanctions and encourages human slaughter is another must.

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UPANISHADIC METHOD

The Classical Indian Way

-Dr. Vincent G. Furtado, ofmcap

“The Ultimate basis for the method will have to be the very reality which the method helps to disclose.” (Panikkar, 1998: 22)

The Upanishads constitute a complex collection of revealed (*śruti*) literature preceded by Brāhmaṇa, Āraṇyaka and Samhitas. It will be too much to expect from so dispersed a literature to be made up of one consistent method and single unified style, much less a unified literary form. What we have today with us is the ‘text’, the exact ‘context’ of which is, for the most part, missing. This does not mean that no effort has been made to retrieve and reconstruct the context, but all these efforts are mostly from within, namely, through the analysis of the texts themselves which can only help us to postulate *a posteriori* a general context applicable to the entire collection and not to individual Upanishads (Witz, 1998:24-28).

But nevertheless, this general context is not insignificant to delineate at least a general methodology followed in the literature under consideration. Even this task is not easy due to the fact that method in any philosophical texts is generally hard to describe, as against empirical sciences where the method is clearly defined and can never be merged with the contents or results and hence remains always distinct. The case with regard to philosophy is different: the method as it is being clarified, gets merged with the thought itself. Descartes and Husserl in the Western Philosophy are very good examples for this: as they started with the formulation of a clear and distinct method, it got merged with their thought and now their methods and their philosophies (rationalism and phenomenology) can hardly be distinguished.

A method is a principle of action, a procedure to attain a goal or a definite result. We can even say that the goal determines the method. We observe that throughout the history of the development of human thought and sciences, whenever some one determined to attain an entirely new goal, or set to discover a totally new invention, s/he invariably employed a method suited to attain the goal, if need be to alter the existing method or even employ a new one. For example, it is sufficiently evident that the goal of Vedic people was predominantly ‘existential’, namely, a desire for earthly security and prosperity and to attain this they had to employ a method of propitiating and pleasing the superior beings through oblations and sacrifices.

We can *mutatis mutandis* ask the question what is the goal of the sages who authored Upanishads? If we can specify the goal, we might be able to pin point the method used to attain the goal. One thing what we notice in the Upanishads is that the goal is not ‘a priori’ formulated, but the ‘context’ in which the seekers of the Upanishadic period lived made them strive after a particular goal. The context of Brāhmaṇic period is characterized by the exaggerated emphasis on the cult and rituals bereft of interior motives and dispositions of true worship. The reaction of the so called ‘heretics’ was to attain the same objectives set forth in

the ritual practices, without actually performing them. This led some of them away from the maddening and haunting crowds to remote corners of nature, the ‘forest’. Hence forest constitutes to some extent the ‘context’ of Upanishadic literature which gives rise to the method quite commensurate with it. No more the method of sacrifices with all the ritualistic paraphernalia was relevant and meaningful. On the other hand, reflective meditation and a quest for the real ‘power’ that makes sacrifices effective, became the goal of relentless seeking.

The Vedic literature was rightly named as ‘*karma kāṇḍa*’ as it dealt with the cultic activity. The new quest or the goal resulted in a thorough shift in the method, the karma being replaced by *jñāna* giving rise to another type of literature called *jñāna kāṇḍa*. The goal or quest for ‘something’ superior and higher than mere performance of liturgy ushers in a new period in Indian history of thought, though what was that ‘something’ and what is its nature etc. remained yet to be clarified. Though it is evident throughout every Upanishad that the ‘quest’ was always for a higher and higher reality, proposed as a supreme reality, the ideal remained for a considerable length of time unknown and unexpressed, which fact made the ‘quest’ itself more and more intense and vigorous, meanwhile the method used for the quest came to be almost identified with the goal itself.

If the method was a quest, a seeking, characterized by ‘knowledge’, then, in principle, the usual ingredients of an epistemological method should have found a place in the Upanishadic method. But the knowledge sought after by the Upanishadic sages was not clearly of empirical nature, founded on logical rules of reasoning, but it was evidently ‘transcendental’. This does not mean that the rules of logic or ratiocination are deliberately violated; they are very much in vogue and implicit almost in all elucidations and arguments presented to show the Ultimate Being as the ground of all that is. Even the categories of classical Nyāya logic such as perception, inference, etc. are present in their inchoate forms.

To give an example, at the great colloquium in the Janaka’s Court, the following question was raised by Bhujyu “Can you tell me where the Pārikshitas went?” Yājñavalkya replied: “They have, in truth, gone where the *Aśvamedha* sacrificers went” (Brih. 3.3.1-2). This can be stated logically (Belvalkar, 1974: 195):

All *Aśvamedha* sacrificers go to a particular region.

The Pārikshitas were *Aśvamedha* sacrificers.

Therefore, The Pārikshitas also went to the same region.

But the predominant character of Upanishadic knowledge was transcendental; they did not seek after the meaning of tangible, temporal, mundane realities but the ultimate ground of the Reality itself. This being a religious pursuit, the Upanishadic knowledge should be basically characterized as religious and only the categories of religion can delineate the nature and method of Upanishadic knowledge. Religion deals with the ultimate concern of human beings, studies the nature of religious consciousness and its growth, explicates the possibilities of human-divine encounter and sets the experience of the Numinous as the goal of all religious striving. If the Upanishadic knowledge is fundamentally religious, it is then founded on experience of the Numinous, or simply on mystical experience. Any reading of Upanishads make this point clear; again and again we have such expressions as “This whole world is Brahma, *tranquil*; let one *worship* It. (chand. 3.14.1). “Brahma is self-existent (*swayambhu*); adoration to Brahma” (Brih. 2.6, 3.6, 4.6; cf. also Tait. 1.4.1).

What are the categories of this experiential or mystical knowledge? The categories should be such that they evoke the experience of the Numinous, and in the context of the Upanishads they are cultic, cosmic, physiological and psychological. The discovery of correlation between and within these categories constituted Upanishadic knowledge as it gave them an insight into the Numinous. As an example, let us look into Bṛhđāraṇyaka Upanishad 1.5.3-7 which is a text of cosmological speculation where we observe a peculiar combination of the psychological (*adhyātmika*), physical (*ādibhautika*) and divine (*ādidāivika*) categories.

Verily, the self (Ātman) consists of speech, mind and breath.

These same are the three worlds. This (terrestrial) world is Speech. The middle (atmosphere) world is Mind. That (celestial) world is Breath.

These same are the three Vedas. The Rig-Veda is Speech. The Yajur-Veda is Mind. The Sama-Veda is Breath.

The same are the gods, Manas, and men. The gods are Speech. The Manas are Mind. Men are Breath.

The interrelation between all these categories cannot be established by any philosophical analysis or through any other methods of ratiocination, but only through a method developed in the Brāhmaṇa literature called, *bandhūta* method or a method of correlation or correspondence, which lays bare the mystic and/or cultic correlations between the *ādidāivika*, *ādibhautika* and *ādhyātmika* (divine, cosmic and human) aspects of the reality. Since Vedic times the sages sought correlation between the macrocosm and microcosm; the *puruṣa sūkta* hymn (RV X. 90: 9-14) is an unique example of how divine, human and cosmic could be presented as correlated in a cosmotheandric act of creation sacrifice (Panikkar, 2001: 72; Cf. Mundaka Up. 2.4ff). Same correlation is found in the Bṛhđāraṇyaka Upanishad which begins narrating the correlation between the stars and the bones, clouds and the flesh, rivers and the bowels, mountains and the livers/lungs etc. The metaphorical description is meant to show that the same fruits of the sacrifice can be derived through meditation and worship of the cosmos in the manner of a horse sacrifice without actually performing it.

In the all pervasive sacrificial ritualism of the Brāhmaṇas the method became very sophisticated with each deity associated with its own *bandhūs* or correlates like a specified function, a particular season, a mantra, a meter, a number, a place, a class of priest etc. What is important for us is to investigate how the method came to be employed in the Upanishads in order to determine the correlations between the divine, human and the cosmic categories. The bond that connects the deity and the correlates is believed to be very subtle, secret and mystic (Bṛih. 4.5.11; Chand. 1.1.10; Mund. 6.29; Kena 4.7); only a well initiated person could discern and understand the connection (Chand. 3.11.5; Bṛih 6.3.12; Svet. 6.22). Whenever such a connection is discovered, the guru asserted '*iti Upanishad*' 'This is Upanishad' (Tait 2.9 and 3.6). There are numerous myths and some cosmogonic legends and even fancy etymologies (Bṛih. 1.4.1 and 3, 5.3, 13; chand. 1.3.6f) in the Upanishads which try to explain the correlation between the thing and the *bandhus* and the *bandhus* themselves.

To provide some examples, first of all we have the *Om* mantra (Chand 1. 1-6), with Prajapati as its divine correlate who meditated and produced three Vedas which became its cultic correlates, when these three Vedas were meditated upon there came the three cosmic correlates: earth (*bhū*), atmosphere (*bhuvah*), and sky (*svah*); from the meditation on these

produced the sacred symbol *Om*, made up of tri-monosyllables, a, u and m. This is called loud chant (*Udgītā*), believed to be pregnant with mystic significance.

Then we have *Gāyatrī* mantra (Chand 3. 5) which has Savitrī for its divine correlate; its correlation to earth (cosmic) is determined from its etymology (*gai* and *traī* = to sing and to protect), and it is identified with the earth. The human body is said to be made up of earth and so *Gāyatrī* is identified with the earth. The centre of the human body being the heart, it is identified with the heart of human beings. The human heart is supposed to enclose ether or space (*ākāśa*); the *Gāyatrī* is identified with ether; but corresponding to the space ‘within’ there should be space ‘without’ and hence *Gāyatrī* is identified with the cosmic reality. So *Gāyatrī* can be characterized as a cosmotheandric hymn.

The conception of Ātman as five-fold *Uktha* is another good example to elucidate the method of correlations or correspondence. The earth, wind, ether, waters and the luminaries constitute the five-fold *Ukthas* ‘without’. Their correlates ‘within’ are body, breath, apertures, blood-mucus-seed, and warmth. These both become the source of all other things in the world. *Prāṇa* is an important category in all earliest Upanishads; it is considered as most essential among the functions of the body, it is sometimes identified with Indra as its divine, with sun as its cosmic and year or *sāma* as its cultic correlates. *Prāṇa* is also compared with *ākāśa* as the support of all beings down to the ants, both representing physiological and physical categories respectively.

As a last example let us take the well-known teaching of the Sage Śāṇḍilya (Chand. 3. 14), where we find the clear identifications of macrocosm and microcosm. The soul as microcosm is smaller than a grain of rice, or a barleycorn or a mustard seed; as macrocosm it is greater than the earth, greater than atmosphere and greater than the sky.

The Upanishads made no attempts to investigate the scientific causes underneath the surface of things and mundane events but their whole energies were directed to discover the mystic correspondence that knit together the multifarious physical phenomena of the nature and the variegated psychological functions in the individual interrelated to the traditional understanding through cultic practices. For example in Brih. Up 1.2, which is a cosmological narration with no logical connections between the different entities that have been created, it is said that with the intention of producing a permanent entity, death practiced asceticism (*tapas*) and brought death upon itself, and the dead body got transformed into the sacrificial horse, which was considered to be the source of immortality. What underlies within this narration is the desire or quest for immortality and the categories used to express this quest are mythical and religious.

There are, however, reasonable explanations to provide foundations to the *bandhūta* method or divine-human-cosmic correlations, which are mystic in nature. Aitereya Upnshads (3.12) narrates how the divine entered into the human body by the opening in the skull called ‘the cleft’ (*vidṛti*). The Bṛhdāraṇyaka Upanishad asserts that “he entered up to the very finger nail-tips (1.4.7). The same Upanishad also attributes the warmth in the living body to the presence of the divine in it (5.9); again the Upanishad asserts that the Brahman became all that there is (1.4.10) which means that the divine is present in all material and inorganic creation:

Having performed austerity he created this whole world, whatever there is. Having created it, into it, indeed, he entered. Having entered it, he became both the actual (*sat*) and the yon (*tya*), both defined and the undefined, both based and the non-based, both the conscious and the unconscious, both the real and the false. (Taittirīya Up. 2.6)

Scholars have attempted to arrange the Upanishads chronologically analyzing their contents and the development of thought (Deussen, 2000: 23-26; Blevalkar, 1974: 30-37; 333-34). We need to pay attention to the progressive growth in the religious consciousness of the sages in the Upanishadic religion which is manifested in the texts themselves. The earliest Upanishadic texts make abundant use of cultic and liturgical categories to express their religious experience and the correlation between the *bandhūs* is explained mostly through mythical categories. The second stage of the growth of religious experience is expressed through more symbolic and theologico-philosophical categories, and the correlation can be determined to some extent through logical categories, in the sense that some rationality can be noticed in the explanation of the reality. The third stage is characterized by contemplation and intuitive vision of the reality as One and the correlation is prominently mystical (Panikkar, 1998: 54).

The growth and deepening of religious experience are eminently manifested in the progressive evolution of the conception of the Ultimate Reality, that came to be named as Brahman in the Upanishads. The method of correlation being applicable in every stage of the growth of the conception: from the Ṛgvedic sense of 'Brahman = prayer' to the Upanishadic sense of 'Brahman = Absolute'. The meaning of the word 'Brāhman' in the Vedas was 'sacred utterance', 'prayer' 'mantra' with its correlate Brahman (the member of the priestly class), who utters the prayer. The prayers being stored up in the samhitas or the collections of Vedas, the Brāhman which meant prayer, came to be identified with the collections of prayers, the *Triveda: Ṛk, Sāma* and *Yajur*. The Vedas came to be believed as infinite and fountain head of all mystic power of the sacrifices. The prayers being used for the sacrifices, which if performed exactly, should result in the desired effects. The question was raised as to what could be the power underneath the sacrifices that yielded desired effects. Brahman being the correlate of the sacrifices, the power which made the sacrifices effective too came to be attributed to Brahman. When the priest wanted to impart highest power to any mantra, he would designate it as Brahman, so we have such terms as '*Ukhtam Brahma*' (Kausi. Up. 2.6.) '*Om iti Brahma*' (Tait. Up. 1.8.1.) and '*Brahma yajña*' (S. B. 3.1.4.15). We can observe the identifications of the correlates of Brahman with itself at every stage.

The second landmark in the growth of the conception of Brahman is noticeable when the distinction was made between '*apara*' (lower) Brahman (also called as *Śabda* or *Nāma Brahman*) and the '*para*' (higher) Brahman in the passages like Mundaka. 1.1.4-5. and Chand. 7.1.2. ff. The distinction is quite logical, the lower Brahman being at the level of Vedas and the higher Brahman is the Supreme Being, the Ultimate Cause of all that is, which is a philosophical concept actually found in the cosmological texts (Brih. 1.4.11; 2.5, 5.3; Chand. 3.19; 3.18). But the narrations are replete with symbolisms which correlate Brahman with the proposed highest category. Thus we have symbols like Sun (Chand. 3.19. 1-4), Space (Chand. 1.9.1, 3.12. 7-9, Brih. 2. 1.5; 3.7.12). He is also considered as the source of energy through which the fire burns, wind blows, and the world is moving on (Kena 4).

In the third stage we see the conception of Brahman fully developed within the context of its correlates. Several texts (Brih. 2.1.1-20; 3.9.10-11; 4.1-2; Chand. 5.11) discuss different conceptions of Brahman and reject the incomplete opinions. These texts mark a transcendence over the earlier ones which projected a duality between the creator and the creature, divine and the human, being and non-being. Now he is considered as one all pervading reality, describing him as “the real, (*satya*) the knowledge (*jñāna*) and as the infinite (*ananta*)” (Tait. 2.1). The Brahman is the ultimate answer to human religious quest and the experience of such a numinous can be expressed only in a apophantic language, the language of *neti neti* (Brih. 4.2.4; 4.4.22; 4.5.15).

A question needs to be asked, how to explain through our methodology the final stage of Upanishadic experience characterized as an identity between Brahman and Ātman. We need to observe here that there occurred in the later texts a slight shift in the methodology of quest marked by less and less interest in the world ‘outside’ and its process of creation and sustenance. The whole attention was geared towards the inner self and its realization. We can say this as a method of ‘self realization’ as there is the predominance of *adyātma* and a bracketing of *ādidaivika* and *ādibhautika*. The basic prerequisite for the quest was *tapas*, which was spontaneously embraced by the seeker involving total renunciation of the temporal goods and prosperity, and courageous acceptance of strenuous yogic discipline (*sādhana*). This we would like to highlight in order to insist upon the religious nature of the quest, as ethical excellence is a prerequisite for any authentic mystical experience.

In the earlier texts we could see how atman came to be identified with *prāṇa*, or with organic functions like speech, etc., (Kena 1.4-8), then came the understanding that Atman should transcend all these, which gave rise to the question of the knowledge of such an Ātman as to how can he be known. The quest was to seek after the unknown, and in the history of humanity we know how the great scientists have worked to discover something unknown. They had to make hypotheses and repeat the procedures again and again, make necessary changes in the procedure until one day the desired discovery was made. Even in the Upanishads, the seekers were relentless in their striving after that experience of the numinous or *Ātma vidyā* and some of the narrations, presented sometimes in the form of myths, bring to light the hard path trodden upon by the seekers.

The entire Katha Upanishad is about the story of Naciketa and his enlightenment (*Ātmavidyā*) as a result the Upanishad is known for its mystic bent of thought. The story narrates how Naciketa reached the world of the God Yama (Death), who taught him the knowledge of Ātman. Yama tells him: “Not by reasoning (*tarka*) is this thought to be attained. Proclaimed by another it is for easy understanding” (2.9). *Ātmavidyā* being a process of self realization, it cannot be had without a Guru who has made this experience for himself. Only such a person can evoke the same experience in the student. Then step by step he leads him to higher and higher (3. 10-11) knowledge and deeper and deeper experience of the Atman. He is said to be “The Inner Soul (*antarātmā*) of all things, the One Controller (5.12) The Person of the measure of the thumb is the inner soul. Even seated in the heart of creatures...” Instruction granted to Naciketa provides a paradigm for the attainment of religious experience followed throughout the centuries by the yogis and the sages in India.

We have another myth in Chhāndogya Upanishad (8. 7-12). We notice here that the quest and its attainment is proportional to the seeker’s striving for it. Experience being

unique and individual in character, there cannot be uniformity in every attempt. Spiritual attainment is conditioned by one's perseverance, commitment, faith and intensity of desire, as we know very well that the supernatural is built upon nature (St. Thomas).

Indra and Virochana are the seekers in the myth, the former represented the gods and the latter the demons. Indra is a symbolic figure of all true seekers, persevering, well motivated and committed. Virochana represents people who wish fast results, belong to the world of 'fast-food', ready-made experience of 'total peace' by attending a single yoga or TM course. Both go to Prajāpati, and serve him for 32 years. After that they were given the first formula of *Ātmavidyā*, namely, that Ātman is found in sense experience furnished to us in the waking state. Both leave but only Indra returns reflecting that the sense experiences "perish immediately upon the perishing of this body" and there is nothing enjoyable in it. (9.1). Virochana on the other hand, representing all the materialists who think that there is nothing above sense experience and matter, gets convinced that he has realized the ultimate goal of life. Indra, after another 32 years, was given the secret of dreaming state and then after another 32 years the knowledge of dreamless sleep and finally after another five years the experience of turiya state. The myth teaches that the *Ātmavidyā* is not every one's cup of tea; it also brings to light its commensurability with the seekers' steadfastness.

The well known story of Maitreyi and Yājñavalkya found in Bṛhdāraṇyaka Upanishad (2.4 and 4.5) is still another example of *Ātmavidyā*. As long as we entertain subject-object duality, we exist under empirical conditions (2.4.14). The true mystic knowledge is objectless and Yājñavalkya through his *neti neti* doctrine confirms that numinous experience is ineffable: "The Soul (Ātman) is not this, it is not that (neti, neti). It is unseizable, for it cannot be seized; it is indestructible, for it cannot be destroyed; unattached, for it does not attach itself; it is unbound, does not tremble, is not injured." (4.5.15.)

Returning to *bandhuta* method, we saw that it always sought correspondence between the world outside and the world inside. Now that the seeker has experienced the unique source of energy on which the whole world and all in it has been grounded in the Brahman Experience and the immediate step was to identify this source of energy with the vital energy that humans experience as working within, the Ātman, the innermost essence of human individual. The energy that we experience within us is identical in essence with the energy that sets the world around us moving. The quality of spiritual energy 'within' is same as the source of energy 'without' at the heart of the Universe (Chand. 3.14). Hence we have the mystic formula of Brahman = Ātman (Brih. 2.6.19, Chand. 8.10.1, 8.11.1, 6.14.1) or *Tattvam asi* (Brih. 1.4. 10 and Chand 6. 9-16).

As a conclusion, we would like to state that this paper is far from being complete as it does not do adequate justice to the complex subject matter. Secondly, the orientation taken in this paper is towards a 'text' centred hermeneutics, a methodology from 'within', derived through the textual contents themselves. There could be other methods. First of all there is the traditional method of Vedanta (Sri Swami, 1997: 9-27), which takes into account the commentaries on Upanishads by Sankaracarya and others. One can also delineate a method through literary analysis of the texts, classifying them as myths, metaphors, allegories, dialectics etc., (Ranade, 1986:23-30). One can also employ historical critical method and analyse the texts from that perspective and present a thorough exegesis. What is more important may be to propose a Upanishadic hermeneutics, which will use all hermeneutical

tools available at present, but this could be a life-long research, which, if done, can be a great addition to existing religious literature of our times.

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Association of Christian Philosophers of India (5)

PHILOSOPHICAL METHODS

Through the Prevalent to a Relevant

Edited by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	
<i>Johnson J. Puthenpurackal, ofmcap</i>	
Methodo for Indian Christian Philosophizing: An Introductory Reflection	
<i>Augustine Thottakara, cmi</i>	.....
Philosophical Method in Indian Philosophy	
<i>Srinivasa Rao</i>	.....
From Dichotomy to Perichoresis: An Overview of Western Philosophical Methods	
<i>George Panthanmackel, msfs</i>	.....
Reflective Equilibrium: A Philosophical Method with a Difference	
<i>George Karuvelil, sj</i>	.....
Upanishadic Method: The Classical Indian Way	
<i>Vincent G. Furtado, ofmcap</i>	.....
The Primacy of Science in Philosophizing	
<i>Mathew Chandrankunnel, cmi</i>	.....
Recent Developments in Science: The Need for a New Method	
<i>Job Kozhamthadam, sj</i>	.....
A Marxist Methodology: For the Indian Context	
<i>Jose Elampassery, sj</i>	.....
The Method of the Subalterns: A Study Based on Paulo Freire and Ambedkar	
<i>Varghese Manimala, ofmcap</i>	.....
Phenomenological Hermeneutics: The Twin-Method of Contemporary Continental Philosophy	
<i>Johnson J. Puthenpurackal, ofmcap</i>	.....
Deconstruction: Not a Unified Methodology	
<i>Stanislaus Swamikannu, sdb</i>	.....
Gandhian Method: Its Prospects in Indian Christian Philosophizing	
<i>B. Joseph Francis</i>	.....
Panikkar's Hermeneutical Itinerary	
<i>Dominic Veliath, sdb</i>	.....
Concluding Statement	.....
Our Contributors	.....

INTRODUCTION

Association of Christian Philosophers of India (ACPI) had a humble origin with a modest goal of channelizing the research-energy of its members towards carrying out investigations into philosophical themes of existential relevance. This has been gradually realized through the presentation of research-papers at its annual meetings. This received an added boost, when ACPI began to publish the research-papers in the form of books. The present volume—*Philosophical Methods: Through the Prevalent to a Relevant*—is the fifth in the series of ACPI Books. By way of introduction the editor feels obliged to look into the ‘why’ of this theme (I), and the ‘what’ of its contents (II).

I

Why has ACPI chosen ‘Philosophical Methods’ as the theme of its research in this book? To answer this, one needs to know the circumstances in which the theme of ‘philosophical methods’ came to be chosen. Since a few years, especially after ACPI started publishing its research papers, it has been very careful in selecting the themes for its annual meeting and discussion—themes that are spatio-temporally relevant, i.e., relevant in the Indian context at this juncture of time. Thus the Indian Christian Philosophers were involved in carrying out researches about philosophically and existentially important themes. In so doing, Indian Christian Philosophers have been emulating their Western counterparts. As a result of a critical reflection on the relevance of its very existence, ACPI became convinced of the urgency of philosophizing with a *difference*. This ‘difference’ can come about only insofar as there is a *difference* in the way of philosophizing or philosophical method. Thus it is the search for a new *method* for Indian Christian Philosophizing, that made ACPI find itself with this theme of ‘Philosophical Methods’.

But, can an investigation into the various philosophical methods lead us to a *different method* for Indian Christian Philosophizing? The immediate answer is: no. But it needs some clarification. The *difference* that ACPI looks for in its way (method) of philosophizing is not *any* difference from the existing ones, but a *difference* that is demanded by the two constitutive characteristics of ACPI, namely, *Indian* and *Christian*. Without uprooting itself from this twofold givenness (Indian Christian) ACPI has to enter into the process of journeying (philosophizing) towards the goal of being *Indian Christian*. Thus the *whence* and the *whither* of the way or method of Indian Christian Philosophizing is the same: being *Indian Christian*. Such a ‘philosophical method’ nowhere exists as ready-to-be-used. The ‘method’ will gradually emerge as ACPI begins its journey of philosophizing, just as the *way* comes to be as one journeys, the *song* comes to be as one sings.

The prevalent philosophical methods are used to serve as the launching pad for ACPI to start moving in its philosophizing. It is with this view in mind that ACPI decided to delve into the important philosophical methods from the West and from the East. The given existing methods contain *repeatable possibilities* to be re-covered and made alive as a possible new method. Standing rooted in its twofold givenness of *Indian Christian*, and delving deep into

the various given methods, ACPI looks towards the emergence of a relevant method, a new way, that is coloured and qualified by *Indian* and *Christian*. This book is the outcome of a concerted effort from the part of ACPI and a collective research by competent persons into the important existing philosophical methods in the East and in the West in view of evolving a method for *Indian Christian Philosophizing*.

II

The book contains thirteen articles and a concluding statement. The first article is of a general nature, giving the orientation to all other articles. The next two studies try to give a synoptic view of the Eastern and of the Western philosophical methods. The remaining ten articles deal with ten different philosophical methods.

The first article, “Methodology for Indian Christian Philosophizing: An Introductory Reflection” by Dr. Augustine Thottakara, serves as the basis for the central theme of the book. The author pleads for a paradigm shift in our approach to philosophy in the Indian context. Philosophy should, rather than being a purely speculative enterprise, be *dar^ana*, which should be the result of the triple means of *^rava<a* (listening), *manana* (reflection) and *nididhyāsana* (contemplation), with greater emphasis on the third. In order to evolve a balanced method, we need to integrate East and West, Indian and Christian, ancient and modern, *theoria* and *praxis*, subject and object in our philosophizing as Indian Christians.

The next two studies give an overview of the philosophical methods in the East and in the West. Dr. Srinivasa Rao in his article “Philosophical Method in Indian Philosophy” dwells on the general structure of the philosophical methods in India. This general structure may be called the *purvapakṣa-siddhānta*. It refers to ‘all the standpoints that are prior to one’s own’. One who develops a major philosophical position shows first the untenability of other positions—both actual and possible. After having done this, s/he proceeds to establish the soundness of one’s own position (*siddhānta*) in a systematic manner. Dr. George Panthanmackel in his study “From Dichotomy to Perichoresis: An Overview of Western Philosophical Methods” gives in a summary-form the various important methods in the West. This overview is concluded with a fitting reflection by showing that the basic philosophical problem in the West has been centred on the relation between Being and beings. The author, in his typical style, refers to this relation as *perichoresis* (mutual indwelling). Being contains within itself, identity and distinction, sameness and alterity, the one and the many, or there is a *perichoresis* of the one in the many and the many in the one, without being dichotomous.

Dr. George Karuvelil reflects on “Reflective Equilibrium:” a rather unknown method that was originally proposed by Kai Nielsen. It is a method of justification, and not of discovery. In this method neither principles nor inferences have a privileged position. Both are open to revision. Reflective equilibrium is a further development of the coherentist mode of justification, according to which the body of our beliefs does not rest on permanent and solid foundations, but on mutual relationships between beliefs. The author concludes the study with a look into its implications for Indian Christian Philosophizing. Dr. Vincent Furtado, in the next article, makes a short study of the Upanishadic Method. As the goal determines the method, in order to understand the Upanishadic method we need to look into its goals. What we have today with us is only the *text* of *Upaniṣad*; its *context* remains unclear. The goal and method of *Upaniṣad* is primarily the quest for the Ultimate through

transcendental knowledge (*jñāna*). Within the *jñāna marga* (way of knowledge) Upanishadic method employs the ways of ‘correlation’ (between the Divine, the human and the cosmic) and ‘correspondence’ (between the world outside and the world inside, the truth within and the truth without). The author concludes the study with a strong plea to subject the text of the *Upaniṣad* with the present-day hermeneutical tools.

The book contains two articles on the question of science in the context of our search for a philosophical method. Dr. Mathew Chandrankunnel, through his study: “The Primacy of Science in Philosophizing,” emphasizes the importance of science in the context of Indian Christian Philosophizing. History reveals that there existed a mutual suspicion due to the initial hegemony of religion and philosophy and the later arrogance of science. Science today is revolutionizing the human life by destroying many of the common-sense conceptions. To make philosophy relevant and stimulating, it has to take into account the contributions of science. In the next article “Recent Developments in Science: The Need for a New Method,” Dr. Job Kozhamthadam dwells on the paradox that science experiences: the more science grows, the less it is sure of its method. Scientific method is parasitic on scientific rationality. When scientific rationality is dynamic and evolving, scientific method too progresses. With the advent of relativity, quantum theory, etc., we notice today a change in both scientific rationality and method.

The next two studies in the book have a *leftist* slant; they deal with methods that got developed from the ground-reality of exploitation and marginalization in the society. Dr. Jose Elampassery in his article “A Marxist Methodology: For the Indian Context,” has worked out the Marxist methodology as suited and applied to the Indian situation. But this is preceded by a concise and step-by-step analysis of Marxian methodology, which is scientific, rational, practical, critical and transformative. The author makes use of this method to unmask the deceptions of ideology, religious fanaticism, capitalist domination, Hindutva and Aryan hegemony. Thus not only the Marxian method, but also the presentation of the method is made praxis-oriented. In the next study “The Method of the Subalterns: A Study Based on Paulo Freire and Ambedkar,” Dr. Varghese Manimala dwells at length on the sad plight of the subaltern groups. The first part of the study, based on the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* by Paulo Freire, deals with the strategies needed for the subalterns. The second part is centred on Ambedkar’s contribution to the Dalit liberation. The study is concluded with a clarion call for leaders who can both ‘denounce’ (the existing unjust structures) and ‘announce’ (a new society of peace and justice).

The contemporary continental philosophy, with its creative way philosophizing, has been wielding great influence on world philosophy. Two of the important methods from this spatio- (continental) temporal (contemporary) segment of philosophy are included in the book. Dr. Johnson Puthenpurackal considers the method of phenomenology and of Hermeneutics together under the title of “Phenomenological Hermeneutics.” It stands for a critique of and an alternative for the traditional Western philosophy, characterized by the subject-object dichotomy. Phenomenological Hermeneutics has destroyed the ‘myth’ of ‘absolutism’ in knowledge. Such a myth could survive only on a philosophy of *dead* concepts with the claim of absolute certainty. But *phenomenological hermeneutics* makes no claim for definitive or conclusive knowledge, since reality is seen as a process of dynamic coming-to-be. Dr. Stanislaus Swamikannu looks into the deconstructive method, which makes no claim of a unified methodology. Deconstruction seems to be best expressed negatively as not an

analysis, nor a critique, nor again a method, etc. But the author very competently works out the method of deconstruction step by step. The deconstructive strategy is very much dependent on the Heideggerian legacy of appropriation going hand in hand with expropriation. Deconstructive method, though exclusively a Western product, is very much relevant to the Indian situation, especially in the context of the different types of hegemonization that are prevalent in the India of today.

The last two studies are about the methods developed and used by two Indians: Mahatma Gandhi and Raimundo Panikkar. Dr. B. Joseph Francis takes a look into some of the salient features of Gandhian method that are of relevance to Indian Christian philosophizing. His method consists in his 'Experiment with truth' that passes through every aspect of his life: political, religious, social, etc. Thus the Gandhian method of searching for truth cannot be divorced from his life. He identifies truth with God. The truth that we can attain on this earth is only relative truth. Gandhian method, as openness to truth, remains very much relevant to Indian Christian Philosophizing. Dr. Dominic Veliath, in the last article of the book, makes an itinerary through Raimundo Panikkar's philosophical thought. As a rare combination of East and West both in his being and in his knowing, Panikkar was able to develop a method that accepts the multidimensionality of reality. His *cosmotheandric* vision with its dialogical implications serves as a 'pointer' towards a 'method' for Indian Christian Philosophizing.

After having presented some of the important philosophical methods, the book is concluded with a fitting finale: a Concluding Statement that serves as a 'pointer' in the direction of a relevant method for Indian Christian Philosophizing. It is born of the collective reflection by the ACPI members, gathered from the 'thoughts' expressed in the discussions, and from the 'direction' taken in the papers. This statement falls short of developing a *Relevant Method* hinted at in the title of the book; still it has taken a step in the right direction. The ground is prepared for a new method to sprout for Indian Christian Philosophizing. When we start 'moving' (philosophizing) from this *step* that is already taken, a new way (method) will hopefully emerge.

* * * * *

This book got printed and published due to the hard work and cooperation of many a person and institution. First of all, those who have written the articles for this book are to be thanked for their scholarly contributions. All the articles in this book are contributed by persons who are competent in the respective field; this shows the 'quality' of the studies carried out. ACPI—its members and, in a very special way, its Executive Committee members—is the motivating force behind this venture of ACPI Publications; all of them are gratefully remembered. We are grateful to Asian Trading Corporation (Bangalore) for having published this book with exquisite perfection. Finally, ACPI is immensely grateful to *Missio* (Aachen) for having financially helped to print and publish this book.

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2. Faith, Reason, Science
Philosophical Reflections
With Special Reference to *Fides et Ratio*
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A Postmodern Reading

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN SCIENCE and The Need For a New Method

Job Kozhamthadam, SJ

Science perhaps is the most successful among all human creations. Most scholars and non-scholars would attribute this phenomenal success of science to its method: science can boast of having a reliable and effective method. Although the basic scientific methods were originally developed primarily in the physical sciences, soon it was extended to the biological sciences. Today it is widely used in the social sciences too with outstanding success.

However, a close look at the evolution of the method of science over the centuries brings us face to face with a paradoxical situation: the more science grows, the less it seems to be sure of its method. In the heydays of the Mechanical Philosophy of Nature, particularly during the days of Mill, Whewell, etc., scientists claimed to be quite sure of the scientific method. In the first half of the twentieth century some of the Logical Positivists also gave the impression that they knew quite well what the scientific method should be. However, in more recent times scientists and particularly philosophers of science have become more cautious and less categorical in their claims and assertions about scientific method. Today one finds questions like: Is there something like *the* scientific method? If there is one, what is it? Some well-known scholars like Paul Feyerabend have gone to the extent of disclaiming any definite method for science.

It must be noted that this perplexity and consequent unsureness about the method of science has not come about because science has failed; in fact, science has been eminently successful. Again, it is not born of any ignorance, nor is it an irresponsible overreaction. Some of the persons involved are practicing scientists and/or well-informed philosophers of science. The perplexity seems to be not of a wanderer who has lost his way, but of an explorer who has stepped into a whole new, exciting world.

Whitehead and other scholars have pointed out that a paradox very often is a pointer to a deeper truth. This paradox invites us to take a careful look at the nature of scientific method and the relation it has to other aspects of the scientific enterprise. This paradox is the result of certain revolutionary developments in science, developments that have exposed the traditional methods as obsolete and inadequate, developments that have brought about a change in the nature and goal of science. This paper will first discuss briefly some of the inadequacies of the traditional methods used in science. Then it will present a brief discussion of some of the most important developments in contemporary science and philosophy of science that have led to the expansion of the scientific horizon. It will conclude that the new situation calls for a new method to be developed.

Some Traditional Methods of Science:

Induction

Induction basically involves a move to a universalization or generalization on the basis of a careful examination of many individual cases. As Karl Popper puts it, “an inference is ‘inductive’ if it passes from singular statements (sometimes also called ‘particular’ statements), such as accounts of the results of observations or experiments, to universal statements, such as hypotheses or theories.”ⁱ Thus one examines the structure of water from many specimens collected from various sources and, having found that in all these cases a molecule of water contains two atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen, concludes that all water molecules at all times and in all places have the same constitution. This method in this form, despite being very simple and seemingly straightforward, is highly vulnerable to serious criticism, as has been pointed out by Karl Popper and others.

More sophisticated and carefully formulated forms of this method have been presented by scholars. For instance, according to William Whewell, “Induction is a term applied to describe the process of a true colligation (binding together) of facts by means of an exact and appropriate Conception.”ⁱⁱ Mill gives four inductive methods of agreement, difference, concomitant variation and residues, of which he considers the method of difference the most certain and reliable. These and similar versions of induction show that this method is not just a matter of enumerating the results of the individual examinations and drawing a generalization from them. In fact, the proponents of this method insist that the inductive move cannot dispense with inventive talent or the leap of genius. Herschel, for instance, emphasized the role of creative imagination in the formation of theories.

The introduction of other criteria and techniques like the “consilience of induction” has strengthened the power and effectiveness of this method. According to Whewell, the incorporation of two or more generalizations into a more inclusive theory is known as consilience of induction. There is no doubt that such a confluence of diverse streams of data cannot but strengthen the theory. Whewell went to the extent of claiming that “no example can be pointed out, in the whole history of science, so far as I am aware, in which the consilience of induction has given testimony in favour of an hypothesis afterwards discovered to be false.”ⁱⁱⁱ Although the history of science cannot support fully Whewell’s claim, the consilience envisaged by him does add credibility and reliability to the method.

Philosophers like David Hume and philosophers of science like Popper have subjected induction to severe criticism, exposing its inherent weakness. Popper writes: “It is far from obvious, from a logical point of view, that we are justified in inferring universal statements from singular ones, no matter how numerous; for any conclusion drawn in this way may always turn out to be false: no matter how many instances of white swans we may have observed, this does not justify the conclusion that all swans are white.”^{iv} Induction involves an illegitimate jump from the finite to the infinite. This difficulty can be circumvented by introducing the principle of induction or what Kant called the principle of universal causation. But this move is no real solution since, as Popper points out, it leads either to the problem of infinite regress or to apriorism.

It seems to me that a far more serious problem is that induction in its basic form cannot accommodate originality and creativity in science. True, many proponents have pointed out that induction can involve creative imagination or the leap of genius. However, it is not clear how this element can be systematically introduced into the inductive method.

The Hypothetico-Deductive Method

Although no method can claim to be *the* method of science, the hypothetico-deductive method is the most commonly and most effectively employed method of science, and for this reason it deserves a special status among the methods of science. In its basic form it begins with a hypothesis the origin or source of which is not specified usually. From this proposed hypothesis an observable consequence is derived. Then an experiment is performed to ascertain the existence of the expected consequence. If the experiment gives a positive result the hypothesis is accepted as scientifically valid, and is usually given the status of a scientific theory.

The Genesis of H-D Method

Often H-D method is associated with modern scientists like Galileo, Newton, etc. However, a close look at the history of science reveals that in essence it had its origin already in Aristotelian science, although later scientists introduced certain sophistications into it and gave it the present form. Aristotle proposed a two-part method in the investigation of nature, which may be called the inductive-deductive method, which began and ended with observation. In its twin path it first moved from observations to general principles and then from these general principles back to observations. In the Aristotelian method a scientist first induced explanatory principles from the phenomena to be explained. This step involved the inductive move. In the second part involving the deductive step the scientist was to deduce statements about the phenomena under study from premises which included these principles. Thus this method was an attempt to fuse together both the inductive and deductive techniques. It shares many essential features of the H-D method, the main difference being that here the initial hypothesis or generalization was obtained by induction, whereas in the modern version the hypothesis can come from any source. Also in the modern version the emphasis is to derive and confirm new consequences rather than to recapture the original observations about the phenomena under consideration.

Later in the thirteenth century Robert Grosseteste and his disciple Roger Bacon took up this method and modified it in some ways. Grosseteste's version is known as "The Method of Resolution and Composition," since he looked upon the first stage as a "resolution" of phenomena into constituent elements, and the deductive second stage as a "composition" in which the elements are combined to reconstruct the original phenomena. Although Galileo is given credit for being the first to employ the H-D method in its modern form, I have argued elsewhere that much before him Johannes Kepler in his discovery of the laws of planetary motion used it effectively, but Kepler misled us by calling his method "the a priori method."^v

Losee points out that Newton basically followed the Aristotelian method, although he called it the "Method of Analysis and Synthesis."^{vi} However, it must be noted that Newton's was no mere replay of the old version since it could claim superiority in at least two ways: emphasis on experimental confirmation of the deduced consequences and on going beyond the original inductive evidence.^{vii}

Problems of the H-D Method

Although this method can boast of having many scientific giants in its roll of practitioners and of being the most effective and successful among the various methods of science, it is not without serious problems. Many consider the mysterious nature of the source

of the hypothesis a nagging problem. Kepler while replying to his persistent critic, his contemporary astronomer David Fabricius, said that his hypothesis was always solidly based on observations. "Hypothesis must be built upon and confirmed by observations,"^{viii} he replied to Fabricius. Popper, on the other hand, believes that hypothesis could come from anywhere, even from the most irrational source, since all hypotheses will have to pass through the test of falsification, and the false ones will surely fail the test.

Logically, the H-D method can never claim to yield certain and sure conclusions since it commits the fallacy of "affirming the consequent." Hence this method can establish the hypothesis under investigation with probability only. Scholars have pointed out many other drawbacks in this method.

Retroduction or Abduction

The retroductive method is usually associated with Charles Peirce, Norwood Hanson, etc., and is proposed as the method of scientific discovery. Schematically this method is as follows: "1. Some surprising phenomenon P is observed. 2. P would be explicable as a matter of course if H were true. 3. Hence there is reason to think that H is true."^{ix} This method seems to be simple and can help in the introduction of novel elements into science. However, scholars have subjected it to severe criticism and have shown that it offers very little help for scientific discovery. The crucial question focuses on the source of the hypothesis H. From where does this hypothesis come? How does one know that this hypothesis is suitable for the case at hand? These and related questions remain unanswered in this method.

The Method of Falsification

Having critically examined the various methods traditionally used in science and finding them all falling short, Popper has proposed falsification as the right method of science. According to this scheme, scientists first propose a hypothesis. It could come from anywhere and could be on anything. Once the hypothesis has been proposed, the scientist attempts to falsify or refute it. If the attempt at falsification fails, the hypothesis is said to be corroborated; otherwise it is rejected.

Popper's proposal has been hailed as insightful by many. However, scholars have pointed out many serious inherent problems with it. Perhaps the most serious problem arises with regard to basic statements which are used for carrying out the falsification test. Popper likes to consider them as neutral. But this raises problems since they have to be observations statements and for Popper all observations are theory-laden. Again, if they are empirical, they themselves need to be subjected to falsification and be corroborated. Thus corroboration becomes a prerequisite for every attempt at falsification. Hence falsification becomes dependent on corroboration and so cannot be any stronger than corroboration.

Inadequacy of the Methods

There is no doubt that the methods discussed above have done great service to science and have been instrumental in the progress of science. However, the fact remains that they are all inadequate and have fallen seriously short of attaining what they are expected to accomplish. The method of science is to serve as the means to achieve the goal science has set for itself: the acquisition of true and reliable knowledge about the structure and operations of the universe. Francis Bacon in the seventeenth century, while advocating his inductive method, had claimed that his scientific method would enable its practitioners to go back to the

pre-Fall days. This meant that by the use of the scientific method humans would be able to have perfect and exact knowledge, as Adam and Eve were said to have before they disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden. Mill later claimed that his inductive method, particularly the Method of Difference, would yield infallible knowledge about the universe. Similarly, Whewell guaranteed that the scientific method he proposed would be foolproof, particularly if consilience of induction could be achieved. But history has shown that all these proponents were overoptimistic. In the rest of this paper I shall argue that not only have these methods been inadequate in the past, but also certain recent developments in science and the philosophy of science render them even more inadequate, thereby underscoring the need for evolving a new method of science.

Certain Recent Developments in Science

Recent developments in science, particularly since the twentieth century, have exposed most strikingly the inadequacy of the existing scientific methods. In the past it was claimed that science with its powerful method could yield absolute knowledge, i.e., knowledge that was valid for all at all times. However, the theory of relativity has shown that no such absolute knowledge is possible and that all knowledge is relative to a frame of reference. It was further claimed that science with its powerful method could give us definite and determinate knowledge about the universe. However, quantum theory with the discovery of wave-particle duality has shown that our universe is indeterminate and so our knowledge cannot be free from a certain degree of indeterminateness and indefiniteness.

It was also claimed that science could give us certain and exact knowledge. But the uncertainty principle of Heisenberg has shown that all scientific knowledge is beset with a certain amount of uncertainty, and there is no way of eliminating it completely. In the past it was claimed that all personal elements like subjectivity could be eliminated, at least in principle if not in practice, from the process of acquiring scientific knowledge. But Heisenberg's uncertainty principle and Bohr's complementarity principle show that this is an impossible dream. There is a certain unavoidable intrusion of subjectivity in quantum science. This can be explained as follows. Every experiment involves a necessary interaction between the observer and the observed since if there is no interaction, then no information is possible. All interaction would involve interference, however small. Objectivity demands that there be no interference of the observer on the object observed that would affect the outcome of the experiment. In all experiments claiming objectivity it is assumed that the act of observation does not affect the object observed. However, in the quantum mechanical world, as shown in Heisenberg's Gamma Ray Microscope thought experiment, this assumption cannot be upheld. Hence complete objectivity is not possible, thereby allowing a certain intrusion of subjectivity.

Bohr's complementarity principle also leads to a similar conclusion. According to Bohr, what is observed is the phenomenon, i.e., observation obtained under specific circumstances, including the experimental setup. In other words, what is observed is the aspect specified by the experimental setup. This means that the experimental setup in a way becomes determinative of what observations results are obtained. The experimental setup in a way decides what results are obtained from the experiment. This means what is observed is in some way determined by how it is observed. Again, since the experimental or instrumental setup can be considered an extension of the observer, the observer becomes part of the

observed. In such a situation there cannot be any complete objectivity. Thus the recent developments in science show that the methods used cannot give us completely objective, exact and certain knowledge.

Certain Recent Developments in the Philosophy of Science

Certain recent developments in the philosophy of science also reveal serious deficiencies in the existing methods of science and call for evolving a new method. All scientific experiments involve observation in one form or other, direct or indirect. In the past it was assumed that one could make observations in a theory-neutral way. But today it has been made abundantly clear that all observations are theory-laden, loaded with theory, dependent on theory. The theory one holds or the theoretical background plays an important role in deciding what observational result is obtained. This need not discredit the value and importance of observation since observation influenced by a true theory brings valuable information. But the fact remains that observation can no longer be considered a purely theory-neutral affair.

In the past it was believed that science was independent of the worldview of the scientist. This meant that a scientist brought up in the western culture will come with the same kind of theories as one brought up in the eastern culture. Today many philosophers of science are challenging this claim. The school of Historicism or Social constructivism, under the leadership of Thomas Kuhn, Paul Feyerabend, etc., have argued that the worldview of the scientist colours and controls the science of the scientist. Although such extreme views are untenable, it seems to me that a moderate influence of the worldview cannot be ruled out. For instance, science basically consists in asking pertinent questions and getting appropriate answers from nature. The type of answer received is very much contingent upon the type of the question put. Since reality is multifaceted, any number of questions can be put to nature from a variety of perspectives. The type of question one asks will depend on the concerns and needs one has, and these in turn are often conditioned by one's worldview. Thus the science of a scientist cannot be fully neutral to his/her worldview.

In the past scientists assumed the principle of isolation: a particular part of the universe under consideration could be treated as a fully isolated system having no influence from the outside. Today, thanks to developments in quantum theory, it is becoming clearer and clearer that ours is a unified and interconnected universe and cannot be fully insulated against all external influence. In the past it was believed that there was a sharp distinction between matter and spirit or the material and the nonmaterial, and attempt was made to keep the latter out of science. Some even denied any existence of the world of the spiritual or nonmaterial. Although consciousness was considered in the case of psychosomatic conditions in the medical world, it was believed that in the physical sciences it had no role to play. But today many philosophers of quantum science assign a definite role to consciousness in certain phenomena like the reduction or collapse of the wave-packet.

In the past there was a concerted effort to keep off all personal elements from science, mainly because it was identified with the form of subjectivity that reduced epistemic claims to the idiosyncracies of the individual. But many scholars point out that the personal element cannot be overlooked in science, particularly in the context of scientific knowledge. Thus the philosopher-scientist Michael Polanyi emphasizes the importance of personal knowledge in

science. According to him, “We shall find Personal Knowledge manifested in the appreciation of probability and of order in the exact sciences, and see it at work even more extensively in the way the descriptive sciences rely on skills and connoisseurship. At all these points the act of knowledge includes an appraisal; and this personal coefficient, which shapes all factual knowledge, bridges in doing so the disjunction between subjectivity and objectivity.”^x Furthermore, although the mathematical, analytical approach has been highly productive and successful in many areas of science, today the inadequacy and poverty of this method are being brought to light. It is pointed out that this part by part, piecemeal approach fails to do justice to the totality of the organism and system. The need for a holistic, system approach along with the analytical is becoming more and more evident.

All these new developments are pointing out the inadequacy of the existing methods of science and are calling for developing a new one.

The Genetic Revolution and Its Implications

The genetic revolution with developments in genetic engineering, cloning, genome projects, nanotechnology, etc., is the most important achievement of science in recent times. One of the immediate consequences of these developments is that it emphasizes the interconnectedness of nature. The genes are intimately connected to every aspect of a living being; any change in the genetic makeup affects the rest of the being. The important findings in genetics reaffirm that a living being is a unified harmonious whole.

The genetic revolution underscores the linkage of the organism with the rest of the universe as well. The most recent findings in genetics reveal that the genetic structure alone cannot determine the nature and operations of the organism; the environment also plays a significant role in the constitution of the organism. Thus a living organism is harmoniously unified within itself and with the environment. All these considerations make a holistic approach necessary.

The developments associated with the genetic revolution are rewriting the nature and scope of science in significant ways. In the past science could bring about only accidental changes. Today, thanks to these developments, science is in a position to bring about substantial changes in humans. In the past science could touch humans only from the outside; today it can touch and transform humans from the inside. In the past science could affect what humans have and want to have; today it can affect what humans are and want to be. Humans are the master and creator of science. But today the domain of science has widened and deepened so as to be able to reshape the very same humans. This is not just a quantitative change in the nature and scope of science, but a qualitative one. Since method of science is parasitic on the nature of goal of science, it seems to me that a qualitative change in the method of science is called for.

Some Ingredients of the New Method

The principal theme of this paper is that since the existing methods of science are inadequate to achieve the goal of science by exploiting the many possibilities opened up by recent developments in science, there is need for evolving a new method of science. However, at this stage it is impossible to say what this new method will be. Nor is it within my competence to list exhaustively the different elements such a method should have. This

section will remain explorative and suggestive of some of the principal ingredients such a method should include.

Some Presuppositions of the Old Method

The traditional methods of science had a number of presuppositions. These methods arose mostly from the sixteenth century onwards during which the mechanistic worldview dominated the scientific world, according to which the universe was looked upon as a gigantic machine operating on the laws and principles of mechanics. Hence their presuppositions are mostly those of the mechanical philosophy of nature.

1. Reducibility

It was believed that the universe was divisible into individual, independent components. The totality of the universe was nothing but the summation of these parts. As in a machine, parts could be added or removed without any significant impact on the whole. Emergent properties had no place in this perspective. This breakup into parts facilitated the analysis and study of the universe and its phenomena since they were easily manageable and mathematically analyzable. Today it is being realized that this reductionist strategy is an endless road. For instance, scientists hoped to solve the problem of constitution of material reality by means of this strategy. But today they are nowhere close to solving the mystery of matter. Some have even given up the reductinist strategy and have adopted others to solve the problem of the constitution of matter. Furthermore, this presupposition does violence to the holistic dimension of organisms and fails to explain adequately the dimensions of life, consciousness, intelligence, etc.

2. Isolatability

It was held that the parts thus divided could be treated successfully in isolation, the rest of the universe having no significant impact on them. In case some elements outside were relevant, then their impact could be determined exactly and integrated into the analysis and study. This assumption failed to do justice to the widely observed interconnectedness of the universe. Today, thanks to the many recent developments, the interconnectedness of the universe is getting more and more confirmed. For instance, the Human Genome Project reveals how interconnected the different parts of the human body are. Not only that, the study of the genome of various other animals show close interconnectedness between them. Humans share 98.4% of DNA with chimpanzees. With the cow the DNA shared is 90%, while with the mouse it is 75% and with yeast it is 30%.

3. Immutability

Scientific knowledge was supposed to be characterized by immutability; once a claim was established as scientific, it must remain true for all times. Change was looked upon as a sign of weakness. Scientific method was expected to yield unchanging knowledge. Today evolution is looked upon as a universal phenomenon, not just a biological one. The physical universe and the biological universe are all evolving. Human knowledge is evolving, science itself is evolving. The traditional method overlooks this overwhelming set of developments.

4. Mathematizability

Another claim made by traditional scientific methods was that the scientifically interesting part of the universe was quantifiable and measurable. In fact, science showed very little interest in non-quantifiable phenomena. This had many important benefits since because of this scientific knowledge could claim to be exact, objective, certain and predictable. This

requirement had serious negative consequences. It limited the domain of science to the narrow world of measurables. The wide world of non-measurables and the qualitative world were left out of the ken of science. The world of feelings, emotions, etc., were left out. Along with them hunches, intuitions, etc., also became alien to science.

5. Materiality

Science reduced the real universe to the world of three dimensional space and one dimensional time. Everything beyond was considered not only unscientific, but by some even unreal. It did not deny phenomena like sensing, thinking, etc. But they were all reduced to an epiphenomenon of matter. This concern for materiality opposed all forms of immateriality in science. Spiritual beings and spiritual experiences were banned from the world of science. Mysticism and mystical experiences were anathematized. Recent scientific developments are challenging these claims. For instance, relativity tells us that the real universe is a four-dimensional continuum, our experiential world of three-dimensional space and one-dimensional time being only a special case. Other theories argue for even higher dimensions. It is pointed out that many paradoxes we confront today could be eliminated if we accept the multi-dimensional universe.

6. Superiority of Rationality

Reason and rationality were considered the path to true knowledge. Other human experiences like emotions and feelings were unreliable and suspect. Science was looked upon as the paradigm of rationality, non-rational and much less irrational elements having no place in science. This meant also that hunches, intuitions and other extra-perceptual knowledge forms were outside of the realm of science. There is no doubt that reason is reliable and gives us better control over the situation, whereas emotion and feeling are not law-governed and hence unpredictable. However, the power and influence of feeling and emotion in human life can hardly be exaggerated. As Hume has put it, "Reason is and ought to be slave of the passions." In some ways passions are more a part of human and animal existence than reason. As I have mentioned, today science is making its entry into the very being of humans. Then science can hardly afford to sideline the world of passions.

In the past science banned emotions and feelings since they were unpredictable. But today the uncertainty principle tells us that the reason-based scientific world is also unpredictable. The difference in unpredictability between reason and emotion seems to be a matter of degree. Hence unpredictability need not be a sufficient reason to ban emotion from the scientific world.

7. Universalizability

Another expectation from science was that its findings be of universal applicability and validity. Scientific truths were for all persons, at all times and in all places. Scientific method was to be geared to ensure the attainment of such truths. This meant that scientific findings must be independent of all particular, personal elements. A direct outcome of this requirement was objectivity: an objective claim was independent of the personal elements of particular individuals. We have seen already that in the light of the uncertainty principle and the complementarity principle, strict and complete objectivity is impossible in science. We have also seen that according to Polanyi and others a certain amount of personal element is not only unavoidable in science, but is even necessary for science. It is true that the subjective, idiosyncratic elements can be a hindrance to science, but keeping all personal

elements out of science seems to be unjustified. All these elements, although they served a useful purpose in the beginning stages, eventually led to an alienation of humans from science. It has led to a kind of dehumanization of science. Because of them science has lost touch with humanity, human values, human concerns and human welfare. Environmental degradation, the impending threat of a nuclear holocaust, etc., are expressions of this alienation. Science cannot remain as before. The situation has changed. As we have seen, today the nature of scope of science has expanded and deepened to enter the very being of humans and other creatures. Since scientific method needs to be changed in accordance with changes in the nature and aim of science, a new method of science is called for.

Some Elements of the New Method

What we suggest is not so much an abandonment of the traditional methods as a broadening of their horizons to include other elements as well. It seems to me that a holistic approach should be integrated into the new scientific method. Also it should take seriously the interconnected nature of our universe and natural phenomena. The evolving nature of the universe and our knowledge about the universe will have to be conceded. Non-material and emergent properties can no longer be sidelined. Furthermore, the personal elements, intuitions, hunches, and extra-perceptual elements will have to be taken seriously. Also science needs to take ideas and techniques from other disciplines, other systems and other cultures. For instance, the personal intuitive knowledge is emphasized in the eastern traditions. Several scholars have pointed out the close similarity between some of the conclusions of contemporary science and the intuitive findings of the sages of the East. Some critics have tried to explain this similarity away as a mere accidental coincidence. However, the parallel is too striking to be deemed a coincidence.

In the past the fear was that taking all these “messy” items was risky and can lead to confusion. But today it seems to me that science is in a position to develop measures to steer it clear of such confusion. Besides, the secret of the success of science was that it was willing to take calculated risks. Developing a new method of science along the lines suggested above seems to me a risk worth taking.

ⁱ Karl Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (London: Hutchinson, 1974), p.27.

ⁱⁱ Losee, p. 124.

ⁱⁱⁱ Losee, p. 127.

^{iv} Popper, p. 27.

^v See Job Kozhamthadam, *The Discovery of Kepler's Laws: The Interaction of Science, Philosophy and Religion* (Notre Dame, USA: The University of Notre Dame Press, 1994).

^{vi} See Losee, p.81.

^{vii} See Losee, p.81.

^{viii} Quoted in Kozhamthadam, p.87.

^{ix} Hanson, *Patterns of Discovery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), p. 86.

^x Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge*, rev. ed. (New York: Harper, 1964), p. 17.

GANDHIAN METHOD

Its Prospects in Indian Christian Philosophizing

Dr. B. Joseph Francis

I. Is There a Gandhian Philosophy or Method?

When I pondered over the title of this paper, I was wondering and asking myself: is there a Gandhian method at all? Can I call Gandhi a philosopher in the ordinary sense of the term? Or perhaps, should I consider him a practical philosopher and not an academic philosopher? What was Gandhi's own attitude towards intellectual pursuits? Is he a social reformer? Or should I call him an astute politician? His frugal living and attire made him out to be an ascetic. People all over the world in his time tried to figure out how exactly to figure him out. Yet his popularity was unprecedented and when he died a violent death the reaction of the world bore witness to the respect he commanded from all peoples of the world. Gandhi was not an anti-intellectual though at times he may appear to be so. Here is what he writes to Purushottam Gandhi, his relative from Yerwada prison, on 12-5-32 "Logic is a purely intellectual process. We should not care in the least if logic, that is the intellect, cannot understand what is self-evident to the heart. On the contrary, sometimes our intellect is convinced of certain ideas which the heart does not accept. We should then reject them."¹ This, however, sounds like the words of Blaise Pascal. Gandhi did not claim to be a philosopher. Margaret Chatterjee says of him: "He was a man of the people, not a professional philosopher...the man and his thinking are all of a piece. He was canny enough to steer completely clear of the artificial distinctions philosophers make between one concept and another, and still more, the distinction made between the rational and allegedly irrational parts of the psyche."² He considered himself to be a practical, sincere man, honest to his conscience. He never liked to think of himself as the originator of any system. This is amply borne out by what he wrote almost towards the end of his life to a certain Rameshwari Nehru on 7-6-1946, 'I do not know myself who is a Gandhian. Gandhism is a meaningless word for me. An 'ism' follows the propounder of a system. I am not one; hence I cannot be the cause for an 'ism'. If an 'ism' is built up it will not endure, and if it does it will not be Gandhism."³ This, I find, is an appropriate caution, which we would do well to keep in mind as we reflect further. Though it is true that he did not formally think out or institute a method, any researcher pouring avidly over his voluminous writings, sayings and above all his life cannot but discover, hidden beneath all these, a practical man, a philosopher with a philosophical method of his own, according to his, perhaps, uncanny perceptions and non-systematized ratings. Its prospects in Indian Christian philosophizing are to be judged by all those delve into his thought. Our task here is only to highlight some of the hidden skein of his hectic life

¹ The collected works of Mahatma Gandhi, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India from 1965, volumes 1 to 100 have been published. I give the volume number (in Roman numerals), the year to which it points to (within brackets), the number of the entry and the page reference when available. The book itself is abbreviated here as CW.

CW XLIX (1932) nr.523, p. 429.

² Margaret Chatterjee, *Gandhi's Religious Thoughts*, Macmillan, London, 1983, p. 32.

³ CW LXXXIV (1946), nr.382, p.303.

of activity and popularity with the masses, which is indicative of his *method*: his way of thinking and acting.

II. His Search for Truth

Practically all the researchers on the thought and life of Mahatma Gandhi have noted that the synthesis of his thinking is “truth” in all its manifestations. It is true, however, that in the popular mind we have connected Gandhi with *ahimsa*, non-violence and his special methodology of *satyāgraha* to achieve his righteous goals. I agree with Shivesh C.Thakur when he says: “In the course of his long and extraordinarily active life Gandhi said and wrote a tremendous amount but I think it is still possible to compress his entire philosophy into literally one word. Most people might imagine that word would be ‘non-violence’ (ahimsa), but I believe that it has to be ‘truth’. It is this word that imparts meaning and justification to everything else Gandhi stood for.”⁴

In his autobiography Gandhi describes his shyness to speak in public and gives instances of his nervousness and inability he experienced while in England. It was to such an extent that he could not even read out the speeches he had written down for special occasions. Later as a lawyer in Mumbai the same thing happened. Was this an inferiority complex of sorts? And how did he get out of it? In a way it could have been an inferiority complex since he says that often in such meetings he felt others were better informed than he. So he kept quiet. Unless something was true, why to speak was his attitude. Ultimately it was the deep down commitment to truth that he had silently cultivated which freed him South Africa. The blatant injustice he met there turned this votary of truth into an eloquent and fearless speaker.⁵

All his life Gandhi tried to describe himself as a humble seeker after truth. A correspondent had written to him about a discussion among friends about Gandhi, some had said he is a cunning politician in the garb of a saint trying to play politics. Gandhi’s answer in 1927 was “To clothe me with sainthood is too early even if it is possible. I myself do not feel a saint in any shape or form. But I do feel I am votary of Truth in spite of all my errors of unconscious omission and commission.”⁶ For him it was truth above all else. While unveiling a portrait of C.R. Das he had said that he was prepared even to sacrifice India herself on the altar not of freedom but of Truth. This had angered some of his friends but Gandhi held his ground. He says: “...I know it jarred on some friends and it incensed some. But what could I do? I can only speak what I feel; or else I should be really worthless.”⁷ Instances can be multiplied from various phases of his life.⁸ But these would suffice.

⁴Shivesh C. Thakur, *Gandhi’s God*, in IPQ 111 (1971) 485-495, p. 485.

⁵ Cf. M.K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments With Truth*, (tr. from Gujarati by Mahadev Desai), Phoenix Press, London, 1949.

⁶ *CW* XXXII (1926-27), nr.267, p. 587.

⁷ *CW* XXXIV (1927), nr.427, p. 501.

⁸ Cf. *CW* XXXVII (1928), nr. 378, 339 where he says: “For I claim to be a humble seeker after truth and am conducting Navajivan not merely to teach but learn” This was in answer to the protest against mercy killing of a calf. Cf. also *CW* XL (1929), nr.327 p. 348 when faced with many leaving his ashram after his public disclosure of some irregularities, Gandhi refused to be perturbed and said he was ready to build up a new ashram if the present broke up. Cf. also *CW* XXXIV (1927), nr. 431, p. 505.

M.K Gandhi was not a stick in the mud person but one who was always prepared to change. It was *truth* that mattered. ‘Against facts there could be no argument’: this seems to be his attitude.⁹ He was therefore prepared to change his ideas. He was not bothered if others considered him to be inconsistent. He says: “I am not at all concerned with appearing to be inconsistent. In my search after *Truth* I have discovered many ideas and learnt many new things. Old as I am in age, I have no feeling that I have ceased to grow inwardly or that my growth will stop at the dissolution of the flesh. What I am concerned with is my readiness to obey the call of Truth, my God, from moment to moment, and therefore, when anybody finds any inconsistency between any two writings of mine, if he has still faith in my sanity, he would do well to choose the later of the two on the same subject.”¹⁰

Truth, therefore, was the over-riding interest of his life. Writing to a certain Mr. Edward Murphy of New York, U.S.A, he asserts categorically: “There is no search greater than Truth.”¹¹ He was indeed an earnest seeker of Truth in all his deeds. He confesses: “I am but a humble seeker after Truth and bent upon finding it. I count no sacrifice too great ... The whole of my activity whether it may be called social, political, humanitarian or ethical, is directed to that end.”¹² He was asked by some Christian student whether one should not be devoted to someone and Gandhi’s reply was: “Yes, to Truth. I am devoted to none but Truth, and I owe no discipline to anybody but Truth”¹³. Now we have reached a stage where we should ask what ultimately was this Truth that Gandhi was seeking in his life?

III. The Ultimate Truth?

The search for Truth and commitment to Truth in his life led this sincere, “deeply paradoxical and often tormented character”¹⁴ that God is that Truth that he was seeking. Resuming the editorial control of his papers “Navajivan” and “Young India” after his imprisonment 1922-24, for seditious articles in those papers, he notes his policy of firmness and adherence to Truth: “I want to see God face to face. God I know is Truth.”¹⁵ In a handwritten message from Sabarmati ashram dated 13-3-1927 he has jotted: “God is truth. The way to Truth lies through *ahimsa*.”¹⁶ In a letter to a student in the same year he writes: “We must become embodiments of Truth and Love, for God is Truth and Love.”¹⁷

But he makes a subtle change in 1930 which becomes stronger and settled by 1932. In writing to Narandas Gandhi from Yervada prison on 22-7-1930 he wanted the following to be read at the ashram during the usual Tuesday morning prayer: “The word *Satya* is derived from *Sat*, which means that which is. *Satya* means a state of being. Nothing is or exists in reality except Truth. That is why *Sat* or *Satya* is the right name for God. In fact it is more correct to

⁹ Cf. Gandhi’s answer to a teacher *CW* LVI (1933-34), nr.178, p. 154.

¹⁰ *CW* LV (1933), nr.63, p. 61. Cf. also *CW* LXX (1939), nr. 236, p. 203 where he says: “ But friends who observe inconsistency will do well to take the meaning that my latest writing may yield unless, of course, they prefer the old. But before making the choice they should try to see if there is not an underlying and abiding consistency between the two seemingly inconsistencies”.

¹¹ *CW* XXIII (1922-24), nr.281, p. 367.

¹² *CW* XXV (1924-25), nr.84, p. 117.

¹³ *CW* LXI (1935), nr.120, p.81.

¹⁴ Ralph Buultjens, *Another Side of Gandhi*, in *America*, April 9, 1983, vol. 148, pp 274-278, p. 274.

¹⁵ *CW* XXIII (1922-24), nr.254, p. 340.

¹⁶ *CW* XXXIII (1927), nr.153, p. 155.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, nr. 244, p. 234.

say Truth is God than God is Truth. But as we cannot do without a ruler or general, the name God is and will remain more correct.”¹⁸ Further, while speaking at a memorable gathering in Lausanne on 8-12-1931 he was asked why he considered God is Truth. In his reply he gives many reasons. God has many names, no name exhausts him. He has many forms and no form exhausts him. Hence he is nameless and formless. He went on to make an important statement: “I would say for those who say God is love, God is love. But deep down in me I say God may be love, but God is Truth. If it is possible for the human tongue to give the fullest description of God, for myself I have come to the conclusion that God is Truth. But two years ago I went a step further and said Truth is God. You will see the fine distinction between the two statements. God is Truth and Truth is God. And that conclusion I came to after a continuous, relentless search after Truth which began so many years ago. I found that the nearest approach to Truth is through love. But I found also that love has many meanings in the English language at least, and human love in the sense of passion becomes a degrading thing also. I found too that love in the sense of ahimsa and non-violence has only limited number of votaries in the world...It is very difficult to understand ‘God is love’ (because of a variety of meanings of love) but I never found a double meaning in connection with Truth and not even atheists have denied the necessity or power of Truth. Not only so. In their passion for discovering Truth, they have not hesitated even to deny the very existence of God---from their own point of view rightly. And it was because of their reasoning that I saw that I was not going to say ‘God is Truth’, but ‘Truth is God.’”¹⁹ He explains the same thing in a simpler manner in a letter from prison on 21-3-1932 to the boys and girls of his ashram: “Do you remember my definition of God? Instead of saying that God is Truth, I say that Truth is God. I did not always think thus. I realized this only from four years ago. But without knowing it I always acted as if it was so. I have always known God as Truth. There was a time when I doubted the existence of God, but even at that time I did not doubt the existence of Truth. This Truth is not a material quality but is pure consciousness. That alone holds the universe together. It is God because it rules the whole universe...For me this is almost a matter of direct experience. I say ‘almost’ because I have only a glimpse of Him. But my faith is unshakeable.”²⁰

While the statement that ‘Truth is God’ is very blandly put, the question remains about Truth itself. In fact he was confronted with this question by his audience at Lausanne on 8-12-1931: “What is Truth?” to which he answered as follows: “A difficult question, but I have solved it for myself by saying that it is what the voice within tells one. How then, you ask, different people think of different and contrary truths? Seeing that the human mind works through innumerable media and that evolution of the human mind is not the same for all, it follows that what may be truth for one may be untruth for another and hence those who have made these experiments have come to the conclusion that there are certain conditions for making experiments...”²¹ He goes on to say that though different persons may be claiming that their inner voice is saying this or that what is needed is sincerity and discipline. These come from rigorous training in observing a life of vows. Gandhi in his ashrams insisted on a

¹⁸ *CW* XLIV (1930), nr.62, p. 40.

¹⁹ *CW* XLVIII (1931-32), nr.259, p. 404.

²⁰ *CW* XLIX (1932), nr.264, p. 223. Many more references could be adduced on this point e.g., *CW* XXXII (1926-27), nr.162, p.441; *CW* XLV (1930-31), nr.396, pp. 340-341.

²¹ *CW* XLVIII (1931-32), nr.259, pp. 405-406.

series of vows, which he wanted his trainees to follow step by step e.g., the vows of truth-speaking and thinking of truth, brahmacharya, non-violence, poverty and non-possession, etc.

Margaret Chatterjee while taking note of how Gandhi changed 'God is Truth' to 'Truth is God' dismisses the subtle distinction with a broad statement: "The word Truth is not substituted for God, but serves to elucidate what 'God' means for Gandhi."²² Raghavan Iyer commenting on this change in Gandhi says, in line with Gandhi's secretary Mahadev Desai's diary dated 24-7-1932: "God is difficult to define, but the definition of truth is deposited in every human heart."²³ This brings us to an inevitable question whether truth is relative or absolute? If they are not the same how are they related to one to the other? If they are same, then are we not plumb in the middle of a world of chaos?

IV. Relative or Absolute Truth?

The Truth that Gandhi was seeking all his life he identified with God and hence it is the Absolute Truth that he sought. Even as God cannot be comprehended in totality, Gandhi was convinced that in this life one cannot get hold of Absolute Truth. In replying to a Polish professor who had remarked that Gandhi's frequent shifting of positions smacked of opportunism he writes: "... Finite human beings shall never know in its fullness Truth and Love, which is in itself infinite. But we know enough for guidance. We shall err, and sometimes grievously, in our application. But man is self-governing being, and self-government necessarily includes the power as much to commit errors as to set them right as often as they are made."²⁴ Writing six years later from Yervada prison to a certain Keshav he says even more clearly about his attitude: "Truth that we see is always relative knowledge and therefore it need not have universal application. My prayer therefore for my neighbour is: 'May they see the Truth as Thou the All-knowing One, would have them see it.'"²⁵ When one has such an attitude one will not take offence because someone else thinks differently and sees things differently. Hence he is able to include *ahimsa* as a means to discover Truth. Writing to a certain Mr. Edward Murphy of New York, he asserts: "There is no search greater than that of Truth. The only means of finding it out is through non-violence in its extreme form. It is because we have ignored it that we seek to impose by force what we consider as truth upon others."²⁶ Similarly in a speech at Warda on 20-12-1926 he says: "For, to me Truth is God and there is no way to find truth except the way of Non-violence."²⁷ This relation between Truth and *ahimsa* he makes clear in his mature thought in 1946. In the course of a discussion with a friend who had said "We feel that we have derived more strength from Truth than from your *Ahimsa*" he went on to explain the connection between the two and expressed his partiality to *ahimsa* to which the friend rejoined "...your emphasis is always on *ahimsa*. You have made propagation of non-violence the mission of your life," to which Gandhi replied even more emphatically: "There again you are wrong. *Ahimsa* is not the goal. Truth is the goal. But we have no means of realizing Truth in human relationships except through the practice of *ahimsa*. A steadfast pursuit of *ahimsa* is inevitably bound to

²² Margaret Chatterjee, Op. Cit. p.58.

²³ Raghavan N. Iyer, *The Moral and Political Thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1973, p. 155.

²⁴ *CW* XXXIII (1927), nr.256, pp. 246-247.

²⁵ *CW* LIV (1933), nr.360, p. 315.

²⁶ *CW* XXIII (1922-24), nr.281, p.367.

²⁷ *CW* XXXII (1926-27), nr.162, p.441.

Truth—not so violence. That is why I swear by *ahimsa*. Truth came naturally to me. *Ahimsa* I acquired after a struggle. But *ahimsa* being the means we are naturally more concerned with it in our everyday life. It is *ahimsa*, therefore, that our masses have to be educated in. Education in truth follows from it as a natural end.”²⁸

From this kind of thinking followed his view on religions. I give three quotations from three different periods of his life to show that it was consistently the same. Replying to a letter from his cousin Jamnadas Gandhi on 30-1-1913, he answers his question whether it is necessary that there should be only one religion for the whole world? He replies: “Personally I think the world as a whole will never have, and need not have a single religion.”²⁹ In 1934 during the course of a speech at Alleppey he says: “It is my conviction that all the great faiths of the world are true, are God-ordained and that they serve the purpose of God and those who have been brought up in those surroundings and those faiths. I do not believe that the time will ever come when we shall be able to say there is only one religion in the world. In a sense even today there is one fundamental religion in the world. But there is no such thing as a straight line in Nature. Religion is one tree with many branches. As branches you may say religions are many; as true Religion is one.”³⁰ Towards the end of his life it remained the same. In a speech at prayer meeting in 1946 he declared: “Just as a tree has many branches but one root, similarly various religions are the leaves and branches of the same tree. Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and Zoroastrianism are the main branches but for varieties of religions, they are as numerous as mankind.”³¹ But does this mean that truth can consort with falsehood? Can truths be partial truths? He held that truth cannot be compromised. Way back in 1926 during Bardoli Satyagraha he had remarked: “...truth is not composed of parts. Truth is only one, whole and indivisible and stays as such for all time, past, present and future. Truth can be compared to an arch. If even one brick of the arch comes off, the whole arch crumbles. Because a counterfeit coin is accepted at ninety-nine shops, it does not acquire the worth to be accepted in the hundredth shop. It was a false coin from the very moment of its making...”³²

Truth for him always triumphs in the end. This has been a conviction he had acquired as a result of his South African experience. At the end of his campaign there he declared on 8-2-1908 “We consider this a victory for truth...we do assert that most of the leaders fought with scrupulous regard for truth. That is why there has been such a wonderful result. Truth is god or God is nothing but Truth.”³³ He was convinced that even if there is one person [*Satyagrahi*] who holds on firmly to truth, there will be victory for truth. Writing to his publisher friend G.A. Natesan on 25-6-1919 he notes: “Remember what I have often said, one real *Satyagrahi* is enough for victory. This is becoming clearer to me day by day. Even as a true coin fetches full value, so does a true *Satyagrahi* fetch his full value, i.e., attain the intended result.”³⁴

²⁸ *CW* LXXXIV (1946), nr.289, pp. 228-229.

²⁹ *CW* XII (1913-14), nr.69, p.94. Cf. also nr.89, p. 127 where he speaks in the oft repeated Indian argument “...in fact, there are as many paths as there are human beings. So long as they differ, their paths are bound to differ. He who sees the identity of his *atman* with the *atman* of others will also see unity in the religions”.

³⁰ *CW* LVII (1934), nr.14, p.17. This is a fine way of solving the one and many in the matter of religions. It is both one and many! See next reference also.

³¹ *CW* LXXXVI (1946), nr.25, p.31.

³² *CW* XXXVII (1928), nr.74, pp.61-62.

³³ *CW* VIII (1908), nr.34, p.61.

V. Satyagraha as a Methodology for Social Action and Relief

To me *Satyagraha* was the special method of Gandhi, which flows naturally from his ardent desire for Truth and Justice. I would not consider them separately in disjunction but always together. *Satyagraha* is the natural consequence of his whole system. In brief, it means to hold on to truth with all one's main and might. Success was assured. If there was a failure then what went wrong was something with the individuals who claimed to be following *Satya* but in fact they were not! An analysis of what went wrong would bring to light the lack of *Satya* in that particular case, either with the individuals or with the matter itself. Therefore there can never be anything wrong with *Satyagraha* itself as a method.³⁵

To put it briefly, the method consists in the following steps. First one has to identify the problem. We have to examine: is there a genuine complaint? Has Justice been thwarted? With a lawyer's meticulousness he would examine everything. He would collect the data, process them in his mind and make sure that there is a genuine cause. The next step would be to appeal to the good sense of the oppressor or the one committing the injustice to vacate it. When the appeal is rejected he would next examine if those suffering from injustice were firm in their mind and not fickle-hearted. He would motivate and train them to undergo any suffering that may come. Above all, they have to see to it that they have no anger against the oppressor but only love for him. The motive is not to defeat him but to convert him to better ways. One holds on to truth, come what may. This does not mean that one is stubborn but rather one is ready to give and take when the oppressor is ready to dialogue. A compromise could be worked out which is acceptable to all concerned. He was always ready to go more than half the way because love has to prevail. If such a mind is there the agitators are not terrorists or violent people who disturb the public peace but are in every respect true *Satyagrahis*. Now Gandhi would be prepared to launch his *Satyagraha*. It is mainly a kind of non-cooperation with evil because he reasoned that evil continues in society only because we tolerate evil and are indifferent. But cutting off co-operation would make the oppressor to reflect and change his ways. No force is applied but pressure is surely exerted, a pressure born out of love (*ahimsa*) for the good of the oppressor. If, however, the oppressor is still unmoved, the *Satyagrahi* undertakes a fast. The aim of such a fast is not to kill oneself but to move the oppressor to realize that the issue is serious enough because here are people ready to suffer for it and perhaps even lose their life in the process. The oppressor's compassionate side (Gandhi believed that all human beings have such compassion, even inveterate murderers) would be manifested and he would peacefully vacate the injustice or come to a compromise.

Here we notice well that for Gandhi a genuine *Satyagraha* can never fail because it is based on Truth, and Truth always triumphs. This was the thesis of Gandhi. There were also instances when he gave up *Satyagraha* in some cases when he found that there was violence or when he found that the motivation was not pure enough.³⁶ Once again what stands out in the

³⁴ CW XV (1918-19), nr.354, p.389.

³⁵ I refer the reader to my book *Love in the Life and Works of Mahatma Gandhi* by Joseph Francis Backianadan, sterling Publishers & St. Peter's Pontifical Institute, 1991, pp. 23-29; 73-87; 169-196; 235-243. There I have given the origin and development of this methodology according to the different stages of his life.

³⁶ Thus his *Satyagraha* in Rajkot in 1939 failed because he had been led astray by personal interest (Rajkot was the native place of his wife and the place of his first steps in education), further his followers had yielded to

whole process is his concern for Truth. He also insisted strongly that the *Satyagrahis* should be trained and should even follow a few vows so that their commitment to Truth can be truly tested.³⁷

VI. What We Can Salvage from Gandhian Methodology

Let me be brief in clarifying this point. One could perhaps make a study of his political philosophy; how he considers that one's spirituality can go hand in hand with an active involvement into politics. He was often taunted that he better go to the Himalayas and become a Sanyasi rather than dabble in politics. Politics need not be his field. He however defended himself by saying that he does not like to compartmentalize his life. For him politics could also be part of his search for Truth. One could also study his projects such as "The constructive programmes" of which he began to speak more insistently in Wardha. These constructive projects show how he wanted his countrymen to be enterprising and be self-reliant and never feel helpless. If there was one thing that he disliked most was the surrender to a feeling of helplessness. His own interpretation of what *ahimsa* demands when one is attacked and one's neighbours' honour is threatened is revealing. Here I would only ask myself the question: Gandhi has been discredited by many as being not practical enough. While this could be disputed, I try to find something, which could be of universal value in his practical "philosophy of life". His penchant for truth and fierce loyalty to truth is one that always could be highlighted when one considers Gandhi. Perhaps no Philosopher would like to dispute that. Truth is what all seek and want above everything. There can be no compromise on that. The problem is with the perception of Truth. Here the problem of relativity comes in. Is relativity itself to be looked at with askance by any one of us? After all is not relativity part of our experience? Even in the field of Science relativity has an honoured place and Einstein has given his general and special theory of relativity. It has been practical enough to make space travel possible. Relativity as Gandhi sees is perception of truth. He is particular in saying that we cannot have and hold absolute truth on this side of life. What we are given is to perceive and reach out to partial truths but to that extent it is valuable and not nothing! This also gives him the much needed flexibility in his life. Many of his thoughts along this line could be used in the field of a philosophy of religions, as he himself seems to have used given the context of his activity during the independence struggle. The same situation exists in today's fundamentalists' agenda of trying to impose one religion in our country under the guise of loyalty to one's culture or country. Gandhi's reflections could be used to good advantage here. At times he appeared to change his opinion. He was not averse to it because truth as we perceive changes according to the given circumstances and situations, but what remains unchanged is the élan towards the fullness of truth.

His *ahimsa*, love, tolerance, all flow from such a perception and they have their lasting value given the current trend of intransigence of fundamentalist programme. We need not break one another's head on issues be they religious, political, social or economical. Paul Grimley Kuntz has his own understanding of Gandhi. He calls Gandhi's project as a

anger. Added to all these the fact was that Gandhi had appealed to the Viceroy to intervene. He should have rather appealed to Virawala the concerned person responsible for the injustice. The result was failure. Gandhi apologized and withdrew his *Satyagraha* there. Cf. *CW* LXIX (1939), nr.209, pp. 168-171; also nr.231, pp. 191-194.

³⁷ *CW* XII (1913-14),nr.161, p. 238; *CW* XLIV (1930), nr.273, pp. 264-265; *CW* XXXIII (1927), nr.125, p.127; *CW* XLVIII (1931-32), nr.259, pp. 405-406; *CW* XXXVI (1928), nr.478, pp. 398-410.

“welcoming of being”. He says he coined this expression because he wanted to capture Gandhi’s meaning without constantly repeating his own words (unfortunately I have done this repeatedly in this paper). He understands by this expression “welcoming of being” as a fundamental concern of Gandhi for all that “is” i.e., for “being” itself. Whatever “is” is his concern.³⁸

Thus we notice how Gandhi’s thoughts could be incorporated well into our Ontology, Epistemology and Ethics, though Gandhi himself would have smiled at our naivety. He was essentially, as he calls himself in his autobiography: “an Experimenter with Truth.”

³⁸ Cf. Paul Grimley Kuntz, *Gandhi’s Truth*, in IPQ 22 (1982), pp.141-155.

REFLECTIVE EQUILIBRIUM

A Philosophical Method with a Difference

George Karuvelil, SJ

Reflective equilibrium, or more accurately, wide reflective equilibrium, is a method that is “at the cutting edge of philosophy, that has had both considerable acceptance, and considerable... rejection”, says one of its proponents.¹ A method is a way, a procedure or mode of doing anything. Reflective equilibrium, then, is a way of doing philosophy or a manner of proceeding in philosophy. Originally proposed by Nelson Goodman for justifying inductive and deductive principles of logic, this method has been further developed and utilized by John Rawls in his ethical theory.² Presently it is used in many different areas of philosophy such as ethics, social and political philosophy, philosophy of science and epistemology. Its advocates include Kai Nielsen and Richard Rorty. This paper is based primarily on Rawls and Nielsen.

1. What is Reflective Equilibrium?

The first thing to be said about reflective equilibrium is that it is a method of justification. The distinction between discovery and justification comes to us from Reichenbach, and I think it is generally conceded today that whether in science or philosophy there is no method of discovery as such. While certain conditions might be conducive to discovery, insight or forming of appropriate hypotheses, no method will necessarily lead to an insight. Discovery, in other words, is a matter of individual genius, sometimes a matter of coincidence and plain luck. Justification of an insight or a system of beliefs or practices is a different matter altogether. Michael Buckley gives a fairly good example that brings out this difference. The empirical need for irrigating the Nile Delta, he says, may have been the social and economic occasion that gave rise to the early geometries, but this agricultural genesis is irrelevant as far the truth the geometrical theorems are concerned.³ Similarly one could point out Erikson’s psychoanalytic study of Martin Luther—showing that Luther’s image of God, a replica of his, the father who could not be satisfied with anything done by the children—as a case of the psychological origins that tell us nothing about the validity or otherwise regarding such an image of God.⁴

Once we recognize this distinction between discovery and justification, the next thing to note is that reflective equilibrium is meant to be a method of justification, and not of discovery. As a procedure of justification, reflective equilibrium is coherentist and not

¹ Nielsen, Kai. *Naturalism without Foundations*. New York: Prometheus Books, 1996, p.13

² Rawls, John. *A Theory of Justice*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971.

³ Buckley, Michael, S.J. *At the Origins of Modern Atheism*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990, 31

⁴ Erikson, Erik H. *Young Man Luther: A Study in Psycho-Analysis and History*. New York: Norton Library, 1962.

foundationalist in its approach. Foundationalists believe that we must get hold of some truths or principles that are absolute and unchanging, principles that are self-evident or self-justifying. The foundationalist manner of proceeding in philosophy, then, consisted in isolating such self-evident principles and then building up a whole worldview or a system of philosophy on the basis of such absolute truths. The Cartesian cogito is a typical example of such self-evident principle; so are the empiricists' sensations, Kantian categories and principles, etc. It was the hope of the modern philosophers that they can identify enough of such free-floating principles that stand on their own, independently of all other beliefs, and then proceed to build up their philosophy on that basis. These two are the characteristic marks of foundational beliefs. One, they are free-floating, in the sense that such beliefs are independent of all other beliefs; they stand on their own. They don't need to be justified by any other beliefs. Second, they justify all other beliefs; and hence the name, foundationalism. In other words, the foundationalists contend that the justificatory relationship between beliefs in a philosophical system is a unilinear or one-way relationship: the foundational beliefs justifying the foundational beliefs and never vice versa.

The coherentists contest both these claims. They say that our beliefs are not stand-alone items that can be bought at the philosophical or cultural supermarket. Our beliefs are interdependent sets that come together. Not only are they interdependent, but their dependence is not a one-way relationship of some beliefs justifying the others and never in the opposite direction. Their relationship, rather, is mutual. There are no foundations and superstructures, but only webs and rafts. Rafts, that is the key imagery of coherentism whereas the imagery that best captures the foundationalist mode of justification is the pyramid.⁵ According to the raft imagery that comes from the positivist philosopher Otto Neurath, we are all like sailors afloat in the open sea. We do not have the option of being able to get off the boat of our beliefs so that we can begin to build one from firm foundations. Since we cannot get off the boats, we always need some planks to stand on while repairing others. But no planks are permanently immune to repairs. We continue to sail, not because there is any possibility of getting to the shore and acquiring a leak-proof boat nor because there are some permanently secure planks for the boat but because there is always the possibility of standing on some planks, however temporarily, while repairing others. In other words, the body of our beliefs do not rest on permanent and solid foundations, but on mutual relationships between beliefs. Some beliefs may be more prone to revision than others; but there may not be any beliefs that are totally immune to revision. The idea of reflective equilibrium is further development of this coherentist mode of justification.

2. History

Nelson Goodman, while giving a justification for the deductive principles of logic, suggested that a particular deduction is justified by its conformity with deductive principles; these principles, in turn, are justified by their conformity with accepted deductive practice. Justification of inferences and principles, then, emerge in a process of mutual adjustment: principles will be revised if they bring about inferences we cannot accept, and particular

⁵ Sosa, Ernest. "The Raft and the Pyramid: Coherence Versus Foundations in the Theory of Knowledge." In *Human Knowledge: Classical and Contemporary Approaches*, edited by Paul Moser and Arnold van der Nat, 309-24. Oxford: OUP, 1987

inferences will be rejected when they conflict with rules we are unwilling to revise. Neither principles nor inferences have a privileged position. Both are open to revision and fallibility is the name of the game.

John Rawls expanded this method by showing its applicability in ethics. According to him, an inquiry into ethical theory begins with our considered moral judgements. Considered judgements are those about which we are confident that they are free from common sources of error such as ignorance of facts and emotional disturbance. In cases we are likely to be prejudiced or where our own interests are involved, for example, we take extra care to see that our judgements are not excessively influenced by such factors. Religious intolerance and caste discrimination for example, we take to be unjust. And this conviction would be a considered judgement when we can negatively answer the question whether the basis of our judgement is the fact that we belong to a disadvantaged religion or caste and would have judged differently if we belonged to a dominant religion or caste. From such considered convictions we move on to consider the principle or principles that would bring our considered convictions into a coherent set. If a particular judgement fails to be compatible with a moral principle that is supported by many other considered judgements, that (problematic) particular judgement will have to be modified—or even excised, as a last resort—until it is consistent with the rest. The relationship between particular convictions and principles, however, is not a one way relationship as in the foundational approach. Rather than choosing principles that match our considered convictions we could also proceed in the other direction: from non-controversial principles to particular judgements. “The general idea”, says Kai Nielsen, “is to shuttle back and forth between particular moral judgements, general principles, medium-level moral rules, and moral practices, modifying and pruning, until we have gained what we have good reason to believe is the most consistent and coherent pattern at the time... When this is attained, a reflective equilibrium has been attained.”⁶

Something similar can also be said about science. Scientific method could begin with observed anomalies to finding solutions to them in laws and/or theories or from general theories to their observational consequences. In either case, justification could be seen as a matter of bringing theories, laws and observations into a reflective equilibrium. Although Popper does not use this new terminology of reflective equilibrium, it is obvious that he had something similar in mind when he said:

Science does not rest upon solid bedrock. The bold structure of its theories rises, as it were, above a swamp. It is like a building erected on piles. The piles are driven down from above into the swamp, but not down to any natural or 'given' base; and if we stop driving the piles deeper, it is not because we have reached firm ground. We simply stop when we are satisfied that the piles are firm enough to carry the structure, at least for the time being.⁷

Rawls tells us why this method is called by that name. This is an “equilibrium because at last our principles and judgements coincide; and it is reflective since we know to what principles our judgements conform and the premises of their derivation.”⁸ He goes on to draw a

⁶ Nielsen, p. 14

⁷ Karl Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, (London: Hutchinson, 1968), p.111. First published, 1959).

⁸ Rawls, p. 20

distinction between narrow and wide reflective equilibrium. When a set of principles and considered judgements have been brought into coherence through a process of mutual adjustment, it is considered to be only a narrow reflective equilibrium. A wide reflective equilibrium, in contrast, is achieved when alternatives to the conception accepted in narrow equilibrium have been considered and philosophical arguments have been put forth as to why one conception is better than another. What is significant about wide reflective equilibrium is that even if we are considering just one area of philosophy, say morals, we need to consider not only about achieving coherence of moral principles and judgements, but also think in terms of the larger coherence between moral philosophy and other background beliefs such as our scientific and metaphysical beliefs regarding human persons, for example. In other words, what is at stake in wide reflective equilibrium is not merely a coherent set of beliefs in one's favoured area of speciality, but the coherence of one's entire worldview. It is such wide reflective equilibrium that is pursued by Rawls and Nielsen.

3. Characteristics

The idea of wide reflective equilibrium enables us to see why this method is not restricted to any one area of philosophy. We have already seen how it is applied in philosophies of logic, morality and science. It is so widely applicable because this method is in keeping with the very nature of philosophy as a second order activity. Although it is the analytic philosophers who have popularized the idea of philosophy as a second order activity, this understanding is in keeping with the idea of philosophy that has come down to us at least from the time of Socrates. While other Athenians were busy judging certain actions to be virtuous or just, Socrates busied himself not with the morality of particular actions (first order activity) but with the basis for judging any action to be moral (second order activity). Justification, as opposed to discovery, is typically this kind of second order activity that examines the rationality of what is being done in (or believed about) the first order. Since it is so much in keeping with the very nature of philosophy, it becomes widely applicable in different areas of philosophy.

Wide reflective equilibrium, in fact, is the actual way in which we go about doing philosophy. Unlike the Cartesian invention of an Archimedean point from which you can build up the whole edifice of one's beliefs, reflective equilibrium is an articulation of a "pervasive bit of common sense". It is a "more precise and somewhat more pedantic articulation of a common sense way of doing things, ...though typically unself-consciously..."⁹ Unlike the modern foundationalists, people do not ordinarily look for absolutely certain, unshakeable stand-alone beliefs to build other beliefs upon. Rather, at any given time there is a whole body of beliefs within which doubts arise and are settled. As Wittgenstein observed, the very activity of doubting pre-supposes certainty.¹⁰ This method differs from pure coherentist theories in this respect that not any coherent set of beliefs would be counted as justified; it is a set of considered judgements that we seek to bring into an equilibrium and not any set of beliefs. Kai Nielsen gives the case of Christian Science as an

⁹ Nielsen, 13

¹⁰ See for example, Wittgenstein, *On Certainty*, ed. G.E.M. Anscombe and G.H. von Wright, tr. Denis Paul and G.E.M. Anscombe (New York/Evanston: J. & J. Harper Editions, 1969), p. 337, 105 etc.

example of pure coherentist theory, justified purely on the basis of making a consistent system.¹¹

As a general method of doing philosophy, wide reflective equilibrium accommodates both the Socratic (critical) and Platonic (systematic) moments in philosophy. By Socratic moment I mean the prophetic moment of criticism, the moment of unsettling the settled and the comforted. This is meant to awaken people from their complacency and make them question their accustomed ways of thinking and behaving. Wide reflective equilibrium, while agreeing fully with the anti-foundationalist thinking that we cannot jump our own shadows and escape our culture and history, maintains this Socratic moment and would not permit us to remain uncritically with our initial convictions that we cannot avoid starting with.¹² In the hands of lesser mortals than Socrates, however, this Socratic moment can be made into an act of intellectual terror: it takes only a single bomb and one determined individual to cause havoc in a whole society. When that happens it does not lead to an alternative or better vision, but is content with destroying the old. It is for this reason that Socrates must be accompanied (or followed) by Plato; the critical followed by the visionary. This creative moment calls for systematic thinking where one tries to bring one's various beliefs and activities into a coherent whole. It is this latter moment—the creative, systematic moment—that I refer to as the Platonic moment. Going beyond criticizing our settled ways of thinking and acting, the Platonic moment offers an alternative vision. Wide reflective equilibrium, since it seeks to bring about a coherence of beliefs, cannot but provide a systematic account of one's world-view.

Another feature of this method is its dynamic character. The equilibrium that is achieved may only be temporary. There is no such thing as a final or once and for all equilibrium that needs never be revised. New facts or other considerations that had not entered into the picture can upset the equilibrium that has been achieved. Once the equilibrium is upset, the process of justification needs to be done again and a new synthesis brought about. "Fallibilism is the name of the game", remarks Nielsen.¹³ But he goes on to say that this is not a form of scepticism because when we have achieved a reflective equilibrium even for a period, we would have justification for believing one conception rather than another. He considers wide reflective equilibrium to be a method that enables us to dispense with the hopeless search for Absolutes and Archimedean points without ending up with relativism, subjectivism nihilism or scepticism.¹⁴

4. Implications for Indian Christian Philosophizing

What does it all amounts to in terms of Indian Christian philosophising? To begin with, let us note that this method brings Western philosophy closer to Indian philosophy in two ways. First, when taken as an approach to logic and inference, it is in perfect accord with Indian logic that does not make a sharp distinction between inductive and deductive logic and is both inductive and deductive at the same time. Secondly, as a general method of philosophising wide reflective equilibrium would lead to the Indian understanding of

¹¹ Nielsen, 17.

¹² Nielsen, p.17

¹³ Nielsen, 15.

¹⁴ Nielsen, 19.

philosophy as *darsana*, a world-view, that permits other competing world-views to emerge and co-exist. This perhaps requires some explanation. Traditional Western understanding of philosophy is in terms of a foundational science. The basic idea, crudely put, is that while physics (science) gives us truth about this changing world, metaphysics goes beyond physics and gives us the unchanging, ultimate truth on which physics is dependent. As unchanging and eternal verities they are supposed to provide such universal knowledge as is indispensable for all, or at least for all rational beings. It is for this reason that we find various Western thinkers, whether it be Kant in the eighteenth century or the logical positivists in the twentieth, complaining about the scandal of philosophy: that philosophers can't agree among themselves, unlike in logic (Kant) or science (logical positivists). The Indian approach, on the other hand, claims philosophy to be basically a vision, a world-view, which may not be accepted by all since others might have other priorities in life and accordingly other belief-systems. Thus, all the six orthodox schools and the two heterodox schools are readily acknowledged to be *darsanas* without any hesitation. This understanding of philosophy is close to the actual practice whereas the Western understanding of philosophy providing eternal and universal truths does not cohere with the actual practice of Western philosophy itself.

Reflective equilibrium, because it combines within itself both the Socratic and Platonic moments of philosophy, has its implications for religious philosophy, whether Christian or non-Christian, Indian or Western. It is in the very nature of religious beliefs to influence the whole of one's life, and not remain as one segment of life. Philosophically, it means having to acknowledge the Platonic moment to see how one's religious beliefs fit into the rest of one's beliefs and seeing the fit of this whole web of beliefs into the web of life. The Platonic moment in reflective equilibrium would lead in this direction, unlike the postmodern style of philosophizing that has a pathological aversion to systematic thinking. While one can understand the reason why those coming from a dogmatic background—whether it be Catholicism, Judaism or positivist analytic philosophy—are attracted by the liberating influence of the free-floating flux of postmodern thinking, it has also an unfortunate effect on philosophy of religion: It leaves the use of reason and arguments in religious matters to its opponents like Antony Flew and Kai Nielsen. This malady can be remedied by using the method of reflective equilibrium.

If philosophising is a matter of bringing about a coherent world-view, the outcome of philosophising activity depends on what goes into it. We might call it the GiGo-WiWo (gibberish-in, gibberish out; wisdom-in, wisdom-out) principle. Therefore, if Indian and Christian beliefs are present among the initial beliefs that are sought to be brought into coherence, one can naturally expect the output to have an Indian and Christian flavour. This, of course, is assuming that the Indian and Christian components do not get eliminated in the process of bringing about an equilibrium. This is a reasonable assumption because as long as there are thinkers who have considered convictions that are both Indian and Christian, such beliefs are not likely to be excised from the final outcome, although modifications and adjustments may have to be made in the process of bringing about a reflective equilibrium, especially a wide reflective equilibrium.

There are certain corollaries that follow from the GiGo-WiWo principle. First, unlike the Thomism, reflective equilibrium will have no ambitions of being able to prove the existence of a Christian God from principles about the natural world or cosmological premises. It will have learnt from Pascal that a God who can be logically proved from

cosmological premises would be an Aristotelian God (“God of philosophers”) and not the God of the Bible or of Christian faith. On the other hand, reflective equilibrium is very unlike the fideistic position, in as much it makes room for the Socratic moment in philosophy. A second corollary is that there cannot be any genuine Indian Christian philosophy unless and until Indian and Christian beliefs go into the processor that brings about the reflective equilibrium. In other words, while an Indian Christian philosopher needs to keep himself updated in Western philosophical trends, such familiarity will have no immediate application to Indian Christian philosophy until those Western trends find an echo in the Indian hearts. This needs to be emphasized because Indian Christian philosophers, because of their own educational background as well as the dominance of Western thinking in Christian doctrines and practice, often think of the latest Western trend as the immediate solution to Indian problems. On the other hand, finding an echo in the Indian heart does not mean repeating classical Indian philosophy. Rather, it means that a Western trend must either reinforce some native insight or pose a prophetic challenge to some of its oversights. In either case, the result would be a creative synthesis, a fusion of three different horizons: Hebrew-Christian, Greco-Roman, and Indian.

Finally, we must also be aware of the limitations of this method. Since it is based on the GiGo-WiWo principle, the outcome is purely dependent on what goes into it. In the words of Rawls, the notion of reflective equilibrium “varies depending upon whether one is to be presented with only those descriptions which more or less match one’s existing judgments except for minor discrepancies, or whether one is to be presented with all possible descriptions to which one might plausibly conform one’s judgements together with all relevant philosophical arguments for them.”¹⁵ It is this limitation of the method that permits an atheistic philosopher like Nielsen to argue for excising of religious beliefs from our worldview, whereas a believer might come up with the opposite conclusion by following the same method. The only remedy for this limitation is to go for as wide a reflective equilibrium as possible. Therefore, Rawls would say that reflective equilibrium is “a point at infinity we can never reach, though we may get closer to it...”¹⁶ While recognizing that the remedy consists in as many and as varied descriptions as possible into our synthesis, Rawls’ suggestion to consider it a point at infinity seems mistaken to me. It is a mistaken view of things because the underlying assumption is that of a pre-determined universe independent of human activity, to which our conceptions can eventually approximate. As opposed to this one could believe in an indeterminate and multifaceted universe, all of which cannot be brought under one coherent conception and there would always be considerable leeway in the choice of one’s worldview (philosophy). This means there would be no one perfect equilibrium to be reached even at infinity or in the *eschaton*. And this is what makes different *darsanas* possible. This is precisely the insight of Wittgensteinian philosophers of religion like D.Z. Phillips: that all horizons cannot be fused together since they involve incompatible values and forms of life.¹⁷ Even when there is an agreement in the forms of life, building of equilibrium will remain a never-ending task that needs to be done again and again whenever there are significant shifts and changes in a culture and life-world. And this is precisely the task of an Indian Christian philosophy for our times.

¹⁵ Rawls, 49

¹⁶ Rawls, “Reply to Habermas,” cited in Nielsen, p.20 n. 10

¹⁷ See for example, D.Z. Phillips, *Faith after Foundationalism: Critiques and Alternatives*. San Francisco; Oxford: Westview Press, 1988.

THE METHOD OF THE SUBALTERNS

A Study Based on Paulo Freire and Ambedkar

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We are in an age of development, and all human beings yearn for growth. But the subalterns of various hues have been a group, who are kept under constant suppression, and down through the centuries they have found themselves unable to express their grievances, and deepest yearnings of theirs have been suppressed. There have been sporadic attempts by some leaders and thinkers to uplift the downtrodden, as that of Marx, the various liberation movements in many continents. Yet the sad fact remains that they have been always dealt a hard blow by the governments and the upper classes and castes. Even there have been occasions when they were considered equal to or below the beasts. All preaching and philosophy has remained on the ideal level, the theory has rarely resulted in praxis. Marx, the great ideologue had lived the ideal and called his followers to strive to live that ideal in the best way possible. But the sad fact remains Marxists have betrayed Marx, just as Christians have betrayed Christ. In this paper we shall deal with the strategies needed for the subalterns to express themselves and to attain to their growth as humans, and we shall exemplify some of the movements that have employed a similar strategy or strategies. We shall look at the non-Brahmin movements, and the Ambedkerian revolt, and their contribution in this light.

The Strategies Needed for the Subalterns

In this section we intend to analyse what strategies may be employed by the subalterns for their conscientization, revolt and development. One of the reasons for the lack of growth and development of the subalterns was that they were kept suppressed, and for long they had not evolved any strategies of revolt. In the Latin American countries there have been many attempts at the conscientization of the poor and downtrodden, especially the peasants. To some extent we will be drawing inspiration¹ from them to find out what strategy may be useful and effective.

The first thing needed is the recognition of dehumanization at work, not only as an ontological possibility but also as a historical reality. Dehumanization, which marks not only those whose humanity has been stolen, but also those who have stolen it, is a distortion of the vocation of becoming more fully human. This distortion occurs within history; but it is not an historical vocation, because to accept dehumanization as an historical vocation would lead either to cynicism or total despair. Otherwise, the struggle for humanization, for the emancipation of labour, for the overcoming of alienation, for the affirmation of men as persons would be meaningless. This struggle is possible only because dehumanization, although a concrete historical fact, is not a given destiny but the result of an unjust order that engenders violence in the oppressors, which in turn dehumanizes the oppressed. The oppressed have a great historical task to perform: to liberate themselves and their oppressors as well. The oppressors, who oppress, exploit, and rape by virtue of their power, cannot find

¹ As all know Paulo Freire has contributed a lot through his pedagogy of the oppressed for the development of a strategy for the oppressed. We shall base ourselves on his book: *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* for chalking out a strategy needed for the subalterns.

in this power the strength to liberate either the oppressed or themselves. Only power that springs from the weakness of the oppressed will be sufficiently strong to free both. Any attempt to 'soften' the power of the oppressor in deference to the weakness of the oppressed almost always manifests itself in the form of false generosity; the attempt stops at this. In order to have the continued opportunity to express their 'generosity', the oppressors must perpetuate injustice as well. An unjust social order is the permanent fount of this 'generosity', which is nourished by death, despair, and poverty.²

True generosity consists precisely in fighting to destroy the causes, which nourish false charity. False charity constrains the fearful and subdued, the 'rejects of life', to extend their trembling hands. Real generosity lies in striving so that those hands need to be extended less and less in supplication, so that more and more they become human hands which work and, by working, transform the world. Only those who suffer the effects of oppression, the oppressed can really understand the necessity of liberation. It will not be defined by chance but through the praxis of their quest for it, through recognizing the necessity to fight for it. And this fight because of the purpose given to it by the oppressed, will actually constitute an act of love opposing lovelessness, which lies at the heart of the oppressors' violence, lovelessness even when clothed in false generosity. But in the initial stage of the struggle, the oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, tend themselves to become oppressors, or 'sub-oppressors'. The very structure of their thought has been conditioned by the contradictions of the concrete, existential situation by which they were shaped. Indeed, their ideal is to be men; but for them, to be a 'man' is to be an oppressor. This has become their model of humanity. This phenomenon derives from the fact that the oppressed, at a certain moment of their existential experience, adopt an attitude of 'adherence' to the oppressor. The oppressed have found in the oppressor their model of 'manhood'. One of the basic elements of the relationship between oppressor and oppressed is *prescription*. Every prescription represents the imposition of one man's choice of upon another, transforming the consciousness of the man prescribed into one that conforms to the prescriber's consciousness. Thus, the behaviour of the oppressed is a prescribed behaviour, following as it does the guidelines of the oppressor. The oppressed, having internalized the image of the oppressor and adopted his guidelines, are fearful of freedom. Freedom would require them to eject this image and replace it with autonomy and responsibility. Freedom is acquired by conquest, not by gift. It is an indispensable and inalienable condition for the quest of human completion.³

The oppressed suffer from the duality, which establishes itself in their innermost being. They discover that without freedom they cannot exist authentically; yet although they desire authentic existence, they fear it. They are at one and the same time themselves and the oppressor whose consciousness they have internalized. The pedagogy of liberation has to be forged *with*, not *for*, the oppressed in the incessant struggle to regain their humanity. How will the oppressed participate in the developing pedagogy of their liberation? Only as they discover themselves to be 'hosts' of the oppressor can they contribute to the midwifery of their liberating pedagogy. As long as they live in the duality where to be is to be like, and to be like is to be like the oppressor, this contribution is impossible. The pedagogy of the oppressed helps them to discover that they and their oppressors are manifestations of

² Paulo Freire, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, London: Penguin Books, 1990 (reprint), pp. 20-21.

³ Cf. *Ibid.* pp. 21-25.

dehumanization. Liberation is thus a childbirth, and a painful one. The human being who emerges is new, viable only as the oppressor-oppressed contradiction is superceded by the humanization of all. This perception is necessary, but not a sufficient condition by itself for liberation; it must become the motivating force for liberating action. Even an individual oppressor may feel sorry for being an oppressor, but it does not necessarily lead to solidarity with the oppressed. Solidarity requires that one enters into the situation of those with whom one is identifying; it is a radical posture. The pedagogy of the oppressed being a humanist and libertarian pedagogy, has two distinct stages: one, the oppressed unveil the world of oppression and through the praxis commit themselves to its transformation. Second, it is a stage in which the reality of oppression has already been transformed, this pedagogy ceases to belong to the oppressed and becomes pedagogy for all human beings in the process of permanent liberation. In the first stage the pedagogy must deal with the problem of the consciousness of the oppressed and the oppressor. This change of consciousness is not an easy task especially from the part of the oppressor, for whom money is the measure of all things, and profit the primary goal. For the oppressors what is worthwhile is to have more even at the cost of the oppressed having less or having nothing. For them *to be* is *to have*, and thus to belong to the 'having' class. They are not able to perceive that, in the egoistic pursuit of having as a possessing class, they get suffocated in their own possessions and no longer *are*; they merely *have*. Having more is seen as an inalienable right. The oppressors do not perceive their monopoly of *having more* as a privilege, which dehumanizes others and themselves. They blame the others for not making use of the opportunities for having more. The oppressors have a sort of sadistic love, which is a perverted love—a love of death and not of life. One of the characteristics of the oppressor consciousness and its necrophilic view of the world is sadism. Making use of science and technology the oppressor tries to maintain the oppressive order through manipulation and repression. The oppressed have no rights because they have become 'objects', which can be manipulated.⁴

Those who are committed to the people need to re-examine themselves constantly. This conversion is radical as not to allow for ambivalent behaviour. Conversion to the people requires a profound rebirth; it is a new form of existence. This conversion requires constant engaging in reflection. When the situation calls for action, that action will constitute an authentic praxis; only its consequences become the object of critical reflection. In this sense, the praxis is the new *raison d'être* of the oppressed; and the revolution, which inaugurates the historical moment of this *raison d'être*, is not viable apart from their concomitant conscious involvement. It is also essential to realize that when the oppressed accept the struggle for humanization they also accept, from that moment, their total responsibility for the struggle. They must realize that they are fighting not merely for freedom from hunger, but as Eric Fromm would put it: "... freedom to create and to construct, to wonder and to venture. Such freedom requires that the individual be active and responsible, not a slave or a well-fed cog in the machine... It is not enough that men are not slaves; if social conditions further the existence of automatons, the result will not be love of life, but love of death."⁵ The oppressed, who have been shaped by the death-affirming climate of oppression, must find through their struggle the way to life-affirming humanization, and this does not lie simply in having more to eat. In order to gain their humanity, the oppressed must cease to be things and fight as human beings. They cannot enter the struggle as objects in order *later* to become

⁴ Cf. Ibid. pp. 25-36.

⁵ Eric Fromm, *The Heart of Man*, as quoted by Paulo Freire, p. 43.

human beings. The struggle begins with men's recognition that they have been destroyed. Propaganda, management, manipulation cannot be the instruments of their re-humanization. The only effective instrument is a humanizing pedagogy in which the revolutionary leadership establishes a permanent relationship of dialogue with the oppressed. A revolutionary leadership must accordingly practice *co-intentional* education. This involves a continuous common reflection and action; this will lead to true participation and committed involvement.⁶

For the liberation to be effective there should be **liberative education**. Present day education according Freire suffers from *narration sickness*. The aim of education is to fill the students with contents of the narration. Education thus becomes a 'depositing'; hence he calls it 'banking concept of education'. Such a banking concept does not admit of partnership. The banking concept of education, which is marked by sonority of words, serves the purpose of the oppressor, is also necrophilic. In opposition to banking education we can think of problem posing education, which will bring about a resolution of the teacher-student contradiction. In such an education what is most important is *dialogue*, and through dialogue such a contradiction is overcome, and that is reconciliation. The method of banking education and problem-posing education are mutually opposed. Banking education attempts, by mythicizing reality, to conceal certain facts, which explain the way the humans exist in the world; problem-posing education sets itself the task of de-mythologization. Banking education resists dialogue; problem-posing education regards dialogue as indispensable to the act of cognition, which unveils reality. Banking education treats students as objects of assistance; problem-posing education makes them critical thinkers. Banking education inhibits creativity and domesticates the *intentionality* of consciousness by isolating consciousness from the world, thereby denying the humans their ontological and historical vocation of becoming more fully human. Problem-posing education bases itself on creativity and stimulates true reflection and action upon reality, thereby responding to the vocation of the humans as beings who are authentic only when engaged in inquiry and creative transformation. Thus true education is constantly remade in the praxis. In order to *be* it must *become*. Its 'duration' is found in the interplay of the opposites *permanence* and *change*. The banking method emphasizes permanence and becomes reactionary; problem-posing education roots itself in the dynamic present and becomes revolutionary. Problem-posing education is revolutionary futurity; hence it is prophetic, and so corresponds to the historical nature of man. There results a deepened consciousness of their situation, which leads the humans to apprehend their situation as an historical reality susceptible of transformation. Resignation, which is the result of banking education, gives way to the drive for transformation and inquiry, over which human beings feel themselves in control. The movement of inquiry should be directed towards humanization—human being's historical vocation. Such a pursuit of full humanity cannot be carried out in isolation, but only in fellowship and solidarity; therefore it cannot be unfolded in the antagonistic relations between oppressors and the oppressed. Problem-posing education cannot serve the interests of the oppressor, because no oppressive order would permit the oppressed to begin to question: why? In the revolutionary process, the leaders cannot utilize the banking method as interim measure, justified on grounds of expediency, with the intention of *later* behaving in a genuinely revolutionary fashion. They must be revolutionary—that is to say, dialogical from the outset. It is only through such an education the oppressed can initiate the revolutionary process. Hence proper education becomes a very important strategy.⁷

⁶ Cf. Freire, pp. 36-44

For the oppressed to be liberated, they need a true praxis—an action and reflection process. This is the meaning of Lenin’s statement: “Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement.” Revolutionary praxis must stand opposed to the praxis of the dominant elites, for they are by nature antithetical. Revolutionary praxis cannot tolerate an absurd dichotomy in which the praxis of the people is merely that of following the leader’s decisions—a dichotomy reflecting the prescriptive methods of the dominant elites. It is a unity, and in this praxis the leaders cannot treat the oppressed as their possession. Manipulation, sloganizing, ‘depositing’, regimentation, and prescription cannot be components of revolutionary praxis, precisely because they are components of the praxis of domination. It is absolutely essential that the oppressed participate in the revolutionary process with an increasingly critical awareness of their role as *Subjects* of the transformation. Dialogue with the people is radically necessary to every authentic revolution. This is what makes it a revolution, as distinguished from a military *coup*. One does not expect dialogue from a *coup*—only deceit (in order to achieve ‘legitimacy’) or force (in order to repress). Sooner or later, a true revolution must initiate a courageous dialogue with the people; its very legitimacy lies in this dialogue. In this praxis one cannot speak of an *actor*, nor simply of *actors*, but rather of *actors in intercommunication*. Denial of communion in the revolutionary process, avoidance of dialogue with the people under the pretext of organizing them, of strengthening revolutionary power, or of ensuring a united front, is really a fear of freedom. It is fear of or lack of faith in the people, and if people cannot be trusted, there is no reason for liberation; in this case the revolution is not even carried out *for the people*, but ‘*by*’ *the people for the leaders*: a complete self-negation. The revolution is made neither by the leaders for the people, nor by the people for the leaders, but by both acting together in unshakeable solidarity. This solidarity is born only when the leaders witness to it by their humble, loving, and courageous encounter with the people. Scientific revolutionary humanism cannot believe in the myth of the ignorance of the people; for the absolutizing of ignorance is one of the myths of the oppressor ideology. The revolutionary process is dynamic, and it is in this continuing dynamics, in the praxis of the people with the revolutionary leaders, that the people and the leaders will learn both dialogue and the use of power. Dialogue with the people is neither a concession nor a gift, much less a tactic to be used for domination; it is the encounter among the humans to ‘name’ the world, a fundamental precondition for their true humanization.⁸

In a society that is trying to engage in revolutionary action there will be anti-dialogical and dialogical action. For a revolutionary praxis to be effective these anti-dialogical methods are to be recognized and rooted out by the dialogical process. First let us look at the anti-dialogical methods that will be employed by the oppressors, and then proceed to analyse the correctives that are to be applied through dialogical cultural action. The first method that will be employed by the oppressors will be **Conquest**. Conquest becomes a necessity for anti-dialogical action. The anti-dialogical man, in his relations with other human beings, aims at conquering them—increasingly and by every means, from the toughest to the most refined, from the most repressive to the most solicitous (paternalism). It is necessary for the oppressors to approach the people in order to keep them passive via subjugation. This approximation does not involve *being with* the people, or require true communication. It is

⁷ See Ibid. pp. 45-59.

⁸ Cf. Ibid. pp. 96-107

accomplished by the oppressors' depositing myths indispensable to the preservation of the status quo: for example, the myth that the oppressive order is a free society, that there is equality for all men, that anyone with initiative climb any rung in the ladder of the society, etc.⁹ The myths, that rebellion is a sin against God, that right to private property is fundamental to human development (as long as the oppressors are the only true human beings), that the oppressors are industrious while the oppressed are lazy and dishonest, that the oppressed are naturally inferior but the oppressors are superior, are made use of to perpetuate oppression. The dominant elites of today, like those of any epoch, continue to conquer others—with or without bread and circuses. The content and methods of conquest may vary historically; what does not vary is the necrophilic passion to oppress.

Another method that the oppressors employ is the **Divide and Rule** policy. Although the oppressors are a minority, they dominate and subordinate the majority, it must divide it and keep it divided in order to remain in power. The minority cannot permit itself the luxury of tolerating the unification of the people, which would undoubtedly signify a serious threat to their hegemony. Any action, which even in incipient fashion could awaken the oppressed to the need for unity, will be halted and suppressed by the oppressors by employing any method including violence. Concepts such as unity, organization, and struggle, are immediately labeled as dangerous, indeed, they are dangerous to oppressors, for their realization is necessary to actions of liberation. Also the notion of *class conflict* upsets the oppressors very much, since they do not wish to consider themselves an oppressive class. Unable to deny this they preach the need for understanding and harmony. But the unconcealable antagonism that lurks between the two classes makes this 'harmony' impossible.¹⁰ Dividing in order to preserve the status quo, then, is necessarily fundamental objective of the theory of anti-dialogical action. Also, the dominators try to present themselves as saviours of those whom they dehumanize and divide. This messianism however cannot hide their true intention, namely to protect themselves and their possessions; for the oppressors cannot be *with* the oppressed. A psychoanalysis of the oppressive action wills the 'false generosity' of the oppressor as a dimension of the latter's sense of guilt. With this false generosity, he tries to preserve an unjust and necrophilic order, and to 'buy' peace for himself. In order to keep the status quo intact, it is essential for the oppressors to keep the oppressed from perceiving their strategy. Hence the former must convince the latter that they are being 'defended' against the demonic action of the 'marginals, rowdies, and enemies of God'.¹¹ In order to divide and confuse the people, the destroyers call themselves builders, and accuse the true builders of being destructive. This is a well-manipulated policy, and the oppressed have to be very cautious to fight it, if they want to be liberated.¹²

⁹ The myths of the elites were highly criticized by Pope John XXIII in his encyclical letter *Mater et Magistra*. Even in the helping of the economically poor countries by developed countries there can a lot of hidden agenda, especially to take advantage of the political situation. This according to him is a new type of colonialism, and as we know, we experience such new type colonialism today.

¹⁰ As we know Karl Marx one of those who clearly perceived the class antagonism and class conflict. He insisted on the class struggle, that is between the proletariat and the bourgeois, for the abolition of the classes; his vision was a classless society through the dictatorship of the proletariat.

¹¹ Here we can recall how the scheduled castes in India are divided by the political parties and other oppressive groups. They make them fight each other, and see that their unity is never achieved. The division that exists between *madigas* and *malas* of Andhra Pradesh is a case in point; these are made to oppose each other so that their unity is always kept in abeyance. The political leaders favour a group and offer some special advantages, which act as a bait for the group without realizing that they are being trapped.

¹² Cf. Freire, pp. 108-116.

Manipulation is another strategy employed by the oppressors for conquest. By this the dominant elites try to make the masses conform to their objectives. Within certain historical conditions, manipulation is accomplished by means of pacts between the dominant and the dominated classes—pacts which, if considered superficially, might give the impression of a dialogue between the classes. In reality, these pacts are not dialogue, because their true objectives are determined by the unequivocal interest of the dominant elites. The presence of the people in the historical process, no longer as mere spectators, but with the first signs of aggressiveness, is sufficiently disquieting to frighten the dominant elites into doubling the tactics of manipulation. Prior to the emergence of the people there is no manipulation, but rather total suppression. In the anti-dialogical theory of action, manipulation is the response of the oppressor to the new concrete conditions of the historical process. Through manipulation, the dominant elites can lead the people into an inauthentic type of ‘organization’, and can thus avoid the threatening alternative: the true organization of the emerged and emerging people. One of the methods of manipulation is to inoculate individuals with bourgeois appetite for personal success. This manipulation is sometimes carried out directly by the elites, and sometimes indirectly, through the populist leaders. The real antidote to manipulation lies in a critically conscious revolutionary organization.¹³

Cultural Invasion is yet another fundamental characteristic anti-dialogical action. In this phenomenon, the invaders penetrate the cultural context of another group, and ignoring the potential of the latter, they impose their own view of the world upon those they invade and inhibit the creativity of the invaded by curbing their expression. In cultural invasion the invaders are the authors of, and actors in, the process; those they invade are the objects. All domination involves invasion – at times physical and overt, at times camouflaged, with the invader assuming the roles of a helping friend. In the last analysis, invasion is a form of economic and cultural domination. Cultural conquest leads to the cultural inauthenticity of those who are invaded; they begin to respond to the values, the standards, and the goals of the invaders. In cultural invasion it is essential that those who are invaded come to see their reality with the outlook of the invaders rather than their own; for the more they mimic the invaders, the more stable the position the latter becomes. For the cultural invasion to succeed, it is essential that those invaded become convinced of their intrinsic inferiority. The values of the invaders become the values of the invaded. The more invasion is accentuated and those invaded are alienated from the spirit of their own culture and from themselves, the more the latter want to be like them: to walk like them, dress like them, talk like them. Cultural invasion is on the one hand an instrument of domination, and on the other, the result of domination. For the reclamation of the culture from invasion requires that the revolutionary leaders initiate the ‘cultural revolution’. Cultural revolution takes the total society to be reconstructed, including all human activities, as the object of its remoulding action. It is the revolutionary regime’s maximum effort at conscientization. Cultural invasion, which serves the ends of conquest and the preservation of oppression, always involves a parochial view of reality, a static perception of the world, and imposition of one worldview upon another. It implies the ‘superiority’ of the invader and the ‘inferiority’ of those who are invaded, as well as the imposition of values by the former, who possess the latter and are afraid to lose them. Cultural invasion further signifies that the ultimate seat of decision regarding the action of those who are invaded lies not with them but with the invaders. Although human beings are

¹³ Cf. Ibid. pp. 116-119.

called to develop themselves, when they are submitted to concrete conditions of oppression in which they become alienated ‘beings for another’ of the false ‘being for himself’ on whom they depend, are not able to develop authentically. The oppressed only begin to develop when, surmounting the contradiction in which they are caught, they become ‘beings for themselves’.¹⁴ In order to overcome the anti-dialogical procedures of the oppressors, revolutionary leaders must follow the path of dialogue and communication.

In contrast to the anti-dialogical action, and the techniques employed by the oppressors, which we have briefly described above, now let us consider in a schematic manner the methods to be employed by the revolutionaries for dialogical action. They are co-operation, unity for liberation, organization and cultural synthesis.¹⁵

In the dialogical theory of action, Subjects meet in **cooperation** in order to transform the world. Here there is a meeting of subjects in the form of an intersubjectivity, where an I-Thou relationship rather than I-It relationship permeates. Cooperation, as a characteristic of dialogical action, can only be achieved through communication. Dialogue, as essential communication, must underlie any cooperation. Dialogue does not impose, does not manipulate, does not domesticate, does not ‘sloganize’. For the cooperation to be effective, confidence and trust are necessary. Although trust is basic to dialogue, it is not an *a priori* condition of the latter: it results from the encounter in which human beings are co-Subjects in denouncing the world, as part of the world’s transformation. In dialogical theory, at no stage can revolutionary action forgo *communion* with the people. *Communion* in turn elicits *cooperation*, which brings leaders and people to the *fusion*. This fusion can exist only if revolutionary activity is really human, empathetic, loving communicative and humble, in order to be liberating.

In the anti-dialogical theory of action one of the methods employed by the oppressors was the policy of ‘divide and rule’, but in the dialogical theory the leaders must dedicate themselves to an untiring effort for unity among the oppressed—and unity of the leaders with the oppressed—in order to achieve their liberation. Thus **Unity for Liberation** becomes a necessity. The carrying out a revolutionary liberating praxis on the part of the leaders is not an easy task. The unity of the elite is derived from its *antagonism* with the people; the unity of the revolutionary leadership group grows out of *communion* with the (united) people. To divide the oppressed, an ideology of oppression is indispensable. In contrast, achieving their unity requires a form of cultural action through which they come to know the why and how of their adhesion to reality—it requires a de-ideologizing. The object of dialogical action is to make it possible for the oppressed, by perceiving their adhesion, to opt to transform an unjust reality. In order for the oppressed to unite, they must first cut the umbilical cord of magic and myth, which binds them to the world of oppression; the unity which links them to each other must be of a different nature. To achieve this indispensable unity the revolutionary process must be, from the beginning, cultural action. Cultural action must lead to the clarification of the forms of oppression, which many a time may be ‘invisible’.

¹⁴ See Ibid. pp. 121-130.

¹⁵ The ideas expressed here have been beautifully summed up by Paulo Freire in his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, pp. 135-150.

Organization of the people presents itself as an antagonistic opposition to manipulation. Organization is not only directly linked to unity, but is a natural development of that unity. The leaders' pursuit of unity is necessarily also an attempt to organize the people, requiring witness to the fact the struggle for liberation is a common task. The essential elements of witness which do not vary historically include *consistency* between words and actions, *boldness* which urges the witness to confront existence as a permanent risk, *radicalization* leading both the witness and the ones receiving that witness to increasing action, *courage to love*, and *faith* in the people, since it is to them that witness is made. For the dominant, organization means organizing themselves. For the revolutionary leaders, organization means organizing themselves with the people. The dominant elite increasingly structures its power so that it can more efficiently dominate and depersonalize; but for the revolutionary leaders organization only corresponds to its nature and objective if in itself it constitutes the practice of freedom. Accordingly, the discipline necessary to any organization must not be confused with regimentation. The people are already depersonalized by oppression—if the revolutionary leaders manipulate them, instead of working towards their conscientization, they negate the very objective of organization, i.e., liberation. The dialogical theory of action opposes both authoritarianism and licence, and thereby affirms authority and freedom. Freedom and authority cannot be isolated, but must be considered in relationship to each other. Authentic authority is not affirmed as such by a mere *transfer* of power, but through *delegation* or in sympathetic *adherence*. Authority can avoid conflict with freedom only if it is 'freedom-become-authority'. Just as authority cannot exist without freedom, and vice versa, authoritarianism cannot exist without denying freedom, nor licence without denying authority. Organization is rather a highly educational process in which leaders and people together experience true authority and freedom, which they then seek to establish in society by transforming the reality, which mediates them.

If in the anti-dialogical situation there is cultural invasion, in the dialogical situation there is **Cultural Synthesis**. Cultural action is always systematic and deliberate form of action, which operates upon the social structure, either with the objective of preserving the structure or of transforming it. Cultural action either serves domination, or it serves the liberation of the humans. Cultural synthesis is a mode of action for confronting culture itself, as the preserver of the very structures by which it was formed. Cultural action, as historical action, is an instrument for superseding the dominant alienated and alienating culture. In this sense, every authentic revolution is a cultural revolution. Those who are invaded, whatever be their level, rarely go beyond the models which the invaders prescribe for them. In cultural synthesis there are no invaders; hence, there are no imposed models. In this synthesis, leaders and people are somehow reborn in new knowledge and new action. Knowledge of the alienating culture leads to transforming action resulting in a culture which being freed from alienation. In cultural synthesis it is possible to resolve the contradiction between the world-view of the leaders and that of the people, to the enrichment of both. Such a synthesis does not mean that the objectives of revolutionary action should be limited by the aspirations expressed in the worldview of the people. Neither invasion by the leaders of the people's worldview nor mere adaptation by the leaders to the aspirations of the people is acceptable. Cultural synthesis serves the ends of organization; organization serves the ends of liberation.

By employing the above mentioned methods and other historically conditioned modes of action a society has to fight against the type of oppression that is active in that society.

II. The Non-Brahmin and Dalit Movements

Our aim in this part of the paper is to look at the early movements of protest against the caste exploitation and other forms of protest in ancient and later India. We shall look at these movements from a historical perspective. As brilliantly noted by Antonio Gramsci, no movement can come into being unless it produces its own intelligentsia.¹⁶ In the Indian history what has happened to the non-Brahmin movements is that they did not have a real intelligentsia to guide and direct them. Any opposition to the existing structures was looked upon with suspicion, and was easily eliminated with the support of the political power. The rise of Buddhism was a great historical event in India. Buddhist religion was led by non-Brahminical intellectuals constituted by the monks and the nuns of the monastic order. After Buddhism's exit all the religions and anti-caste movements that arose thenceforth functioned within the *jati* system, and hence they were assimilated by it sooner or later.¹⁷ With the establishment of the colonial society by the British rulers the assimilative capacity of the Hindu society was challenged. They ushered in new capitalist forces of production for their exploitative purposes, and modified the feudal caste relations of production instead of abolishing them. Officially in 1843 they abolished slavery, made all Indians equal before law, and threw the doors of education open to all, irrespective of caste, race, class, religion or sex. Class did not exist in India prior to the British rule; hence caste is a pre-class institution of exploitation and administration in India. With colonial regime, the two modes of production that of caste and class, came to exist. The anti-caste outlook professed mechanical materialism, while the class nationalist outlook professed Vedanta idealism.

Jotiba Phule¹⁸ was the first revolutionary democrat of India who strove for the abolition of feudal caste order. He could not link his efforts for democratic revolution with that of national independence due to the duality of the old caste system, and the new class system brought into being by the British imperialists. The imperialist rule being a class based one, the nationalist revolution was conceived as a class revolution by the high caste leaders of the National Congress. The leaders hailed exclusively from the Brahmin and Bania castes, wanted national independence without the abolition of the feudal caste order. Phule's programme of the emancipation of the Sudra peasantry from the shackles of caste, religion and landlordism was rejected by the National Congress in 1892, and thus came into being the lasting rift between the social (caste) and political (class) emancipatory movements. Even Gandhiji preferred caste as a better guarantee of social stability as compared to class. With Shahu (1874-1922), the Maharaja of Kolhapur State, the non-Brahmin movement became a mass movement. But he chose to become an Arya Samajist, instead of a Phuleyite. The radical section of the movement led by Keshavarao Jedhe was merged with the National Congress in 1930 against the advice of Ambedkar. The intellectuals of Sudra peasantry fell a prey to the Gandhian Gospel of one point programme, that class based independence revolution would solve the

¹⁶ See his *Prison Books*, 1971, p. 5.

¹⁷ The movements like *Lingayat* religion led by the *Jangam* intellectuals, Sikhism led by the *Khatri* intellectuals, and the *Bhakti* movement by saints of the respective castes, are some examples in this connection.

¹⁸ Jotiba Phule (1829-1890) was the founder of *Satyashodak* non-Brahmin movement in Maharashtra. He was not satisfied with the reform of the upper caste Hindu family life, but built up the pre-conditions of grass root movements of *Sudras* and *Adi-Sudras* for the abolition of the caste system itself. Phule started the first girls' primary school in India in 1848 at Pune and taught his illiterate wife Savitri to become the first lady primary teacher in that school. He had great respect for women, and even held that they are superior to men, and preached women's emancipation to be the pre-condition for that of men.

problem of caste also. Thus they betrayed the lower castes. The rift between caste and class theories and practices was bridged at the cost of the former.

In the seventies efforts were made by Marxists and Dalits to combine the ideologies of Marxism and Phule-Ambedkarism eclectically. But it proved to be a combination of two crisis-ridden philosophies. The combiners in order not to get alienated from masses, espoused even the out-dated tenets of Marxism or Ambedkarism. How are they crisis ridden? Caste philosophy does not have the most advanced tool of historical materialism, which helps one to study any society in a materialistic manner, i.e., starting not with the study of superstructure but with that of the material base constituted by the forces of production and relations of production of the society. Caste philosophy has no economic theory of its own which can help study the present caste-class society of India. But class methodology being a unilinear one, refrains from studying caste in its origin, development and death, and thus can attain knowledge only of the class character of Indian society. In studying the history of exploitation in India, perhaps, no model from outside may fit—neither Marxism, nor Western anthropology may serve the purpose. Africa, India, etc., have their own mode of production. Applying a unilinear methodology cannot go far enough in studying non-class exploitative societies like India. Perhaps, we may have to apply a multi-linear methodology of Marxism-Phule-Ambedkarism. Dalit literature has come into existence, but it has not been able to produce its own aesthetics. The Marxist-Phule-Ambedkarist aesthetics synthesizes the contributions to aesthetics by Kant, Husserl and Sartre, and draws upon Freud and Frazer. Marxism-Phule-Ambedkarism, having its own more and more advanced epistemology and having raised the understanding of the law of contradiction to a qualitatively new and higher level, is a new philosophy. Its multilinear methodology is, perhaps, the only applied philosophy in India, which has been able to lay bare the laws that regulated the pre-colonial caste society and that govern modern caste-class society.¹⁹

The Dalit²⁰ movement in India has come about in the recent history. This has come about through struggles of the scheduled castes against the upper castes. Here we shall only just mention briefly about Dalit movement, for we will have occasion to discuss about it in detail in relation to Ambedkar whose contribution we intend delineate at some length. Any real movement of the most oppressed section, the Dalits, will have to confront the entire system. This is not to say that all collective actions by Dalits will do so; their actual development depends on the possibilities of the situation, question of alliances, support of middle castes, etc. But Dalit movements will have an inherent interest in moving in a radical direction. The basic guideline for any analysis in the interests of the oppressed people is to ask: who are the exploiters and who are the exploited? How can the exploited organize their struggle to move in the direction of liberation? And what is the relation of the structures of exploitation to the

¹⁹ For some of the ideas in this section I am indebted to a paper written by Sharad Patil, "Non-Brahmin and Dalit Movements and their Implications for the Struggle against Caste Culture," in the book : *Religion, Ideology and Counter Culture, Essays in honour of S. Kappen*, edited by Philip Mathew and Aji Muricken, Bangalore : Horizon Books, 1987, pp. 207-225.

²⁰ The term *Dalit* means 'broken', 'downtrodden', 'oppressed', 'bent', 'fragile', etc. Hence the term can include all those who are oppressed for caste, race, or economic reasons. It is primarily applied to the scheduled castes and tribes, and can have an extended meaning to include all those who are under oppression, like women. Originally Gandhi had used the term *Harijans* for those who belonged to the scheduled castes, but because of its bad nuance, they themselves have opted for the term *Dalits*, especially after the conversion of Ambedkar and others to Buddhism.

historical possibilities of moving in the direction of liberation from exploitation? It is not enough that we have good theories, for as Marx says, “Philosophers have only interpreted the world; the point is to change it.”²¹

The discovery of an identity of their own is a must for the Dalits. The efforts of various social reformers, Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar’s conversion to Buddhism, the establishment of a Dalit political party, the special ‘reservations’ and welfare measures taken by the government for the uplift of this community, their access to educational facilities have all combined to generate a sense of identity in this community. Ambedkar had hoped to revolutionize the lives of his people through mass conversion to Buddhism. This hope was not realized. But conversion did prove to be the first step in a steadily ongoing change; it even accelerated this change. By conversion to Buddhism, and by taking on the name ‘neo-Buddhists’, they wanted to give up the Hindu superstitions and the caste structure.

III. Ambedkar and Dalit Liberation

When we look into the pre-Independence and post-Independence history B. R. Ambedkar (1891-1956) stands out as a towering figure, because of his intellectual acumen, organizing capacity and straightforwardness. Except for the caste dominated National Congress Party he would have achieved much more. A lot of his life energy was wasted in fighting against the caste leaders. Ambedkar played three roles: that of a caste leader, that of an Untouchable²² spokesman, and that of a national statesman. In his leadership role, he was guide, guru and decision maker for his own caste, the Mahars of Maharashtra, from the mid-twenties of this century till his death. From the early 1930s onwards he was the chief spokesman of the Untouchables in the eyes of the Government of India, the Untouchable leader who had to be dealt with from the viewpoint of the Indian National Congress, and the individual most responsible for India’s policies of compensatory discrimination toward the Scheduled Castes. In his third role, he spoke on all phases on India’s development, worked on problems of labour and law as a member of the Government, and even put aside some of his own theories to help create a viable, generally accepted Constitution.²³ Ambedkar’s greatest support was from his own caste, and this massive support is what enabled him to work effectively in larger circles. As Mahars were eager for change, perhaps, Ambedkar struck a concordant note with them. His very presence created a new image. Ambedkar designed over the years an ideology and a programme, which counteracted negative self-images, made use of Mahar virtues, and urged the Mahar toward every channel open to participation in a modernizing, democratizing India. In the end he left with new images and legends, and with a new history as past and present Buddhists, so much so, an old Mahar remarked: “He took us to the stars.”²⁴

²¹ Cf. Gail Momvedt, *Dalits and the Democratic Revolution : Dr. Ambedkar and the Dalit Movement in Colonial India*, Delhi: Sage Publications, 1996, pp. 28-31.

²² ‘Untouchable’ was a word used by Ambedkar himself for those castes lowest in the Hindu scale of pollution. The early governmental term was ‘Depressed Classes’; this was replaced by Scheduled Castes in 1935 when these castes were placed in a schedule as qualifying for special rights. Gandhi used the name Harijan, which was in current usage until recent times, except among the followers of Ambedkar. All those who were converted to Buddhism use the term Buddhist and reject all other nomenclature, including their original caste names. Since 1980s the term in current usage is Dalit, a term the meaning of which we have explained above.

²³ Eleanor Zelliot, *From Untouchable to Dalit : Essays on the Ambedkar Movement*, New Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 1996, p. 53.

²⁴ See Ibid. p. 54.

Ambedkar, although an untouchable, could influence others, even foreigners by the sheer ability of his intelligence and extraordinary practical ability. His Western dress and his independent critical temperament underlined the new identity he sought for the Indian untouchables. In the political field, Ambedkar at first supported special representation for the Depressed Classes, then joint electorates with Hindus, then separate electorates, and toward the end of his life denied the workability of the reserved seats for the Scheduled Castes for which he had spent his life and energy. Ambedkar's varying approaches in the religious and political fields, however, reflect the shifting opportunities and changing political demands around him. We find a remarkable consistency in his total view. Through his speeches and writings²⁵ Ambedkar tried to inspire his followers. From his voluminous writings we can cull out some guiding principles of Ambedkar.

1. The Untouchables should revolt because they are slaves, and slavery is inherently inhuman. There is no racial difference that marks them off from caste Hindus. If Hindu religious scripture ordains the practice of untouchability, those scriptures should be rejected.
2. Only by acknowledging their slavery, by admitting their inferior position, could Untouchables unite themselves and press for change. Only by Governmental acknowledgment of their deprivation as a class and the correction of injustice by a special treatment on a caste basis could equality eventually be reached.
3. Only Untouchables can understand their own condition and needs; hence only Untouchables themselves should lead Untouchable movements.
4. Education and politics are the chief means to equality: education, so that the Untouchables will be able to participate in society on an equal plane; political agitation and participation, so that Untouchables can secure their rights and redress their economic and social grievances by law and political policy.
5. Untouchables are totally Indian. No foreign ideology, no foreign religion could help them achieve equality as Indians. India must be free before they are totally free, but their battle for freedom must never be subservient to other demands.
6. Only as some Untouchables become elite can the whole group be raised. Only if ability and ambition enable some Untouchables to be at the top of the pinnacle can the mass below realize its own potential.²⁶

In various volumes of the works of Ambedkar²⁷ we find him taking up the cause of the Untouchables of India. He was their champion; nobody could dissuade him from fighting for their freedom. Also he had the courage to withstand the caste leaders, even Gandhiji, and tell

²⁵ As we know his speeches and writings run into many volumes. For lack of space and time we are not able to concentrate much on them. But some of the volumes pertaining to our theme have been consulted.

²⁶ Zelliott, *Untouchable to Dalit*, pp. 61-62.

²⁷ See for example volumes 5, 7, and 9. He deals at length on the status and deprivation that the Untouchables are called to endure. He used to show by contrast how the caste Hindus oppress the Untouchables. Ambedkar wanted their conversion.

on their face the naked truth of the oppression of the Untouchables. What he wanted was the regaining of their status as human beings with freedom for self-determination and rights. The emergence of Mahar leaders and a new spirit of militancy in the nineteenth century was due in large measure to the influence of education acquired in the army and in domestic service. Also from their ranks emerged many primary school teachers. Ambedkar in his book: *The Untouchables* published in 1948 presents his own view about the Untouchables. According to this account, untouchability originated in the practices of separation and denigration imposed on those who remained Buddhists during the early period of nascent Hinduism. Although Ambedkar himself experienced discrimination and humiliation during his youth, the Maharashtrian atmosphere of reform allowed him exceptional opportunities for education and later for leadership. He was aided by caste Hindus. The greatest fight that he undertook was the fight against caste system. Ambedkar did not find Gandhi's condemnation of untouchability radical; he reacted to Gandhi very strongly. He organized the programmes to integrate the Untouchable into the Indian society in modern, not traditional ways, and on as high a level as possible.

Ambedkar, being an adept leader, knew that if the Untouchables at any time have to achieve their rightful position in Indian society, the only way was to have a proper theory and praxis. He put that in three terms: *educate*, *agitate* and *organize*. Although *Swarajya* was proclaimed as the ideal for Indian society, no untouchable believed that the upper castes would recognize the untouchables as human beings and live up to their own humanity after the attainment of *swarajya*. And, therefore, the *swarajya*, which the caste Hindus looked forward to as a goal much to be cherished, is looked upon by the untouchables as a potential calamity. He wanted them to set a time frame and win their own rights. With this in mind, Ambedkar evolved his own ideology. The salient features of this ideology may be put in these terms:

1. The untouchables might belong to the same religion, but they were not a part of the same society as the caste Hindus. They constituted a separate interest group.
2. Untouchables had historically been an exploited group; untouchability was the culmination of a religious philosophy based on inequality.
3. The philosophy of Brahmanism was a philosophy of graded inequality, and Hinduism was the same as Brahmanism. It was inflexible and had frustrated till then all previous efforts at reform in this basic feature.

The untouchables sought equality and justice, not favours. Social graces were unimportant. Justice demanded not just proportional representation, but protective discrimination for the untouchables.

The untouchables would seek to attain legitimate equalitarian goals and special protection, in political and economic spheres, within the fold of Hinduism as far as possible, but would reject Hinduism if necessary.²⁸

²⁸ M. S. Gore, *The Social Context of an Ideology : Ambedkar's Political and Social Thought*, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1993, pp. 120-121.

What Ambedkar hated most in Hinduism was the caste system. It became so oppressive. The original *varna* system which might have been a division of labour later degenerated into an established form of discrimination, and was exalted to the level of a divine institution, and breaking its norms would bring in divine sanction. Describing the numerous and specific disabilities which the Depressed Classes had to undergo, Ambedkar said that so long as they remained in the Hindu fold, there was no salvation for them. They had to go out of the Hindu fold to secure their freedom. He used to say: “You have nothing to lose except your chains, and everything to gain by changing your religion.” Also he told them that they lacked three essential qualities for carrying out their struggle, namely, manpower, money and intellectual power, and so long as they remained in the Hindu fold they would not be able to acquire those powers. As regards the spiritual aspect of the issue, he observed that the function of religion was the uplift of the individual. For that purpose it should teach the virtues of fellow-feeling, equality and liberty.²⁹

Ambedkar established an Anti-Untouchability League with the hope to work for the amelioration of the Depressed Classes. He identified mainly three areas of work for the League. These were: (a) securing civil rights for the depressed classes, (b) ensuring equality of opportunity for them in employment, and (c) promoting greater social intercourse between caste Hindus and members of the depressed classes. The goals that Ambedkar set for the Untouchable Movement has to be analysed from two levels—the philosophic, ideational level, and the practical, programmatic level. Protest movements, particularly movements of depressed classes or communities, are in a broad sense movements to find for themselves a ‘place in the sun’, a social space in which they can live and breathe with freedom and dignity. In his Barsi Takli speech delivered in 1924, Ambedkar said, “Untouchability is worse than slavery, because slaves are known to have attained freedom even in Roman society, but untouchability is forever.” He understood the need for education for the Untouchables in order to wrest power and equality. In 1948 speaking at the Dhobi Talao High School, he said, “We cannot rise in life without education and knowledge. The upper castes at present hold the reins of political power. They are determined to keep hold of power. The education needed to win high position is still only with the upper castes. You cannot wrest this power from them without education.” In the same speech Ambedkar emphasized the need for cleanliness, tidiness and good apparel. As important as cleanliness, he said, was self-respect. He asked the students to give up servility to the upper castes. Death, he said, was preferable to a life of humiliation. In another talk at Akola in 1942, he urged, “Nurture your self-esteem. How long will you live like sheep? Learn to face injustice and fight it. If I had not done it myself I would still be called only a ‘Mahar’.” The call to ‘Educate, Agitate and Organize’, which Ambedkar had given at the time of the founding of Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha was repeated in different ways, and with newer emphasis through many years of political travail.³⁰

For Ambedkar **Religion**, as it existed, constituted another block to the realization of the goals of the Untouchables, because it sanctioned and sanctified the oppressive caste system. Hence a change of religion became another necessity for redeeming one’s self image. Ambedkar’s personal conversion announcement in 1935 was followed in 1936 by a Mahar conference in Bombay. In this conference he spoke for the need of change of religion in moving words, and all those who were present took the pledge to change to another religion. In touching words he

²⁹ Dhananjay Keer, *Dr. Ambedkar : Life and Mission*, Bombay: Sangam Books, 1987, pp. 273-274.

³⁰ Gore, *Social Context of an Ideology*, pp. 207-214.

spoke: “Religion is for man; man is not for religion. If you want to gain self-respect, change your religion. If you want to create cooperating society, change your religion. If you want power, change your religion. If you want to have equality, change your religion. If you want independence, change your religion. If you want to make the world in which you live, happy, change your religion...”³¹

He also showed the sad plight of continuing to be Hindus: “Because we have the misfortune of calling ourselves Hindus, we are treated thus. If we were members of another Faith, none would dare treat us so. Choose any religion, which gives you equality of status and treatment. We shall repair our mistake now. I had the misfortune of being born with the stigma of an Untouchable. However, it is not my fault; but I will not die a Hindu, for this is in my power.”³² Such passionate plea moved the hearts of people, and they were willing to take the plunge. The reason for such a decision to conversion was the rigid attitude of the caste Hindus who refused them entry into temples, to take water from the common wells, and even to make use of the common road, etc. After the announcement of 1935-36, however, there was a hiatus of 20 years before Ambedkar’s formal conversion to Buddhism took place. For the first few years he flirted with Islam and Christianity in an attempt to combine a personal need for self-respect, felt by many untouchable groups, with an astute political move that would allow Untouchables more political power. He rejected Christianity and Islam because, though formally egalitarian religions, they did not face in their origin the task of fighting the caste system. Even the Lingayat and Sikh religions, which arose in the struggle against caste system succumbed to it. The only religion, which arose and grew out of the struggle against caste system and never succumbed to it was Buddhism. During the time when Ambedkar was most active on the national scene, his personal interest in Buddhism increased. He studied and wrote extensively on *Buddha and Dhamma*³³. His delayed conversion came long after the period of combining the conversion idea with political expediency, and by then reference to conversion as a political threat had lost its significance. Instead, it had reference to the great Asian Buddhist world, reputation of Buddhism as an important religion both in India and abroad, and the possibility of Buddhism as a moral force.³⁴ Ambedkar also tried to compare Marxism and Buddhism, and found Buddhism better than Marxism. Although he was not against Marx, somehow he did not find it as attractive as Buddhism. One of the reasons was that he was basically religious. He was willing to consider the economic assumptions offered by Marxism. Taking standard left economic assumptions for granted had two consequences for Ambedkar and the Dalit movement: First, it led to attempts to formulate a historical theory of caste and social struggle in India that functioned primarily at the ‘superstructural’ level, stressing factors of political conflict and ideology apart from those of economic development. Second, it effectively suppressed any dialogue with alternative economic models and ignored the degree to which a state-controlled heavy industry would effectively a Brahmin and high caste-controlled economy.³⁵

For Ambedkar ‘religion’ came to have a specific meaning. In a speech delivered in Bombay (1955) on the foundation of Buddhism, he said, ‘That which promises equal opportunity to all

³¹ Zelliot, *Untouchable to Dalit*, p. 192.

³² Ibid. p. 208.

³³ See Moon, ed., *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar : Writings and Speeches, The Buddha and His Dhamma*, Vol. 11, Bombay: Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, 1992.

³⁴ Zelliot, *Untouchable to Dalit*, pp. 192-195.

³⁵ Omvedt, *Dalits and Democratic Revolution*, p. 230

is the true religion. The rest are all false religions'. For him 'religion' had significance only insofar as it helped to establish a moral order characterized by equality, freedom and fraternity. And he was convinced that Buddhism alone could create a climate favourable to human equality.³⁶ The main reason why Ambedkar decided to opt out of Hinduism was the oppressive caste system, which made the lower castes lesser than animals. This situation was considered to be sacred and irreformable by the upper caste Hindus, because it gave them a special advantage of domination over the depressed classes. Since the leadership of the Congress Party was also vitiated with this virus he decided to opt out, and found that as the best solution.

Ambedkar saw in Buddhism a revolutionary potential and as an egalitarian religion. According to him Buddha created his *Sangha* as a model of casteless society and the laity was supposed to emulate the *bhikkhus*. He held that the anti-caste legacy was a powerful weapon for the enlightenment of the Indian masses. The great merit of neo-Buddhism is that it has revived the anti-caste heritage of the so far neglected and suppressed non-Brahminical current in Indian history, philosophy, science, literature, arts and culture. Though neo-Buddhism does not go beyond early Buddhism, it brings us to the study of later Buddhism, which brought about a veritable renaissance in all fields of human endeavour in India. The Buddhist *bhikkhus* are no more full time revolutionaries. Neo-Buddhism is a religion of the laity, which was not the case with ancient Buddhism. Buddhist philosophies and culture, like all the philosophies and cultures of the great non-Brahmin current of Indian history, can be a vehicle of anti-caste enlightenment.

Ambedkar being a politician involved himself in political affairs, for he knew only through political power any transformation can come about. But he was totally disillusioned with the Congress Party and its leadership. He founded his own political party (Independent Labour Party). But Hinduism on the one hand, and traditional Marxism, on the other, thwarted all his attempts. The only way left for him was to agree to the drawing up of a compromise draft on anti-caste, bourgeois, democratic Constitution, and, in the bargain, obtain reservation for Scheduled Castes and Tribes. This was a strategic move he visualized for the abolition of caste system. But after his demise in 1956 these groups and communities drifted away from each other, and towards the Congress.

Conclusion

Although not exhaustively, we have dealt at some length about the method of the subalterns, especially in relation to the position of the Dalits in India. In the first part of the paper our endeavour was to delineate the method and the strategies the oppressed will have to adopt if they have to bring about their liberation. Ambedkar understood that what people needed is true democracy. Genuine democracy will promote the interest of the well-being of the people at large. His concept of democracy revolves around the basic philosophy that our view of the relationship between individual and society has always been, not one of conflict but of harmony and cooperation born out of consciousness of single reality running through all individuals. For him the individual is a living limb of the corporate social personality. Both individual and society supplement and complement each other with the result that both get strengthened and benefited.³⁷ Oppressed people all over the world eagerly look for such a

³⁶ Gore, *Social Context of an Ideology*, pp. 238-239.

‘golden democracy’. In his historic speech in the Constituent Assembly Ambedkar said: “We must make our political democracy a social democracy as well. Political democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of it social democracy. What does social democracy mean? It means a way of life which recognizes liberty, equality and fraternity as principles of life.”³⁸

‘Dalits’ (the oppressed in general) live in sub-human social conditions, abject poverty, economic exploitation, a sub-culture of submission and political powerlessness. They are considered to be a curse and are treated as untouchables. Without access to the vital economic resources and bargaining power, they become the most exploited peripheral group in any society. This has happened to the Untouchables and outcastes of India in a large measure without any hope of throwing away the yoke of oppression. In this context we can ask the question: “Who will lead the Indian democratic revolution?” The answer of the communist parties is: The Indian industrial proletariat. Ambedkar disagreed and said that a proletariat which is caste-ridden and itself inegalitarian is unfit to lead it. Unless it becomes homogenous through the abolition of the caste system, it will not be able to discharge its historic function of accomplishing the socialist revolution. Ambedkar would say that it is the social proletariat, the masses of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes, who is fit to lead such a revolution. As Paulo Freire has pointed out it is the oppressed who are their own liberators.

Quite contrary to the expectation, most policies of the post-independent India have been regarded by the Dalits as the greatest source of their frustration. Ambedkar had realized the need for higher education for the Dalits, but even today this dream of his remains unfulfilled. The plight of the Dalit students from the higher education is due to the prejudices of high caste educators and fellow students, besides inadequacies of the government’s provisions and unfavourable poor social economic background of their parents. Mostly it is the activist groups who support the Dalit students and youth. But such activist groups quite often meet with opposition from the establishment and dominant castes and classes.³⁹ Also a proper ideology and literature can support any movement; hence, what is urgently needed from the part of the Dalits is development of a literature which will sustain their movement for freedom and equality. They should have the courage to throw off the weight of the traditions, especially the religious accretions and build upon new foundations. In fact, the failure of the Neo-Buddhists is that they have not been able to throw off the yoke of traditional Hindu religion.

Ideologies of protest seem to perform simultaneously several functions. They articulate new values and new social goals. They uncover and make visible the inequities and injustices or ‘contradictions’ of the existing order of social and economic relationships, they propose and canvass the acceptance of new set of goals and social modalities, they provide justification and legitimacy for the opposition to and ‘demolition’ of existing structures, they create and emphasize new identities for the ‘victims’ of the existing order.⁴⁰ Only those leaders who have the capability to ‘denounce’ (denouncing the existing unjust structures that oppress the humans in various ways), and to ‘announce’ (announcing of a society established in justice,

³⁷ M. G. Chitkara, *Dr. Ambedkar Towards Buddhism*, New Delhi: APH Publishing Corporation, 1997, pp. 83-83

³⁸ Ibid. p. 132.

³⁹ See Nandu Ram, *Beyond Ambedkar : Essays on Dalits in India*, New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications, 1995, 354-356.

⁴⁰ Gore, *Social Context of an Ideology*, p. 339.

peace, equality and harmony) have the right to be leaders. They should have the total commitment like that of Ambedkar, who became an icon for the Dalits. Perhaps, like the dream of Martin Luther King Jr., it may still remain a distant reality for many more years to come.

FROM DICHOTOMY TO PERICHORESIS

An Overview of Western Philosophical Methods

-George Panthanmackel, msfs

The term 'method' is derived from the Greek '*methodos*' ('road to'). Hence etymologically the term refers to the way of doing something,¹ the system of procedure to obtain or reach the end intended. It is the way of procedure from the known to the unknown, from a given starting point to final propositions in a determined field of knowledge. In speculative sciences it indicates the road to propositions concerning that which exists or is thought to exist; whereas in normative sciences it indicates the road to the norms governing the doing of something. In the sciences, the use of correct methods is most important in order to make certain that the conclusions are correctly connected with the starting point and the foundation. Every scientific method is the road from the known starting point to a result, which in one or the other is linked to this starting point. This connection can be established through logical reasoning or deduction, or through induction, synthesis, or analysis.² The characteristic feature of the discipline of philosophy is the existence of different methods in it. When there was no distinction between science and philosophy and all knowledge was philosophy, it was thought that the task of philosophy was to give a complete and coherent account of the universe as a whole. This view originated in ancient Greece and lasted for several centuries in the West until alternatives to it were developed. This paper contains brief overviews of a few of the prominent Western philosophical methods together with the humble proposal of an alternative view that might take into account some of their concerns.

Speculative Method

The intellectual development reached its climax in Athens as the various streams of Greek thought converged there during the fifth century B.C. The age of Pericles saw Athens at the peak of its cultural creativity and political influence. The development of democracy and technical advances in agriculture and navigation encouraged humanistic spirit and speculative method. Pre-socratic philosophers³ had been relatively isolated in their speculations. Now in Athens such philosophical speculation became more representative of the city's intellectual

¹ There is a difference between 'method' and 'methodology.' Method is a way of doing something; whereas methodology is a study of method.

² Henry Van Laer and Henry J. Koran, *Philosophy of Science* (Louvain: Duquesne University, 1956) 55.

³ The first known pre-Socratic philosopher Thales speculated that water was the original substance out of which all others are formed. He maintained that the earth rests on water. He also believed that the magnet has a soul in it as it moves the iron; further, that all things are full of gods. Anaximander, the second philosopher of the Milesian school, held that all things come from a single primal substance, but that it is not

life as a whole, which continued to move toward conceptual thought, critical analysis, reflection, and dialectic.⁴

Dialectic Method

Dialectic method of Socrates and Plato was essentially a method of discussion and debate in which the participants progressed from one point to another, each one disputing the point of the other until they could reach an undisputable point. It consisted in reasoning through rigorous dialogue as a method of intellectual investigation intended to expose false beliefs and elicit truth. The strategy was to take up a sequence of questions with whomever one was in discussion, relentlessly analyzing one by one the implications of the answers in such a way as to bring out the flaws and inconsistencies inherent in a given belief or statement. Attempts to define the essence of something were rejected one after another as being either too wide or too narrow. Often such an analysis ended in complete perplexity. Yet such times it was clear that philosophy was concerned less with knowing the right answers than with the strenuous attempt to discover those answers. To practice philosophy in the dialectic method was continually to subject one's thoughts to the criticism of reason in earnest dialogue with others. Genuine knowledge was not something that could simply be received from another secondhand, but was rather a personal achievement, won only at the cost of constant intellectual struggle and self-critical reflection.⁵

Retortive Method

Towards the end of the patristic period, St. Augustine tried to answer the problem of certainty with his method of retorsion.⁶ He held that the skeptics are mistaken in assuming that certainty of knowledge is impossible and that humans can achieve only "probable

water, or any other of the substances that we know. It is boundless, eternal and ageless, and it encompasses all the worlds. The primal substance is transformed into various substances, which are again transformed into each other. Anaximenes, the last of the Milesian triad, makes further advances. For him, the fundamental substance is air. The soul is air; fire is rarefied air. When condensed, air becomes first water, then earth, and finally stone. He also thought that the earth is shaped like a round table, and that air encompasses everything. The most important stage in this evolution was reached in the latter half of the fifth century with the emergence of the sophists. With the sophists, philosophy turned away from its earlier, more speculative and cosmological concerns to skepticism, rationalism and atheism. It was in this highly charged cultural climate that Socrates developed his famous dialectical method.

⁴ Richard Tarnas, *The Passion of the Western Mind* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1993) 25.

⁵ Ibid, 34-35.

⁶ Retorsion compels assent to an argument by showing self-contradiction in the counter-argument. See *Soliloq.* I, 6,12.

knowledge,” i.e., ideas whose validity is highly probable. Since any degree of probable knowledge implies an approach toward completely certain knowledge, the assumption of probably valid truths presupposes the existence and attainability of absolute truths. If the skeptic argues that no real objects of his sensory experience exist, nevertheless he cannot doubt the fact that his perception does exist. The person who doubts all truths is caught in a logical dilemma, for one must exist in order to doubt; in fact, no matter what else one doubts, one proves one’s own existence through the act of doubting. Nor is it of any use to suggest that one might err in thinking that one exists, for ‘even if one errs, one exists’ (*Si fallor, sum*).⁷

Scholastic Method

The scholastic method—a creative synthesis of several previous methods—of Thomas Aquinas further supported the Augustinian view of certainty. Thomas was certain of concepts having their foundation in sense perception. He accepted Abelard’s view of the relationship between universals and particulars, including the Aristotelian thesis that Plato’s universals can be found only in particular things which thus become actualities detectable in sense experience. For Aquinas too, the universal nature, the essence, of a thing exists immanently in the object itself as part of the real world, but this universal characteristic (this substantial form of an object) is also an idea or concept separated from its object when it is abstracted by the human mind. As a part of the real world, the universal essence never exists independently of its object. Yet, before nature was created, these universals (essences) existed in the mind of God as archetypes or ideas which God used in creating the universe. Thus the Moderate Realism of Aquinas accepts not only Aristotle’s view that universals exist in individual objects (*universalis in re*) but also asserts that universals exist in the mind of God prior to the particular objects (*universalia ante rem*) and in the mind of human (as concepts) after the particular object has been created (*universalia post rem*). Thus truth is understood as the conformity between mind and object.⁸

Cartesian Method

Descartes was also bothered by the same question of certainty. He became fascinated by the question of whether there was anything we could know for certain. He distinguished between certainty and truth. For him, certainty is a state of mind, whereas truth is a property of statements which usually relates to the way things are out there in the external world. But Descartes believed that only if one had grounds for certainty could one know that one had hold of the truth. The pursuit of truth involves the pursuit of certainty. He wanted that the method he was looking for would have to be one which not only delivered the goods in the form of worthwhile conclusions but could also defend itself against the arguments of sceptics. So he engaged himself in what might be called *pre-emptive scepticism* by which he wanted to put the foundations of knowledge beyond the reach of scepticism. He did it in three stages. First, he laid aside things that just on ordinary commonsensical grounds one might possibly find doubtful. For instance, he reminded himself of such well-known facts as that straight

⁷ *Contra Academicos*, 3,10, 23.

⁸ George Panthanmackel, *In Struggle and Dialogue With: A Concise History of Western Medieval Philosophy* (Bangalore: ATC, 1992) 61-62.

sticks can look bent in water. But he wanted to go beyond such ordinary kind of doubt. Second, he doubted that at any given moment he was awake and perceiving anything at all. For he had often dreamt in the past that he was perceiving things, and when he was dreaming, he had thought that he was seeing people, or tables, or whatever, around him. But, of course, he had woken up and found it was all illusion. Third, he imagined a malign spirit whose sole intent was to deceive him as much as it could. However, the point at which the doubt stops is the reflection that he is himself engaged in thinking. No malicious demon can ever make one believe that one is thinking when one is not. If one has a false thought, that is still a thought. So his fundamental first certainty was 'I think, therefore I am' (*Cogito ergo sum*).⁹

Empiricist Method

The empiricist method of philosophy advocated by Locke, Berkley, and Hume held that *all* essential truths about the world were discoverable only by empirical experience. Thus, reason was substituted by empirical experience. It was above all John Locke who set the tone for empiricist method by affirming the foundational principle of empiricism: 'There is nothing in the intellect that was not previously in the senses' (*Nihil est in intellectu quod non antea fuerit in sensu*). All knowledge of the world must rest finally on human's sense experience. Through the combining and compounding of simple sense impressions or 'ideas' (defined as mental contents) into more complex concepts, the mind can arrive at sound conclusions. The mind is at first a blank tablet, a passive receptor of its experience. The mind possesses innate powers, but not innate ideas as cognition begins only with sensation. However, Berkeley pointed out that all experience is nothing more than experience, i.e., all mental representations of supposed material substances are finally ideas in the mind. Therefore, the existence of a material world external to the mind is an unwarranted assumption. All that can be known with certainty to exist is the mind and its ideas. 'To be' does not mean 'to be a material substance', rather, 'to be' means 'to be perceived by a mind' (*esse est percipi*). David Hume drove the empiricist method to its logical end, making use of Berkeley's insight while turning it in a direction more characteristic of the modern secular scepticism growingly visible from Montaigne through Bayle and the Enlightenment. As an empiricist who grounded all human knowledge in sense experience, Hume agreed with Locke's general orientation and Berkeley's criticism of Locke's theory of representation while he disagreed with Berkeley's idealist solution. Human experience is indeed of the phenomenal only, and there is no way to ascertain what is beyond it. Like Berkeley, Hume could not accept Locke's views on representative perception, but neither could he accept Berkeley's identification of external objects with internal ideas rooted in the mind of God.¹⁰

Critical Method

The intellectual challenge that faced Kant was a seemingly impossible one: on the one hand, to reconcile the claims of science to certain and genuine knowledge of the world with the claim that experience could never give rise to such knowledge; on the other hand, to reconcile the claim of religion that human was morally free with the claim of science that nature was entirely determined by necessary laws. With these several conflicting claims, an intellectual

⁹ Bryan Magee, *The Great Philosophers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987) 80-85.

¹⁰ Richard Tarnas, *The Passion of the Western Mind*, 333-337.

crisis of profound complexity had emerged. Kant's method of resolution of that crisis was equally complex, brilliant, and weighty in its consequences.¹¹

According to Kant, the human mind does not passively receive sense data, but it actively structures them. Human, therefore, knows objective reality to the extent that reality conforms to the fundamental structures of the mind. All human knowledge of the world is channelled through the mind's own categories. The necessity and certainty of scientific knowledge are embedded in the mind's perception and understanding of the world. The mind does not conform to objects; rather, objects conform to the mind. Human can attain certain knowledge of the world, not because one has the power to penetrate to and grasp the world in itself, but because the world is saturated with the principles of one's own mental organization. Hence, human could know things only as they appear, not as they are in themselves. A genuine philosophical method should investigate the formal structure of the mind and analyze the nature and limits of human reason. Although reason cannot decide matters transcending experience, it can determine what cognitive factors are intrinsic to all human experience and inform all experience with its order.¹²

Analytical Method

Analytical philosophy refers to various contemporary methods of analysing the language. Other names for it are 'philosophical analysis,' 'logical analysis,' and 'scientific philosophy.' The names 'logical positivism,' 'scientific empiricism,' and 'neo-positivism,' refer to the tendency within analytical philosophy which has as its main target the 'verification principle,' i.e., the criterion of truth consists in its capacity of being verified by sense experience. The second branch of analytical philosophy is 'linguistic analysis' as it emphasizes the analysis of the language used in philosophy.¹³ The verification principle and language analysis are not incompatible; both can be found in one movement. Furthermore, one should not confuse 'analytical philosophy' with symbolic logic. The latter is a system of expressing the rules of correct thinking through mathematical symbols, instead of using words as in traditional logic. Symbolic logic is only an instrument of philosophy rather than a philosophical position. Although its use is strongly advocated by most analytical philosophers to avoid some ambiguities proper to conventional words, it is not required by all philosophical analysts.¹⁴

¹¹ Ibid., 341.

¹² Ibid., 343-348.

¹³ Teoddoro de la Torre, *Popular History of Philosophy* (Texas: Lumen Christi Press, 1986) 368-369.

¹⁴ Ibid; Ludwig Wittgenstein is hailed as the one who gave analytical philosophy its definite shape. There are two clearly identifiable phases in Wittgenstein's philosophy: Early and Later Wittgenstein. *The Early Wittgenstein* holds that only those propositions which picture facts are true or false, because only facts can be verified by experience. Therefore, all metaphysical propositions about the world as a unit or about the spiritual soul or values – which are not empirically verifiable – are senseless. *The Later Wittgenstein* likened words to tools in a toolbox. Words are used to assert, question, command, describe, report, speculate, joke, ask,

Pragmatic Method

Pragmatism is a philosophical method founded by three American philosophers: Charles Sanders Peirce, William James and John Dewey. Peirce argued that the function of inquiry is not to represent reality, but rather enable us to act more effectively. He was critical of the 'copy theory' of knowledge which had dominated philosophy since the time of Descartes. He was also one of the first philosophers to say that the ability to use signs is essential to thought.¹⁵ Peirce's thought was further extended by James, whose *The Principles of Psychology* (1890) broke with the associationism of Locke and Hume. James held that '“The true”...is only the expedient in our way of thinking.'¹⁶ Truth is what 'works,' and not merely an idea of a harmony between thought and the things, since one could make a judgment about this only by means of thought and the things are accessible only within thought. Ideas are true to the extent that they help us to enter into satisfactory relationships with other parts of our experience.¹⁷ James and Dewey both wanted to reconcile philosophy with Darwin by making human being's pursuit of the true and the good (cultural evolution) continuous with the activities of the lower animals (biological evolution). Dewey criticized the Cartesian notion of the self as a substance which existed prior to language and culture, and substituted an account of the self as a product of social practices. Dewey, whose primary interests were in cultural, educational and political reform rather than in specifically philosophical problems, developed the implications of pragmatism for ethics and social philosophy.¹⁸

Phenomenological Method

The main objective of the phenomenological method is the enlarging and deepening of the range of our immediate experience¹⁹ under the watchword 'to the things themselves' (*Zu den Sachen selbst*). Its interpretation may vary; but the common concern is that of giving the phenomena a fuller and fairer hearing than traditional empiricism has accorded them. Negatively it expresses a revolt against an approach in philosophy that takes its point of departure from crystallized beliefs and theories handed down by a tradition which often perpetuates preconceptions and prejudices. In this respect

thank, curse, greet, pray, and so on. Each use of language is part of an activity. Language games are as countless as the uses of words. Words by themselves have no meaning, they acquire a distinct meaning from each distinct use.

¹⁵ Richard Rorty, "Pragmatism", in *Concise Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000) 704-705.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Julian Marias, *History of Philosophy*, Tr. by Stanley Appelbaum and Clarence C. Stowbridge (New York: Dover Publications, 1967) 397.

¹⁸ Richard Rorty, "Pragmatism", in *Concise Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000) 704-705.

¹⁹. Herbert Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement* (London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994) 678-679.

phenomenology stands for a kind of rebellion against the trend in modern science which begins with simplifying abstractions and ends with a minimum vocabulary of scientific concepts. The method consists of a series of steps, of which the later will usually presuppose the earlier ones:²⁰ investigating particular phenomena, investigating general essences, apprehending essential relationships among essences, watching modes of appearing, watching the constitution of phenomena in consciousness, suspending belief in the existence of phenomena, and interpreting the meaning of phenomena.²¹

²⁰. Ibid., 682-715.

²¹ The first three steps have been accepted, at least implicitly, and practised by all those who have aligned themselves with the phenomenological movement; the later ones only by a smaller group. For instance, the gestaltists, in declaring their partial solidarity with phenomenology, usually accept only the principle of descriptive research without subscribing to the investigation of essences and essential relations. 1. *Investigating the Particular Phenomena*: Under this heading three operations are included: phenomenological intuiting, phenomenological analyzing, and phenomenological describing. *Phenomenological intuiting* is one of the demanding operations, which requires utter concentration on the object intuited without becoming absorbed in it to the point of no longer looking critically. *Phenomenological analysing* comprises the distinguishing of the constituents of the phenomena as well as the exploration of their relations to and connections with adjacent phenomena. In his later writings Husserl often uses the expression ‘intentional analysis’ as an equivalent to phenomenological analysis. By itself the expression suggests nothing but analysis which pays systematic attention to the parallel aspects of intending act (*noesis=cogitations*) and intended content (*noema=cogitata*). More specifically, intentional analysis focuses on the way in which intentional act and intentional referent correspond to one another. *Phenomenological describing* concentrates on the central or decisive characteristics of the phenomenon. To this extent description already involves a consideration of essences. 2. *Investigating General Essences (Eidetic Intuiting)*: In order to apprehend the general essence we have to look at the particulars as *examples*, i.e., as instances that stand for the general essence. Thus using the particular red of an individual rose as a point of departure we can see it as an instance of a certain shade of red in general. But we can also see it as exemplifying redness and, finally, colour as such. Thus the intuiting of particulars provides stepping stones for the apprehension of the general essences. Seeing red as red we also see redness, the general essence which is exemplified in all of them. 3. *Apprehending Essential Relationship*: These essential relationships are actually of two types: relationships within a single essence and relationships between several essences. In the case of *relationships within single essence*, we are concerned with the question whether its components are or are not essential to it. Thus, in the case of the triangle we have to determine whether three sides, three angles, and certain shapes and sizes of these sides and angles are necessary to them or required by the essence ‘triangle’ or whether they are merely compatible with it. *Relationships between several essences* are established by the procedure of imaginative variation too. Keeping one essence constant we try to combine it with various other essences, leaving off some of its associates, substituting others for them, or adding essences not hitherto encountered together with them. 4. *Watching Modes of Appearing*: Phenomenology is the systematic exploration of the phenomena not only in the sense of *what* appears, but also the *way* in which things appear. These ways of appearing are usually overlooked in our preoccupation with what appears. There are actually at least three different senses of appearance which a careful study of the modes of givenness must distinguish: I). The side or aspect of the given object from which we know the object as a whole. II). The appearance of the object may be the perspectively ‘deformed’ or slanted view which the sides offer to the perceiver (*Abschattung=perspective shading-off*). III). The third one is called modes of clarity. The same object, appearing with the same sides and in the same perspective, may still be given with very different degrees of clarity and distinctness. 5. *Exploring the Constitution of Phenomena in Consciousness*: It consists in determining the way in which a phenomenon establishes itself and takes shape in our consciousness. An illustration of such a constitution can be the experience of getting oriented in a new city, whose ‘picture’ gradually takes shape in our mind, or the way in which the personality of someone we meet takes shape in our mind, beginning with our first impressions, with the observations of his/her movements, followed by the hearing of his/her voice, etc. 6. *Suspending Belief in Existence (epoche = reductions)*: Husserl himself associated the original and basic meaning of the reduction with the mathematical operation of ‘bracketing’ (*Einklammerung*). The underlying idea of this metaphor is that we are to detach the phenomena of our everyday experience from the context of our natural living, while

Deconstructive Method

In a deconstructive reading the text in question is shown to harbour contradictory logics, which are standardly ignored. Very often it is a matter of locating certain clearly-marked binary opposition (as for instance between nature and culture, speech and writing, concept and metaphor, or philosophy and literature) and showing that their order of priority is by no means as stable as the text seeks to maintain. That is to say, there is a counter-logic at work whereby those distinctions can be shown to break down, or to generate a reading markedly at odds with author's overt intent. This leaves open the possibility that texts may mean something other and more than is allowed for by any straightforward appeal to the authorial intention.²²

Transcendental Method

Transcendental method is a way of reflecting upon and interpreting the previous conditions of the possibility of an act of knowledge. Such a way of interpreting has been understood by Kant in his *Critique of Pure Reason*: "I entitle *transcendental* all knowledge which is occupied not so much with objects as with the mode of our knowledge of objects in so far as this mode of knowledge is to be possible *a priori*."²³ The method aims at discovering and explaining the knowledge which is prior and which makes every knowledge of objects possible. This knowledge is not explicitly available before all other kinds of knowledge. It is a pre-knowledge, a basic knowledge, which is implicit in every kind of empirical knowledge, and it can be made explicit only thorough a reflection upon the previous conditions of the possibility of empirical knowledge by both transcendental reduction and transcendental deduction. *Transcendental reduction* is a thematic uncovering of the conditions and presuppositions implied in the immediate data of consciousness. It is a return from that which is thematically known to that which is unthematically co-known in the act of consciousness. It is a return to that which is

preserving their content as fully and as purely as possible. The actual procedure of this detachment consists in suspending judgment as to the existence or non-existence of this content. This does not mean that we deny or even doubt its existence to the extent of writing it off, as Descartes had done. Reduction facilitates genuine intuiting, analyzing, and describing of the given. For it frees us from our usual preoccupation with 'solid reality', which makes us brush aside what is 'merely in our imagination' or 'by convention only' as unworthy of our attention. This does not mean that suspension of existential beliefs is indispensable for an unbiased stock-taking of phenomena. What is all important in phenomenology is that we consider all the data, real or unreal or doubtful, as having equal rights, and investigate them without fear or favour. The reduction will help us to do justice to all of them, especially to those which are under the handicap of initial suspicion as to their existential claims. 7. *Interpreting Concealed Meanings (Hermeneutic²¹ Phenomenology)*: The hermeneutic phenomenology aims at the discovery of meanings which are not immediately manifest to our intuiting, analyzing, and describing. The interpreter has to go beyond what is directly given (in this way it goes beyond the original programme of phenomenology itself). The interpreter has to use the given as a clue for meanings, which are not given, or at least explicitly given. Heidegger's²¹ analysis of *Dasein* and Sartre's existential psychoanalysis provide the main examples of such interpretations. Heidegger takes certain structures of human being, such as the fundamental moods, as indications (*Anzeigen*) for a certain meaning which is not immediately manifest, namely, 'concern' (*Sorge*) and being-toward-death (*Sein zum Tode*).

²² Christopher Norris, "Deconstruction," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Ed. Edward Craig, Vol.2 (London and New York: Routledge, 1998) 836.

²³ Norman Kemp Smith (Tr), *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason* (London: Macmillan, 1992) 59.

pre-known (pre-apprehended) as a condition of the act. *Transcendental deduction* is the movement of the mind from this previous datum uncovered reductively. In transcendental deduction, the mind deduces *apriori* the empirical act of consciousness, its nature, its possibility and its necessity from the previous datum uncovered reductively. In other words, *reduction* proceeds from a particular experience to the conditions of its possibility, whereas *deduction* proceeds from these conditions to the essential structures of the same experience. These movements are in constant interaction, influencing each other. Yet one can be more emphasized than the other. For instance, Kant emphasized reduction; whereas Fichte and Schelling emphasized deduction.²⁴

ENDINGS

A philosophical method is established through logical reasoning, i.e., through deduction, induction, synthesis, or analysis. The characteristic feature of philosophy is the existence of different methods in it. The Pre-socratic philosophers mainly followed a speculative method that continued to move toward certainty and truth through conceptual thought, critical analysis, reflection, and dialectic. Dialectical method of Socrates and Plato was essentially a method of debate in which the participants progressed from one point to another, each one disputing the point of the other until they could reach a point of certainty. Towards the end of the patristic period, St. Augustine demonstrated that the skeptics are mistaken in assuming that certainty of knowledge is impossible. The scholastic method of Thomas Aquinas further supported the Augustinian view of certainty. Descartes was also bothered by the same question of certainty. He became fascinated by the question of whether there was anything we could know for certain. The empiricists' response was that *all* essential truths about the world were certainly discoverable through experience. However, Kant argued that no certain and genuine knowledge of the world could be possible only through experience without the *apriori*, categorial structures of the mind. For the analytic philosophers, the criterion of certainty and truth is the 'verification principle,' while the pragmatists hold on to the view that 'truth is what works.' The foundational principle of phenomenological method is the indubitability or certainty of the fact, act and object of consciousness. In a deconstructive reading the text in question is *certainly* shown to harbour contradictory logics which are standardly ignored. Transcendental method, of course, is a way of reflecting upon and interpreting the *necessary apriori* conditions of the possibility of an act of knowledge.

The Western philosophy's preoccupation with 'the problem of the bridge', or the problem of dichotomy of the subject and object, probably necessitated its frequent emphasis on certainty and truth, invariably inherent in all its philosophical methods too. A close look at these philosophical methods, centred around certainty and truth, will reveal to us that the Western philosophy has wandered away from its original path, forgetting its root, and thus deserving the critical analysis of Heidegger. According to Heidegger, the term 'philosophy' is derived from the Greek root *philosophia*. It is usually translated as 'love of wisdom.' But, for Heidegger, the word *philosophia* has its origin in *philosophos* coined by Heraclitus. The word is originally an adjective like *philaguros* (loving silver) or like *philotomos* (loving honour). An *aner philosophos* is not a 'philosophical man.' In this way the Greek adjective *philosophos* is

²⁴ Emerich Coreth, *Metaphysics*, English Edition by Joseph Donceel with a Critique by Bernard Lonergan (New York: Seabury Press, 1973) 37.

completely different from the adjective philosophical. An *aner philosophos* is *hos philei to sophon* (he who loves *sophon*). *Philein* (to love) in the Heraclitean sense means *homolegei*, to speak in the way in which the *Logos* speaks, to speak in correspondence with the *Logos*. This correspondence is in accordance with the *sophon*. Accordance is *harmonia*, that both are originally united to each other because they are at each other's disposal. For Heraclitus, this *harmonia* is the distinctive feature of *philein* (loving)²⁵. *Sophon* means *Hen Panta* "One (is) all." 'All' means all things that exist, the whole, the totality of beings. *Hen* means the One, the unique, the all-uniting. All beings are united in Being.²⁶ *Hen Panta* means "One (is) all." If One is all, the one should be identical with and distinct from all and 'all' presuppose One. As 'all' presuppose One, One is to be in 'all'; 'One in all' means 'One is All'. All is multiplicity or diversity or many; One is in many. Therefore, philologically, philosophy is the love of the *sophon* (*Hen Panta*), love of the One in Many, love of Being in beings.

As we further reflect on the notion of Being in beings, One in many, we discover a *perichoresis*²⁷ (mutual indwelling) of Being and beings, i.e., Being (One) in beings (many) and beings (beings) in Being (One). It can be explained in a twofold manner: First, Being (One) is that which is in some way or something. That which is in some way or something is in its own way. When each being is in its own way, all beings are in their own ways (many). When all beings are in their own ways (many), there would be a plurality of beings (many) *in* Being (One). Second, Being is that which is in some way or something. That which is in some way or something is indeterminate. That which is indeterminate is that which is not determinate. That which is not determinate is that which is not. That which is not is non-being. Non-being is the other of Being. The other of Being is *distinct* from Being. The distinct otherness of Being is not apart from Being, though from Being. What is from Being (in as much as it is from Being) is *identical* with Being. Hence Being contains within itself both identity and distinction, the sameness and alterity, the one and the many, or there is a *perichoresis* of the one in the many and the many in the one without being dichotomous. Thus glancing through the various methodologies of Western philosophy, we note that there has been a gradual move towards *perichoresis*: a unity in diversity.

²⁵. Martin Heidegger, *What is Philosophy?*, Tr.by William Kluback and Jean T.Wilde (Plymouth: Vision, 1989) 46-47.

²⁶. Ibid., 47-49.

²⁷ *Perichoresis* is usually used in Christian Theology to refer to the mutual indwelling of the three divine persons by which notwithstanding their distinction, they are present to each other on the grounds of common nature, their origin, their relations, and so mutually share in all the divine perfections.

PHENOMENOLOGICAL HERMENEUTICS

The Twin-Method of Contemporary Continental Philosophy

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Among the various methods that contemporary Western philosophy has employed, no other method has wielded such popularity and prominence as phenomenology and hermeneutics. This paper attempts to look into this twin-method as a single method, since one has grown into the other: phenomenology into hermeneutics.¹ We are able to consider them together because of the basic similarity that exists between them, despite the minor differences. We shall first briefly consider phenomenology as developed by Husserl (I), and then we shall look into the way in which Heidegger deviated from Husserlian phenomenology and developed it into 'hermeneutical phenomenology' (II), and in the final part we shall try to show the importance and value of 'phenomenological hermeneutics' (III).

I

Phenomenology as a method was discovered and developed by Edmund Husserl;² and it took a definitive shape only after a long period of intellectual struggle with the vague insight he received while he was involved in research on the foundations of mathematics and logic. We do not intend to consider—the purview of this paper does not demand it either—the various phases³ through which Husserl made his intellectual traverse in order finally to arrive

¹ The reason why we have titled this paper as 'phenomenological hermeneutics', rather than 'hermeneutical phenomenology'—this expression is more popular as it is used by Heidegger, Ricoeur, etc.—is precisely to show that we take hermeneutics as developed from and related to phenomenology.

² Edmund Husserl was born in Prossnitz in Mähren (Moravia)—then it was in Austria, but now it has become part of Czechoslovakia—in 1859 of Jewish parents. He did his studies in the three universities of Leipzig (astronomy, physics), Berlin (mathematics) and Vienna (mathematics and philosophy). In Vienna he did his doctorate on "The Contributions to the Theory of Calculus of Variations," and there he attended the lectures of Franz Brentano, and was impressed by the way he linked philosophy and science. Husserl also taught successively in three universities: in Halle, in Göttingen, and in Freiburg. There seems to be a rough correspondence between the three places of his teaching and the three phases of his thought. His mature thought began with a concern for the foundations of mathematics, continued with the development of phenomenological method and concluded with a kind of idealism. He died in 1939 at the age of seventy-nine. All his manuscripts are preserved at the Husserl-Archives in Louvain, established by Herman Van Breda in 1938.

³ Many of the historians of philosophy refer to three phases in

at the method of phenomenology. We shall be exclusively concerned about the salient features of phenomenology as a method, such as intentionality, phenomenological reduction of essence, phenomenological epoché, etc. But before we go into the details of them, we need to make a few introductory clarifications.

The term 'phenomenology'⁴ brings to our mind the Kantian distinction between phenomenon (that which appears) and noumenon (the thing in itself, what is behind the appearance). Husserl does not accept such a distinction; there is nothing behind the phenomenon as the noumenon. According to him, only phenomenon is given, and in it is given the essence of that which is. Phenomenology is the methodological attempt to clarify the phenomenon through an investigation of the subjective consciousness, the objective content of which is the phenomenon. Although Husserl distinguishes between science and phenomenology—the former deals with facts, whereas the latter with essences—he wanted phenomenology to have scientific rigour and philosophical radicalism. As philosophy has to give absolute foundation to all other sciences, it has to be absolutely radical and as rigorous a science as possible.⁵ When he speaks of scientific rigour, he has in mind deductive science like mathematics—a system of knowledge in which each step is built upon its preceding one in a necessary sequence. Such a rigorous connection requires ultimate clarity in basic insights and systematic order in building further upon them.⁶ Phenomenological philosophy should have, according to Husserl, a radicalism of foundation, which positive sciences cannot possibly have. Philosophy has to base itself on a radical—presuppositionless and absolute—foundation. Husserl looks for the ultimate foundation in an original intuition of the things themselves. Hence his maxim “to the things themselves” (*zu den Sachen selbst*) means that we must return to the immediately given and original data of our consciousness,⁷ since

Husserl: the pre-phenomenological, phenomenological and the phase of pure phenomenology.

⁴ The term 'phenomenology' was used for the first time by J.H.Lambert (1728-77) in his *Neues Organon*. Thereafter the important thinkers who used it in their philosophy are: Herder, Kant, Fichte, Hegel, and Brentano. With Husserl the term gets a definitive meaning, Cf., *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, Bd., 7, s.v. "Phänomenologie."

⁵ Husserl has not wavered from his insistence on the ideal of a rigorous science for philosophy from his *Philosophie der Arithmetik* (1891) to *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften* (1936). But he has given a definitive shape to this conviction in his "*Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft*" (1911). Cf., Joseph Kockelmans, *Edmund Husserl's Phenomenology* (Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1994), p. 11; Herbert Spiegelberg: *Phenomenological Movement: A Historical Introduction* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982), pp. 72ff.

⁶ In his Amsterdam Lectures of 1926 Husserl clarifies it in a footnote, saying that the 'rigour' of positive sciences is not adequate enough for philosophy. Cf., Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement*, p.76.

⁷ J. Kockelmans, *Edmund Husserl's Phenomenology*, p. 14.

the things themselves in their radicality are to be found in the very consciousness of the knowing subject. Thus Husserlian phenomenology claims to have the ideal of scientific rigour and philosophical radicalism.

With this introductory clarification we are prepared to look into the notion of intentionality, which is the very core and unique contribution of phenomenological method. Husserl acknowledges that it was Brentano who called his attention to this unique phenomenon. According to the theory intentionality, there is a parallelism between the subjective act and the objective content. In Husserlian terminology this parallelism came to be known as that between *noesis* (subjective act) and *noema* (objective content). The noetic-noematic parallelism stands for a necessary relation between the intentional act and the intentional object. It signifies that all *cogito* necessarily implies a *cogitatum*; all consciousness is consciousness of something. Thus intentionality, by destroying the myth of separating the *cogito* and the *cogitatum*,⁸ reconciles the subjective and the objective. Spiegelberg clarifies Husserl's notion of intentionality by referring to four of its characteristics.⁹ They are the following: intentionality *objectivates* insofar as the perspectival narrowness of the intentional act widens itself so as to embrace the intentional object; intentionality *unifies* insofar as the various perspectives are synthesized in the very same referent; intentionality *relates* insofar as it is able to go beyond the boundary of the 'fact' and thus to be related to its 'horizon';¹⁰ and finally intentionality *constitutes* insofar as the intentional object 'originates' or 'is constituted' in the intentional act. The intentional object is not the brute factual object, but what is constituted *in* and *by* the intentional act. It is nothing other than the 'essence', which Husserl intended to reach by means of his phenomenological method.

Husserlian phenomenology is aimed at the knowledge of the 'essence', rather than mere 'facts' which constitute the object of empirical sciences. Every contingent thing can have an essential being, an *eidōs*, which can be apprehended in its purity by a phenomenological method. Husserl distinguishes between the ordinary experience of the empirical ego, and the transcendental experience or intuition by the transcendental ego. The phenomenologist is interested only in the transcendental experience, which is the essential intuition proper. Essences, for him, are "not the 'empirical generalities' that provide us with types encountered in experience but rather 'pure generalities' that place before our minds pure possibilities whose validity is completely independent of factual experiences."¹¹ In order to arrive at the essence Husserl proposes primarily 'imaginative variation',¹² which can be

⁸ Cf. *Ideas-I*, pp. 199-216; as cited by J.J.Kockelmans, *Edmund Husserl's Phenomenology*, p. 18.

⁹ J.J.Kockelmans, *Edmund Husserl's Phenomenology*, pp. 98-99.

¹⁰ For Husserl, horizon is the setting, consisting of the indefinite possible experiences. It is by relating the actual to the possible, that one is able gradually to intuit the essence.

¹¹ Husserl, *Ideas*, I: 8-11; as quoted by J.J.Kockelmans, *Edmund Husserl's Phenomenology*, p. 15.

¹² Together with 'imaginative variation' Husserl proposes also 'inductive generalization' which is not typically phenomenological in character. Hence many Husserlians do not make mention of it.

understood only in the light of his notion of 'horizon'. An object is actually apprehended only within the horizon (setting) of possible apprehensions. The essence extends beyond the limits of what is arrived at in actual perception. By imaginative variation one moves from the limitation of the actual experience to the indeterminacy of possible experience or horizon. By this process of linking the actual to the possible—the process of widening the horizon—Husserl claims to reach deeper into the pure eidetic sphere.

The act of grasping the essence is referred to by Husserl in different terms, such as eidetic reduction, phenomenological intuition, transcendental experience, etc. It points to the process of penetrating into the very original or essential residue, gradually revealing the pure subjectivity as the exclusive source of all objectivity. In his *Ideas* Husserl distinguishes between two types of reductions: eidetic reduction and transcendental reduction.¹³ The former refers to the reduction of (the universal and timeless) *essence* from (the particular and historical) *fact*; but the latter points to the reduction of the *real* (existent) from the *non-real* (non-existent).¹⁴ Essences as the pure noemata of the pure consciousness are real, whether or not it is reduced from the existent or non-existent object. In most of his works Husserl uses these reductions synonymously, and he speaks of different levels of reduction according to the purity of subjectivity giving rise to more or less pure objectivity. In short, reduction to the essences means 'constitution' of the objectivity *in* and *by* my subjectivity. The objectivity is transcendently related to the subjectivity by intentionality.

Another important notion in phenomenological method is *Epoché* (bracketing). Husserl wanted phenomenology to be a rigorous and apodictic science. In his search for apodictic evidences, "Husserl turns to Descartes' method of doubt, but he changes the act of doubt into an act of 'bracketing,' into a mere suspension of judgment, a mere *epoche*."¹⁵ The act of 'bracketing' goes with the act of 'reduction';¹⁶ in order to intuit the pure essence in the purity of the subjectivity, a radical elimination of the non-essential is required. This process of elimination is referred to as 'bracketing'. The factual or the existential is kept in parenthesis or brackets. The thing under consideration may have factual existence, but it is of no significance whatsoever with regard to its essence. The process of bracketing has to take place both on the subjectivity and on the objectivity. The phenomenologist must be free from all cultural, philosophical and existential bias in order to arrive at the pure objectivity. The *epoché* demands that the phenomenologist take a distance from the various solutions, which in the course of history have been proposed for different philosophical problems. It calls for an ascetic neutrality with regard to the object in question. The purity of the objectivity is on a

¹³ In his *Crisis of European Sciences*, and *Encyclopedia Britannica* Article, Husserl speaks of phenomenological reduction in the place of eidetic reduction.

¹⁴ It is not of importance that the object factually exists or not. That is why something can be intentionally present, even if it is factually absent.

¹⁵ J.J. Kockelmans, *Edmund Husserl's Phenomenology*, p. 16. See also, R. Bernet et al., *An Introduction to Phenomenology*, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1995), pp. 66ff.

¹⁶ The act of intuiting or reduction is the positive, and that of bracketing is the negative aspect in the same process of 'going back to the things themselves' or the essence.

par with that of the subjectivity. By eliminating the factual and existential aspects through the process of *bracketing*, Husserl claims to reach the essence of reality—back to the things themselves.

Phenomenological method as developed by Husserl, thus, deals with the insight into the essence without regard to the existential aspects. It is not a question of making the phenomenon appear in its ‘factual reality’, but in its ‘immanent reality’ to consciousness. This is made possible by the phenomenological or intentional constitution *in* and *by* consciousness. The intentionally constituted phenomenological object is the ‘essence’ of reality, which remains *immanent* to consciousness, and *transcendent* to factual existence.

We have given a rough outline of phenomenological method as conceived and developed by Husserl. This has inspired many a contemporary Western thinker into using it in their philosophizing. Although most of the contemporary thinkers make use of the basic insights of Husserlian phenomenology, hardly anyone uses it in its original purity; they, deviating from strict Husserlian phenomenology, have made different versions of phenomenology. Martin Heidegger¹⁷ is the most outstanding among them with his ‘hermeneutical phenomenology’.

II

Heidegger’s hermeneutical phenomenology got developed mainly in the context of his larger quest for a ‘fundamental ontology’ in the earlier phase of his thought. ‘Hermeneutics’ for him is not a *method*¹⁸ that he makes use of in his thought, but it is rather his philosophy itself.¹⁹ Hence clarification of his method of hermeneutical phenomenology amounts to a clarification of his earlier philosophy. For our purpose, we shall limit ourselves to shedding

¹⁷ Heidegger was born at Meßkirch in South Germany of Catholic parents in 1889. After his university studies he came in contact with Husserl and his phenomenology. The Husserlian method and Aristotelian concern for the question of Being made Heidegger develop a philosophy, that has brought about a revolution in Western thought-structure. In the midway of his philosophical career, Heidegger felt the need to get away from his first point of departure, and developed a thought that was more poetic in style and profound in meaning. After having given rise to such a philosophy, spread out in the numerous works of his, Heidegger died in 1976.

¹⁸ Heidegger gives a new meaning for method: “Der Weg heißt griechisch *odos*, *meta* heißt ‘nach’; *methodos* ist der Weg, auf dem wir einer Sache nachgehen.” Heidegger, *Der Satz vom Grund*, 5. Aufl., (Pfullingen: Neske, 1978), p.111.

¹⁹ He has not clarified ‘hermeneutics’ as a method anywhere in his writings, except for a few pages of etymological meaning of ‘phenomenology’ in the introductory section of his *Sein und Zeit*, 15. Aufl. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1979, (pp. 27-39); *Being and Time*, transl., J. Macquarrie and Robinson, 3rd ed., Oxford: Blackwell, 1973 (pp.49-63).

some light onto the *what* of Heidegger's hermeneutical phenomenology, and the *how* of its development from Husserlian phenomenology.

Heidegger's philosophy is a way-making movement (*Be-wägung*) awakened by the urgency he felt to distance himself from deteriorating Western philosophy, characterized by its oblivion of Being (*Seinsvergessenheit*). The whole strength of his philosophy consists in his placing himself in contrast to the monolithic structure of Western philosophy,²⁰ which has been nothing but an epistemology, a theory of knowledge. In such a tradition Being (*Sein*) was conceptualized as beingness (*Seiendheit*), truth was reduced to correctness, and reality was looked at in its brute objectivity.²¹ The philosophical acumen of Heidegger did not allow him to be another someone flowing along with the old philosophical current of last two millennia. Hence he launched a new philosophical venture—fundamental ontology—with the sole aim of clarifying the meaning of Being through an analysis of *Dasein*. His hermeneutical phenomenology got developed as he carried out this project.

Heidegger begins with an etymological analysis of the term 'phenomenology', which is compounded of the Greek terms: *phainomenon* and *logos*. After a careful look through the ancient texts for the original meaning of these terms, Heidegger shows that *phainomenon* means 'that which shows itself in itself' and *logos* means 'letting something be seen as unhidden'. Thus he formulates the meaning of phenomenology as follows: "to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself."²² From this provisional meaning of phenomenology, it is clear that that 'letting be seen' (*logos*) and 'showing itself' (*Phainomenon*) are complementary and relative; that is, something can show itself only insofar as it is let be seen. The process of 'letting be seen' is needed since *phainomenon*—it is not any entity (*Seiendes*), but the Being of entities (*Sein des Seienden*)—remains mostly vague and hidden. Since phenomenology clarifies the Being of entities, it has to be ontology. "Phenomenology is our way of access to that which is to be the theme of ontology,.....*Only as phenomenology is ontology possible.*"²³ In order to lay bare the meaning of Being Heidegger begins with an analysis of *Dasein*²⁴ as it has an onto-ontologico-fundamental priority over other entities.²⁵ It is in this context that Heidegger finds

²⁰ R. Rorty, "Overcoming the Tradition: Heidegger and Dewey," in *Nachdenken über Heidegger*, ed., Ute Guzzoni (Hilderheim: Gerstenberg, 1980), p. 268.

²¹ Johnson Puthenpurackal, "The Radicality of Heideggerian Hermeneutics," in *Hermeneutics: Truth and/or Meaning*, ed., (Kondadaba: St. John's Seminary, 1994), p. 36.

²² "Das was sich zeigt, so wie es sich von ihm selbst her zeigt von ihm selbst her sehen lassen." *Sein und Zeit*, p. 34; *Being and Time*, p. 58.

²³ Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, p. 35; *Being and Time*, p. 60.

²⁴ *Dasein*, which literally means 'Being-there', is the ontological term for the human being. It is the 'there', the disclosure of Being.

²⁵ Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, pp. 11-15; *Being and Time*, pp. 32-35. For a concise explanation, cf., J.J. Puthenpurackal, *Heidegger: Through Authentic Totality to Total Authenticity*, pp. 8-11.

that phenomenology has to be hermeneutical. “....The meaning of phenomenological description as a method lies in *interpretation*. The *logos* of the phenomenology of Dasein has a character of *hermeneuein* [interpreting]...”²⁶ The ‘letting be seen’ (*logos*) of the phenomenology of Dasein is nothing but interpreting. Thus for Heidegger phenomenology becomes hermeneutical phenomenology. This interpretation (*Auslegung*) or letting-be-seen takes place on the *understanding* of Being, with which Dasein is essentially endowed; this needs to be clarified.

The notion of ‘understanding’ according to Heidegger is totally different from what is ordinarily taken as ‘intellectual comprehension’. It is the ability of Dasein for its Being. To quote from Heidegger, “*Understanding is the existential Being of Dasein’s own potentiality-for-Being; and it is so in such a way that this Being discloses in itself what its Being is capable of.*”²⁷ He clarifies this potentiality-for-Being (*Seinkönnen*) as a potentiality-for-Being-in-the-world, since Dasein is essentially Being-in-the-world. It is on this understanding as openness to or potentiality for Being, that interpretation is based. It is a rendering explicit or clarification of what has already been vaguely understood. That which is disclosed in understanding is made to stand out explicitly in interpretation by illuminating the *in-order-to* (*Um-zu*), which is same as the ‘as-structure’. When the hermeneutical sight ‘sees’ what something is for, its in-order-to, it sees it *as* this something: *as* a pen, *as* a hammer, *as* useful, etc. Such an interpretation or existential hermeneutics takes place in Dasein’s existential living in the world—concernful dealing with things and solicitous relation with persons.²⁸ Thus something is interpreted as a hammer in the existential dealing of hammering; someone is interpreted as loving in the existential relation of love.

The ‘as-structure’ of interpretation is based on the ‘fore-structure’ of understanding.²⁹ Understanding as Dasein’s concernful and solicitous existence in the world is the horizon or the hermeneutical situation. It is from this fore-structure of understanding—the horizon of the world—that something is let stand out *as* this something in Dasein’s existential dealing with it. Thus the process of ontological interpretation is nothing other than Dasein’s letting-be-seen in its existential living. Human existence, according to Heidegger, is *hermeneutical*. What is let-be-seen or interpreted is the Being/meaning of something, and it comes to be in Dasein’s hermeneutical existence. Thus meaning is not anything that is locked up in the object nor is it an external label given at random by the subject. Meaning emerges from the merging of the object’s ‘showing itself’ and the subject’s ‘letting be seen’; and it is articulated in interpretation, and remains articulable in understanding.

²⁶ Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, p. 37; *Being and Time*, p. 61.

²⁷ “Verstehen ist das existenziale Sein des eigenen Seinkönnens des Daseins, so zwar, daß dieses Sein an ihm selbst das Woran des mit ihm selbst Seins erschließt.” *Sein und Zeit*, p. 144; *Being and Time*, p. 184.

²⁸ Johnson Puthenpurackal, “The Radicality of Heideggerian Hermeneutics,” p. 40.

²⁹ The fore-structure consists of fore-having, fore-sight and fore-conception. For a diagrammatic presentation and clarification of the relation between the as-structure and the fore-structure, cf., J.J. Puthenpurackal, op. cit., p. 30.

The special relation between understanding and interpretation creates a circularity of argument, since interpretation makes explicit only what has already been understood. Are we caught up in a vicious circle, or a hermeneutical circle?

In the ordinary conception the process of knowledge is a linear movement—a quantitative acquiring of knowledge. The notion of hermeneutical circle has brought about a revolution. Traditionally hermeneutical circle was understood in terms of the whole and the parts—parts are considered within a whole, which itself can be understood in respect to its constituent parts.³⁰ Heidegger has changed the old circle of the whole and the parts into a phenomenological circle of the implicit and the explicit, of pre-thematic and thematic, of anonymous horizon and explicitly named object.³¹ It is more appropriate to use the dialectics of implicit and explicit in the case of Heidegger's hermeneutical philosophy.³² Hence it is not a vicious circle—a constant back and forth movement between two identical poles. For Heidegger hermeneutics is the process of clarification of the as-structure—a movement from the vagueness of the fore-structure to the clarity of the as-structure. Hermeneutical circle thus is the constant hermeneutical movement from vagueness to clarity of the *same*, or better, *differently same*.³³ Hermeneutical understanding is a going *deeper* rather than a growing *wider*. By going into the *intensively deepest*, hermeneutics embraces the *extensively widest*.

We can get to the deeper meaning of hermeneutics and hermeneutical circle by clarifying the close link between 'retrieval' (*Wiederholung*) and 'interpretation' (*Auslegung*). Since hermeneutics is a clarification of what remains vague or hidden, it is a 'recovery' or 'fetching back' (*wieder-holen*) of what remains latent. The project of recovery which is the hermeneutical strategy of *Being and Time* has much to owe to the Kierkegaardian notion of 'repetition' and the Husserlian call to a 'return to the origins'.³⁴ Heideggerian hermeneutics is a recovery of the origins, a going back to one's very own,³⁵ a return to the primordial and the

³⁰ J. Bleicher, *Contemporary Hermeneutics* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980), p.102.

³¹ John D. Caputo, "Hermeneutics as the Recovery of Man," in *Hermeneutics and Modern Philosophy*, ed., B.R.Wachterhauser (New York: State University of New York Press, 1986), p. 433.

³² Derrida, a critic and admirer of Heidegger agrees that his *Sein und Zeit* is guided by the logic of the implicit and the explicit.

³³ We use the expression 'differently same' to indicate that the same does not remain identically same, but grows into greater clarity.

³⁴ For a detailed study of this twofold influence on Heidegger, cf., Caputo, "Hermeneutics as Recovery of Man," (Art. Cit.); W.V.Spanos, "Heidegger, Kierkegaard and the Hermeneutic Circle," in *Martin Heidegger and the Question of Literature*, ed., W.V. Spanos (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), pp. 115-48.

³⁵ In Heidegger's later thought, this notion is given greater prominence, and it is expressed in poetic terms of 'home-coming' (*Heimkehr*), a return to one's 'fatherland' (*Vaterland*) to speak the 'mother-tongue' (*Muttersprache*).

authentic, which calls for the ‘courage for repetition’. Heideggerian hermeneutical circle contains two aspects: the existential and the ontological, a recovery of the self and the recovery of Being. Both belong together. By heeding to the call of conscience in ‘resoluteness’ (*Entschlossenheit*) Dasein recovers its authentic potentiality-for-Being (*Seinkönnen*). This recovery of one’s authentic self goes with the recovery of Being—reality in its as-structure or meaning—in its explicitness from the fore-structure of one’s understanding of Being. The interpretation of one’s Being (self) cannot be separated from that of the Being of entities, as Dasein is essentially Being-in-the-world. The function of hermeneutics is *aus-legen, ex-ponere*, to lay out, to expose, to uncover, to recover, to make explicit what we already implicitly understand.³⁶ Through such a recovering of the self and of Being, hermeneutics “brings us to stand in the place that we already occupy. It returns us to ourselves, brings us home. It is appropriation and home-coming: coming into our own again.”³⁷

III

Now that we have traversed through the twin-roads of Husserlian phenomenology and Heideggerian hermeneutics, we can now bring them together into a single road where they meet together. Although there exists great difference between them, the purview of our study does not demand that we dwell on it.³⁸ It is the underlying similarity that is the basic inspiration behind this study.

Phenomenology and ontological hermeneutics can be considered both as a critique of and an alternative for the traditional Western philosophy characterized by subject-object dichotomy—the subject that knows and the object that is known.³⁹ Husserl initiated the

³⁶ Johnson Puthenpurackal, “The Radicality of Heideggerian Hermeneutics,” pp. 42-43.

³⁷ John D. Caputo, “Hermeneutics as Recovery of Man,” p. 434.

³⁸ There are several studies relating Heidegger and Husserl. Some of the studies in English are the following: Elliston, “Phenomenology Re-interpreted: From Husserl to Heidegger,” *Philosophy Today* (1977): 273-83; Schneider, “Husserl and Heidegger: An Essay on the Question of Intentionality,” *Philosophy Today* (1977): 368-75; Michael Murray, “Husserl and Heidegger: Constructing and Deconstructing the Greek Philosophy,” *Review of Metaphysics* XLI, pp. 501-18; S. Breton, “From Phenomenology to Ontology,” *Philosophy Today* (1960): 227-37; Schacht, “Husserlian and Heideggerian Phenomenology,” *Philosophical Studies* (1972): 293-314; Timothy Stapleton, *Husserl and Heidegger: The Question of a Phenomenological Beginning* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983).

³⁹ In fact the different schools of Western thought came about as a result of the different emphasis that is placed either on the subject or on the object. Thus we note the swinging of the pendulum from one to the other in rationalism to empiricism, idealism to positivism, etc. Kant made an attempt to reconcile the subjective and the objective or rationalism and

process of doing away with the subject-object separation with his theory of intentionality or the noetico-noematic structure. Heidegger has worked it out more radically with his ontological hermeneutics of Dasein as Being-in-the-world. Thus both of them insisted on the impossibility of separating the subject from the object, noetic act from noematic content, intentional experience from intentional object, the Being of Dasein from the Being of the world. Heidegger spared no effort to insist on the priority of *ontology* (of Being-in-the-world) over *epistemology*⁴⁰ (of subject standing over against the object). According to Heidegger, Dasein is related to the world, not as a knower to the known, but with a relation of existential dealings of concern and solicitude. Dasein's Being-in-the-world is more fundamental than its knowledge of the world. "Knowing is a mode of Dasein founded upon Being-in-the-world."⁴¹ Thus he emphasizes the priority of ontology over epistemology.⁴²

The greatest merit of phenomenological hermeneutics is its unique way in which reality is considered. In traditional philosophy reality has been largely looked at in its brute objectivity—a position of extreme realism. In such a conception meaning or being is inherently present in the object. Thus a table is a table irrespective of its being used as a table by the humans. Even when it is used as a cot to sleep on, it does not cease to be a table, until it is made a cot by a material change. Thus the Being of something has been exclusively dependent on the object. Phenomenological hermeneutics has brought about a revolution, not by switching over to the other alternative of subject-dependence,⁴³ but by transcending the either/or structure of subject-object dichotomy. Thus meaning is neither exclusively locked up in the object, nor is it exclusively imposed by the subject; it rather comes to be in the existential meeting between the subject and object, and in the transcending of their dichotomy. Reality is seen here not in its crude objectivity, but as intentional object as related to the humans. Thus for instance, a *gate* or a *door* is not anything that is made on a wall by

empiricism. But in phenomenology this reconciliation is worked out better.

⁴⁰ In comparison to Heidegger, Husserl is referred to as an 'epistemologist' since he is concerned about the *knowledge* of essences. But Husserl's use of the term 'knowledge', according to my understanding, cannot be taken as in the traditional sense of subject trying to know the object intellectually. We are able to conclude it from the way he explains the whole phenomenological process, which tries to do away with the subject-object dichotomy.

⁴¹ Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, p. 62; *Being and time*, p. 90.

⁴² This priority is well reflected in all of Heidegger's works. It is evident from the contrasting terms and expressions that he has employed. Thus he distinguishes between 'interpretation' (*auslegung*) and 'assertion' (*Aussage*), 'hermeneutical as' and 'apophantical as', ontology and epistemology, readiness-to-hand and presence-at-hand, etc.

⁴³ D. Sinha distinguishes between 'subject-dependence' and 'subject-relatedness'. In phenomenology meaning is not exclusively made dependent on subject, but only related to the subject. Cf., Debabrata Sinha, *Studies in Phenomenology* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969), p. 60.

removing a bit of it and re-shaping it with something else, but it is rather the possibility of entry and exit, of welcome and rejection, of opening and closing. The intentional meaning of *presence*, for instance, is not to be taken as the physical presence with one's body—as opposed to one's physical absence—but as the presencing⁴⁴ with one's existential person. Such a presence can be had even when the other is physically absent.⁴⁵ At the same time, physical presence does not necessarily imply intentional and personal presence. One may be physically so close to me, but intentionally can be far away from me. It goes without saying as to where the priority has to be placed: physical presence or intentional presence.

Both phenomenology and hermeneutics have yet another important merit; they consider reality as dynamic, as different from the traditional conception of it as static. With the notions of phenomenological intuition and hermeneutical circle, a definitive and conclusive understanding of anything is ruled out. Phenomenological intuition is the process by which the 'essence' is gradually revealed. Hermeneutical circle refers to the never-ending process of moving from vagueness to clarity of the same. Thus both phenomenology and hermeneutics have destroyed the myth of 'absolutism' in knowledge. Such a myth could survive only on a philosophy of *dead* concepts with absolute clarity, certainty, and precision. With reality as dynamic⁴⁶ the certainty of knowledge is no more possible. According to such a position, Being, truth⁴⁷ or meaning cannot be encapsulated in static concepts or enframed in perennial definitions; they are in the process of dynamic coming-to-be.⁴⁸

With the conception of reality as *intentional* and *dynamic*, philosophy gets a poetic depth. Such a depth is evidently present wherever phenomenology and hermeneutics are made use of, as for instance, in aesthetics, in theology, in mystical writings, in poetry, etc. Even before phenomenological and hermeneutical method got formulated, it had been covertly in use at least in art and poetry. But after Husserl and Heidegger gave a philosophical formulation to phenomenology and hermeneutics, reality has got *new 'life'*, language has got *more 'depth'*, art has got *wider 'meaning'*, philosophy has got *greater 'relevance'*.

⁴⁴ We use the expression 'presencing', taking inspiration from Heidegger, in order to highlight the dynamic meaning of presence.

⁴⁵ Gabriel Marcel developed his phenomenology of presence from his experience of a deeper presence—the intentional presence—of his mother who dies when he was quite young.

⁴⁶ It was Nietzsche who with his philosophy of life initiated the way of looking at reality as dynamic. Heidegger was very much influenced by Nietzsche on this question.

⁴⁷ For a concise study on the dynamic notion of truth, propounded by Heidegger, cf., Johnson Puthenpurackal, "Truthfulness to the Truth as Openness to the Open: The Heideggerian Perspective," *Vijñānadīpti*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (2002).

⁴⁸ In the later Heideggerian philosophy the dynamic conception of reality has reached its zenith and purity, when he speaks of it in terms of the 'subjectless' presencing of the present. Thus the Being of the tree is the *treeing* of the tree, the coming-to-be of the tree, the presencing of the tree, etc.

PHILOSOPHICAL METHOD IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

Dr. Srinivasa Rao

Indian philosophy is as distinct from Western philosophy in its method as it is in its content. Sometimes it appears that even the similarity between these two philosophies in terms of the basic questions asked is probably only superficial and not deep at all. I can foresee some objection to this observation of mine from those who are votaries of perennial philosophy. They might, for example, ask: Is not the question “What is being?” so common that it was asked by ancient Greeks, by Heidegger among modern philosophers and by ancient Indians as well?

But this question does not seem to me to be a very sound one. In philosophy also, no question arises in a vacuum and without a relevant context just as in any other discipline. The meaning of a philosophical question is therefore a function of the peculiar circumstances in which it comes to be asked, of the background and nature of the questioner, of the presuppositions the questioner chooses to make and so on. If these elements change, then the meaning of the question changes too. Therefore the question “What is being?” is verbally the same as asked by the ancient Greeks and by Heidegger, while it is substantially very different in the two cases. There is a whole background and development of thought lasting several centuries that lies behind Heidegger’s question which is missing from the one asked by ancient Greeks. That is why two entirely different kinds of answers have emerged for the same question—one from the Greeks and the other from Heidegger.

Thus it appears that questions of philosophy, even when asked from within the same tradition, are still not quite the same. They are always local in the sense that they carry with them the flavour of their own peculiar times and circumstances. Probably because philosophical questions do not remain quite the same over a period of time, the methods adopted to obtain answers for them have also changed over a period of time. This is especially evident if we look at the evolution of philosophical methods in Western philosophy from the dialectical method of Plato to, say, the dialectical method of Hegel and the subsequent methods of Logical Positivists, Linguistic Analysts and Phenomenologists.

The evolution and proliferation of different methods in Western philosophy seem to have close links with the way science and philosophy began developing in the seventeenth century. We can see that until the seventeenth century there were but few methods in philosophy. When science started developing quite fast due to the impetus received from the work of Galileo, Newton and others, two very powerful and influential methods in philosophy—rationalism and empiricism—also quickly developed.

It is also clear that certain perceived inadequacies in a method have often led to its abandonment and the development of a new method. For example, rationalism focused exclusively on the most general characteristics of entities to the exclusion of all those features peculiar or specific to them. Descartes thought that the feature of “being extended in space” was the sole important or essential characteristic of “matter.” He also thought that not being so extended in space constituted the essential characteristic of anything mental. Since

Descartes was a very competent mathematician of his times, when he started philosophizing, he naturally relied on the mathematical way of treating the things of the world. This led to remarkable successes as well as deep problems, which is now standard knowledge among philosophers. The notion of “innate ideas” which Descartes developed was pursued and carried to such great lengths in England that Locke had no hesitation in rejecting that notion altogether. But, then, the methods and contents are usually so closely interwoven in philosophy that the rejection of one naturally leads to the rejection of the other as well. So, Locke discarded the rationalist method and developed his new empiricist method and brought in a whole lot of new content as well.

Sometimes radically changed circumstances also lead to new philosophies with their own specific methodological principles. The World Wars and the vast destruction of life they brought about necessitated raising questions about the humans and their life in this world and consequently various Existentialists thinkers flourished in the first half of the twentieth century. Philosophy is always closely linked to time, place and circumstances and this is no less so in India.

The term in Sanskrit that comes closest to the Western notion of “philosophy” is, in my opinion, “*tattvajñāna*.” Of course the term “*darśana*” is often used by Indian writers for “philosophy,” but this term (which literally means “vision”) is more appropriately applicable to the final vision resulting from the process of “enquiry into the nature of reality” (*tattva jijñāsā*). The vision is produced by knowledge and knowledge is produced by enquiry. The knowledge resulting from such enquiry (*jijñāsā*) is *tattvajñāna*. The term *tattvajñāna* clearly has this meaning in both the orthodox (*āstika*) and the heterodox (*nāstika*) traditions of India. For example, Vātsyāyana, the commentator on Gautama’s *Nyāya Sūtras* says: “The ascertainment of a pillar as a man is wrong cognition—the knowledge of something as what it is not. The ascertainment of a pillar as a pillar is the “knowledge of a thing as it is” (*tattvajñāna*). The wrong knowledge [generated by a wrong cognition] is removed by the knowledge of a thing as it is.”¹ The term “*tattva*” from the very beginning is clearly used by Vātsyāyana in the sense of “that which is” or “reality.” In the very beginning of his commentary he says: “Being is existence and non-being is non-existence. When being is grasped as being, when it is grasped as it is and not as contrary to what it is, then it is reality (*tattvam*).”² Grasping the nature of things as they really are, or the correct grasping of reality is most important as it is considered the sole means of attaining “the highest good.” The very first *sūtra* of Gautama gives a list of the categories according to him and declares at the end of the *sūtra* that “the highest good is achieved through philosophy” (*tattvajñāna*).³

1 *sthāṇau puruṣo 'yamiti vyavasāyo mithyopalabdhīh—atasmimstaditi jñānam. sthāṇau sthāṇuriti vyavasāyah tattvajñānam. tattvajñānena ca mithyopalabdhīrnavarttyate...* *Nyāyasūtrabhāṣya*, 4.2.35, page 808, Benares: Chowkhambā Sanskrit Series Office, 1925.

2 *sataśca sadbhāvo asataśca asadbhāvah. sat saditi gṛhyamāṇam yathābhūtam aviparītam tattvam bhavati*, *Nyāyasūtrabhāṣya*, 1.1.1, page 10, Benares: chowkhambā Sanskrit Series Office, 1925.

3 *tattvajñānāt niḥśreyasādhigamah*, *Nyāyasūtrabhāṣya*, 1.1.1, page 14, Benares: Chowkhambā Sanskrit Series Office, 1925.

The notion of the relationship between reality and philosophy runs very deep in the Indian tradition. The content of philosophy is not determined by human wishes, whims and purposes but solely by the nature of “what is.” The nature of reality decides the nature of philosophy and not any human desire or purpose. What the nature of reality is, is to be known through rigorous enquiry (*jijñāsā*). Through free enquiry one can find nothing but “what is there.” This idea is brought forth very clearly and powerfully by Śaṅkara when he extensively criticizes the Mīmāṃsā school. In this process of criticism, he makes use of a certain distinction peculiar to Vedānta in the Indian tradition. It is the distinction between what is *puruṣa-tantra* and what is *vastu-tantra*. Since the Vedāntins are in general accused of blindly relying on the Vedic scriptures, looking into the above distinction also throws light on the correctness or otherwise of this accusation.

Śaṅkara makes the distinction in the specific context of the very sharp demarcation he chooses to make between any kind of *karma* (in this specific context, *dharma* or “duty” as prescribed by the Veda) and *jñāna*. He maintains that while *karma* is *puruṣa-tantra*, *jñāna* is *vastu-tantra*. “*Puruṣa-tantra*” means “dependent upon the human person.” *Dharma* (“duty”) is *puruṣa-tantra* because a person may come to know what is *dharma* through the Vedas and either decide to do it, or may also decide not to do it, or even choose to act in any other manner.⁴ Therefore, the very existence of *dharma* is completely dependent upon, or is entirely determined by, human action. Since *dharma* is produced by human action alone, it is *puruṣa-tantra*.

In sharp contrast to the above, the nature of human action plays no role in determining the knowledge of *tattva* (reality) which is governed entirely by that which it is the knowledge of, viz. Reality. Philosophical knowledge is, for its production, entirely dependent upon “what is there” (reality) because that is what it is the knowledge of. Even if the Vedas extol and exhort *dharma*, if no one in the universe actually desires it and strives for it, there would simply be no *dharma* in the universe and hence the existence of *dharma* is entirely dependent upon men who seek it. But the existence of reality is not similarly dependent upon men who seek it. Reality exists even if no one ever seeks it. Reality is something that *already* exists (*bhūtavastu*) while *dharma* is something that has to be brought into existence by the actions of men. Reality does not depend for its existence upon either human knowledge or human action. Therefore the nature of things completely determines the nature of philosophical knowledge we are capable of attaining, and hence the knowledge of reality (*tattvajñāna*) is entirely governed by what is there (*vastu-tantra*).

Since philosophy (*tattvajñāna*) is “the knowledge of things as they are,” very logically and naturally, the methods of knowing things as they really are become important and central to philosophy. In Indian philosophy, these methods which give us the knowledge of things as they really are, are called “means of correct knowledge” (*pramāṇa*). The various kinds of

4 Speaking of an action like thinking or meditation, Śaṅkara observes: “Even though mental, meditation and thinking can be done as prescribed, not done or done differently because they are dependent upon man. But knowledge is born of *pramāṇa*. And the object of a *pramāṇa* concerns the nature of the thing as it is; therefore knowledge cannot deviate from the nature of the object as action can deviate from what is prescribed. Knowledge is just dependent on the very nature of the object, and not on either injunction or the human person” (*dhyānam cintanam yadyapi mānasam tathāpi puruṣeṇa kartum akartum anyathā vā kartum śakyam, puruṣatantratvāt. jñānam tu pramāṇajanyam. pramāṇaṅca yathābhūtavastuviśayam, ato jñānam karutṁ akartum anyathā vā kartum aśakyam. kevalam vastutantrameva tat na codanātantram nāpi puruṣatantram*), Śaṅkara’s *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, 1.1.4, Delhi: Motilal Banarasiidass, 1964, p. 14.

objects that come to be known through the employment of such correct means of knowing are in general called “*prameya*.” Finally, the correct knowledge itself which results from the employment of the correct means of knowing, is called “*pramā*.” If, for some reason, we fail to know correctly, then we have necessarily failed in employing the correct means of knowing, and in that case the resulting cognition is “wrong knowledge” (*a-pramā* or *bhramā*) as when we mistake a rope for a snake. Thus, every school of Indian philosophy without exception has its own theory of the “epistemic trio”—of *pramāṇa*, *prameya* and *pramā*.

The relation of dependence between epistemology and metaphysics is circular in nature. While a certain kind of epistemology leads to a certain kind of metaphysics, the preference for a certain kind of metaphysics will necessitate the adoption of a certain kind of epistemology. But, whichever way one goes about, there must be a correct match or fit between the chosen epistemology and the resulting metaphysics. It is not always easy to determine their relative priority in different schools of Indian philosophy at different stages of their development. But at a certain stage, a definite pattern seems to emerge. Almost all the later systematic works of all schools of Indian philosophy first expound their epistemology—the type and number of the means of correct knowledge they prefer to accept—and then expound their metaphysics that logically and naturally follows from the means of correct knowledge they have already accepted.

It is very easy to see that the kind of means of knowledge accepted by a school also determines what sorts of metaphysical entities or categories that school is ready to accept or concede. Therefore the metaphysical differences between different schools of Indian philosophy can be closely correlated with their mutual differences in the means of knowledge accepted by them. While the accepted epistemology sometimes seems to dictate the nature of metaphysical entities to be accepted, there are also cases where the epistemological tools are suitably modified by the school to enable it to stick to a preferred metaphysical stance. There is so much diversity in these matters that it is usually very difficult to make even very broadly applicable generalizations in Indian epistemology or Indian metaphysics.

Even then, I am tempted to coin and use my own catch phrase to picturize the situation prevailing in the Indian philosophical scene: “The method of knowing is the method of philosophy!” If the methods of knowing differ in their ramifications, then the resulting philosophies also differ. Therefore it is first of all necessary to know broadly what are the methods of knowing, before going into the question of how they have contributed to the development of different philosophies. In Indian philosophy, the ways of knowing are six. They are: perception (*pratyakṣa*), inference (*anumāna*), verbal testimony (*śabda*), comparison (*upamāna*), presumption (*arthāpatti*) and non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*).

The first *pramāṇa*, perception is ordinarily sense perception including mental perception. It may be determinate (*savikalpaka*) or indeterminate (*nirvikalpaka*), ordinary (*laukika*) or extraordinary (*alaukika*), or of a special kind possible only for yogis (*yogika*) and so on. This is one means of knowing that is universally accepted by all schools of Indian philosophy, but with their own individually prescribed delimitations of what and what does not come within the purview of perception. We will be shortly seeing as to how specific delimitations (and also extensions) are imposed or invoked to arrive at specific philosophical doctrines.

Inference is a process of reasoning by which we are led to what is *not* given in perception, but always on the basis of something already given in perception. Therefore inference is parasitic upon perception in the sense that if nothing can be perceived, then nothing can also be inferred. This inference may be “for oneself” (*svārthānumāna*) as in the case of a man non-verbally inferring within his mind the presence of fire on the hill upon observing smoke there. Or, it may also be “for another” (*parārthānumāna*) as when someone argues to prove that there must be fire on the hill because smoke is observed. This latter form of inference is necessarily expressed in language. But both types proceed from a sign (*hetu* or *liṅga*)—in this case, smoke—to what that sign signifies—fire—between the two of which there is always a relation of pervasion (*vyāpti*). The validity or invalidity of an inference depends upon whether this relation of pervasion is just right, or too narrow or too wide.

Verbal testimony (*śabda*) is not only the most characteristic way of knowing accepted in the Indian tradition but is also one that enjoys a special kind of centrality in many schools. It is both hotly attacked and stoutly defended by various schools. The logic behind accepting it as a *pramāṇa* is that if a person has seen and known things as they really are, his testimony regarding what things really are should be accepted as a legitimate source of knowledge by us at least until we are ourselves able to attain such direct knowledge of things. In so many fields of knowledge we accept the testimony of those who know about all those dozens of things that we still do not know. For example, we do not question the testimony or authority of the particle physicist who asserts the existence of electrons although the electrons are totally unperceived by all of us. Therefore, if the procedure we adopt in the case of the particle physicist (of accepting his authority) is not wrong, there is no good reason to believe that it would be essentially wrong when the same procedure is adopted in the case of a person either possessing yogic knowledge or claiming that all is Brahman. If someone were to object that there is no similarity between the two sets of cases because the physicists’ claims can be verified by certain experiments while those of the Yogi or the Vedāntin cannot be so verified, it may be argued back that just as we may reject the physicists’ claims only when the same experiments conducted by us do not show up electrons, we may reject the Yogi’s claims only after following all the steps the Yogi has followed, but fail to find what he claims to have found. Certain meditative techniques have been adopted in arriving at “higher” and even the “highest” level of perception by the saints and seers in India for several centuries, and unless we can conclusively show that these techniques are fundamentally flawed and unreliable, there will always be reasonable ground for accepting their authority in the matter of what ultimate reality is like.

Comparison (*upamāna*) is considered by some schools to be the source of our knowledge of the similarity of an unknown object to a known object. For example, if someone has never seen a wild cow but has been told by knowledgeable persons that it looks somewhat like a domestic cow, when he later on sees a wild cow for the first time in the forest, he will *know* that it is a wild cow. Some schools do not accept this and argue that knowing something to be a wild cow in this way is simply a case of perception, inference and memory operating together and no new kind of *pramāṇa* is involved. Whether or not comparison is a distinct *pramāṇa* that is not reducible to a combination of other *pramāṇās* has been the subject of extensive debate in Indian epistemology.

Presumption (*arthāpatti*) is regarded by some schools as yet another *pramāṇa*. A typical example of the application of this way of knowing is when we know that Devadatta has gone out, when we do not find him in the house. The champions of *arthāpatti pramāṇa*

reject any possible objection that this knowledge is just a case of inferring the presence of Devadatta outside his house from his perceived absence in the house. That is because Devadatta might be dead, in which case also he will be equally absent in the house. Even if it is a correct inference, it has no ground at all unless the *presumption* that Devadatta is alive is also granted. It is this presumption that lends correctness to the knowledge-claim and hence this presumption is really the source of our correct knowledge. There is a similar extensive debate on whether *arthāpatti* is a genuine, original source of correct knowledge.

Just as we are aware of the existence of things, we are also aware of the non-existence of things. While schools like *Nyāya* contend that both the presence as well as the absence of a jar on the floor is known through perception, others vigorously refute this. They argue that the absence of things is not known through perception but through a special way of knowing called non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*). If, for example, I say today, i.e., on the second day of this seminar, that there is no elephant present in the seminar hall, you may look around if you like, but you will find no elephant and agree that my knowledge-claim is correct. But is this knowledge-claim of the absence of an elephant in the seminar hall therefore based on our perception? Do I *perceive* the absence of an elephant? If I get the knowledge that there is no elephant only on the basis of perceiving its absence, it logically follows that any similar knowledge-claim anyone makes must also be based on the perception of the absence of the elephant.

Now, if any one present here were to claim that an elephant was absent in the seminar hall yesterday also, we would not hesitate to concede it to be correct. But, then how did he *know* the absence of the elephant? Yesterday, did he at any time *look for* an elephant in the room and not find it? Only if he had done that, his perception of the absence of the elephant yesterday could legitimately serve as the basis of his knowledge-claim made today. Please note: we cannot say that he *remembers* that there was no elephant in the seminar hall yesterday, because remembering of anything he *did not look for and not find*, is not possible at all. All memory depends upon prior cognition or perception. If our memory is sound and if it does not reveal a specific object like “an elephant seen (cognized or perceived) yesterday”, this is simply due to the fact that an elephant was *not cognized* (not perceived) yesterday. Therefore “non-cognition” (*anupalabdhi*) of any elephant yesterday (or today) is the source of our knowledge of the absence of the elephant and not the *perception of its absence*. Many Indian epistemologists sharply distinguish between absence of perception (cognition) and perception (cognition) of absence. Only when absence or non-existence (*abhāva*) is treated as a legitimate metaphysical category and is also distinguished from another category of presence or existence (*bhāva*), as the *Nyāya* philosopher chooses to do, any linguistic expression like “I *perceived* the *absence* of an elephant” will be meaningful, because “the absence of the elephant” will also be treated as a kind of entity like the elephant itself.

These six ways of knowing have played a very crucial role in the development of a very large segment of Indian philosophy. For example, if certain forms of verbal testimony (*śabda*) like the Vedas were not to be allowed as sources of correct knowledge (*pramāṇa*), the entire system of Vedānta would have been impossible to either formulate or defend. To explain in detail how the acceptance of a certain theory of *pramāṇa* leads to the development of a certain type of philosophy, one will have to explain the development of virtually the whole of Indian philosophy. Therefore I would like to limit myself to some select examples that illustrate the point I have made above.

Cārvāka or the Indian materialist school is perhaps a very good example. It is a school which is bent upon shedding all metaphysical baggage by choosing to remain entirely within the confines of everyday experience. No original works of the Cārvāka school have survived because this school seems to have been in the minority and was also attacked heavily by all other schools of philosophy throughout history. Even among the several thousand original works of Indian philosophy available today, as far as I know, there is no single work, which upholds or endorses even a single point or doctrine of the Cārvāka. It is a matter of great wonder how a school of philosophy could ever be so completely negative in its outlook as the Cārvāka school is invariably made to appear to be in the works of their rival schools. Even the so-called digests of philosophy usually going by titles like “*sarva-darśana-saṅgraha*” (literally, “collections of all philosophies”) carry summaries of the Cārvāka school that are by no means complimentary in character. I guess there is a good reason why this kind of a thing seems to have happened, but I cannot go into this matter here as it is beside the point of this paper.

If one wants to radically limit one’s metaphysical baggage, as the Cārvāka seems to be keen on doing, then one must also radically limit one’s epistemological apparatus with the help of which metaphysical structures are built up. All traditional accounts of Cārvāka philosophy uniformly declare that only perception was accepted as a *pramāṇa* by that school. This is certainly incoherent since it is impossible to argue out one’s philosophical position without accepting inference also as supplementing perception. Since no one has argued against the Cārvāka that he cannot establish his own position since he does not accept inference as a *pramāṇa*—which point every critic should have made vociferously—we must guess that the Cārvāka rejected a good variety of inferences (like analogical inference) that were very popular among the majority of philosophers and for that reason must have been branded as one who does not accept inference as a *pramāṇa*. If so, it is somewhat similar to Buddhism being branded as a “no-soul doctrine” (*nairātmyavāda*).

Accepting the sole validity of ordinary sense perception has its consequences for philosophy. Theism is ruled out as God is not among the perceived entities. Even an eternal, immortal human self is similarly ruled out. Theories of creation of the universe also stand excluded since no one has perceived the universe being created. Even among the elements that go into the constitution of objects, the element ether (*ākāśa*) has to be excluded since it is imperceptible. Rebirth cannot be believed in, as there is no perceptual evidence in support of it. All metaphysical categories, which are constructions of the mind—which cannot be seen, touched or smelt in any kind of an act of sense perception—should be dismissed as flights of fancy. No scriptures—like the Vedas that talk about transcendental entities—are philosophically admissible. There can of course be no heaven or hell, which ordinary folk believe in. The kind of knowledge that we get in everyday life is what is possible for anyone and there is no special kind of knowledge like philosophical knowledge for which we should look up to someone. Every standard work in Indian philosophy written in the commentarial tradition begins with expounding the Cārvāka stand in this way, and also summarily attacking and dismissing it.

It is generally held that the Buddhists accept only two sources of correct knowledge: perception and inference. The interesting exclusion here is of verbal testimony as a source of correct knowledge since the entire school depends so completely upon the teachings of the Buddha. Is it then that the word of the Buddha himself is not authoritative? Yes, it is

astonishing but true that nothing is to be accepted in Buddhism just because it is said by the Buddha. After giving out his teaching, the Buddha would invariably say something like: “You have heard all this. Do not accept it just because I have said it. Examine it yourself thoroughly and accept it only if you find it satisfactory.” Thus in Buddhism, ‘who says what’ is not important; the reasonability or otherwise of what is said alone counts. If we keep in mind that the teaching of the Buddha was primarily to counteract and nullify the effects of a degenerate Vedic culture, and if we also keep in mind that the authority of the Vedas was regarded as absolute and unquestionable in those times, it is easy to understand why the Buddha adopted the above stance and verbal testimony stands excluded as a source of correct knowledge in Buddhism.

I have observed earlier that the epistemological apparatus may be modified to arrive at or support a specific metaphysical stand. This has happened in Nyāya. One of the most long-standing controversies in Indian epistemology is about the ontological status of the “object” of erroneous perception, like the “snake” we mistakenly perceive in the rope when we mistake it for a snake. Is there a “real” snake involved in such misperceptions? The Buddhists gave the most commonsensical answer: No; there is no snake there, there is only a rope, but the Naiyāyika saw great danger in accepting it. He thought that this amounts to admitting the possibility of a non-existent object appearing in our perception. The Nyāya philosopher who is as much of a thorough-going realist as he is an anti-Buddhist, is averse to admitting such a possibility. His worry is that if we admit that it is possible for non-existent objects to appear in our perceptions, then how can we at all be sure of the correctness of *any* perception whatever? How at all can we be sure that any given perception is presenting the object “as it is”? We “see” a snake; a moment later we no more see the snake, we see a “rope.” If we accept the Buddhist stand, just as a non-existent snake appeared in my perception a moment ago, an equally non-existent rope might now be appearing in my perception. Thus, my perception of the rope is not any more reliable than my perception of the snake. I cannot at all be sure of the correctness of *any* of my perceptions. I am led into the one-way street of scepticism because I accept that non-existent objects can appear in my perception.

How to get over this scepticism? The Naiyāyika has an ingenious solution. Accept that the snake is existent and real, but maintain that it is a snake existing elsewhere, say, in the zoo or in the forest. What exists elsewhere, appears here. That is perceptual error. If what exists here appears here, it is correct perception. This looks fine, but how can something existing *elsewhere* appear *here*? Perception always reveals the objects that are *here*, that are present before us. Yes, that is of course true, but then it is “ordinary” (*laukika*) perception. There is also another kind of perception, an “extraordinary” (*alaukika*) kind of perception, in which entities that are present *elsewhere* are perceived. For example, when I perceive a cow present before me, I also perceive the universal “cowness” which is present in it. Each cow does not have its own universal (in which case it would not be a universal at all); all cows have only one universal “cowness” in common, which universal is present in each one of the cows wherever that cow may be. Therefore it logically follows that when I am perceiving the “cowness” of the cow that is before me, I am also perceiving the “cowness” of a cow in Denmark, in Japan, in short the cowness of a cow that is *elsewhere*. The Naiyāyika resorts to a specious argument to show that the snake that is present elsewhere is presented here, when the rope is mistaken for a snake. This is a clear case of modification of the epistemological apparatus of perception to uphold one’s metaphysical belief that no non-existent entity can be

perceived, or that whatever is perceived necessarily exists, if not here, then elsewhere.⁵

In the same way it can be shown that specific epistemologies that each of the schools adopts is tailored to its metaphysical needs and also that different metaphysical needs necessitate and bring about different modifications in the epistemological apparatus. For example, the Mīmāṃsaka insists that something can be accepted as a *pramāṇa* not just when it gives rise to correct knowledge, but only when the knowledge it gives rise to is fresh and new (*anadhigata*). That is, to count as a *pramāṇa*, it must give us knowledge that cannot be obtained from any other source. The Mīmāṃsaka makes this amendment specifically to accommodate the Vedas as a *pramāṇa*. The Vedas give us the knowledge of (supersensuous) *dharma*, which knowledge cannot be obtained through either perception or inference. But someone may suggest that the Yogis who are capable of supersensuous perceptions may be able to obtain knowledge of *dharma* directly without resorting to the Vedas. That would threaten the *pramāṇa*-status of the Vedas as they are now no longer the exclusive source of our knowledge of *dharma*, with yogic perception being offered as an alternative source. But the Mīmāṃsaka is so keen on ruling out any alternative source of our knowledge of *dharma* (other than the Vedas) that he refuses to accept yogic perception (*yogika pratyakṣa*) as a source of correct knowledge (*pramāṇa*)!⁶

Similarly there are disputes among schools as to whether memory (*smṛti*) cognition can be accepted as an authentic source of knowledge. We can naturally expect the Mīmāṃsaka, the champion of *śruti*, to refuse *pramāṇa*-status to *smṛti* (memory) since the knowledge it gives us is knowledge we have already previously obtained through perception etc., and is hence not new and fresh (*anadhigata*).⁷ There are also debates as to whether any perception can be indeterminate (*nirvikalpaka*) at all, and whether dream cognitions point to real objects or false (*mithyā*) ones. All these epistemological debates have their unmistakable metaphysical underpinnings. Likewise, the bitter metaphysical debate among the Vedāntins about the existence of a “quality-less” (*nirguṇa* or *nirviśeṣa*) entity has led to a lot of sophisticated and subtle modifications in Vedāntic epistemology.

In the light of the above discussion, I venture to propose that the theory of *pramāṇas* constitutes the methodological device of doing philosophy in classical India. Because of this peculiarity, we cannot always classify the Indian schools as exclusively rationalistic or empiricistic, exclusively idealistic or realistic or even as just pragmatic. The diversities in the theory of *pramāṇas* has produced the diversities in philosophical standpoints.

I think that this presentation will be incomplete if I do not briefly discuss the methods peculiar to Advaita Vedānta. The philosophy of Śāṅkara represents a high watermark of philosophical development in classical India. His teacher’s teacher Gaudapāda had adopted the method of analyzing the states of consciousness like waking, dream and deep sleep—which is famously known as the method of *avasthātraya*—to demonstrate his thesis that

5. For a brief treatment of this topic, see Srinivasa Rao, *Perceptual Error: The Indian Theories*, Chapter 5, Honolulu: The University of Hawaii Press, 1998.

6. See Govardhan P. Bhatt, *Epistemology of the Bhāṭṭa School of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā*, Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1962, p. 185.

7. See Govardhan P. Bhatt, *Epistemology of the Bhāṭṭa School of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā*, Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1962, pp. 86-87.

consciousness is the only reality and that it is also non-dual.⁸ Even today Advaitins think that this is the method of arriving at the ultimate truth in philosophy. What is ultimately true must always prevail without getting affected by anything else at any time. The world of waking experiences gets cancelled out by the dream world and both the waking and dream worlds stand excluded from the experience of deep sleep. We wake up from this deep sleep and come back to the waking state once again. Thus the states of waking, dream and deep sleep go on constantly alternating and changing from one to the other; but what remains unchanged throughout all these changes is pure consciousness. It is this underlying pure consciousness that serves as the basis of the continuity of the alternating states of waking, dream and deep sleep.

The Advaitin's argument is that if there were to be no such pure consciousness underlying all our experiences, it would not be possible to maintain that it is the *same* "I" that was waking which went into a dream state later on and then left it to enter into a state of deep sleep. If the consciousness present in waking is different from the consciousness present in dream, and if there is no consciousness at all in deep sleep, how do we then account for the sense of personal identity (the sense of continuity of consciousness) that persists through all the three states? This method of *avasthātraya* involves phenomenological analysis of not only waking and dream states but also of the state of deep sleep which is not at all recognized as a "state" of consciousness in Western phenomenology. The basic point on which Advaitic phenomenology differs from Western phenomenology is that Advaita does not accept "intentionality" as an *essential* characteristic of all conscious states. The Advaitin concedes that only the waking and dream consciousness is intentional. No objects of any kind are experienced in deep sleep and when we wake up from such sleep we are clearly aware that no objects were experienced by us in that state. In deep sleep, the "light" of consciousness persists, but no "objects" of any kind—gross or subtle—are there to be lighted up by consciousness. Therefore the Advaitins argue that objects invariably depend upon consciousness for their disclosure but consciousness is not similarly dependent upon objects for its disclosure. Consciousness is self-disclosing and self-luminous. To become aware of any object we necessarily require consciousness, but to be conscious of the fact of our being conscious, we do not require another "revealing" consciousness.⁹ Consciousness is like a lighted lamp which reveals itself as well as all the objects present before it.

There is one big, serious question which Advaita must answer: if pure consciousness is the one and the only reality, why is it that we always and everywhere perceive variety and multiplicity? It is in trying to answer this basic question that Śaṅkara produced his justly famous works. His answer was that though the one and the only pure consciousness always exists and nothing else which is like or unlike it ever exists, we are completely ignorant of this basic truth. In the place of the only reality that exists we ignorantly think that there exist dualities like "you" and "I" and all other multiplicities that make up this perceived world.¹⁰ The perceived world does not exist in and by itself. It is superimposed on pure consciousness.

8. See *The Māṇḍūkyaopaniṣad with Gaudapāda's Kārikā and Śaṅkara's Commentary*, Swāmi ṅikhilānanda (tr.), Mysore: Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, 1968.

9. The Naiyāyika would hotly contest this, but this is another big story.

10. Śaṅkara's original formulation of the doctrine of superimposition at the beginning of his *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya* is famous as *adhyāsa-bhāṣya*. The original Sanskrit is quite complex, although quite clear, and there are many translations of it available in English.

Such superimposition (*adhyāsa*) is quite natural, pervasive, beginningless and common to both humans and animals. All human beings who are by nature conscious entities, invariably and naturally identify the conscious self with the physical body when they make statements like “I am fat,” “He is tall,” “You are sad” etc. Characteristics like obesity and tallness belong only to the physical body and qualities like sadness belong only to the mind and they do not, and also cannot, in any sense belong to the Self or pure consciousness. Thus all our empirical transactions are rooted in the fundamental misconception that the Self is the body, or that it is the mind, or that it is the sense organs (as revealed in “I am blind!”) and so on. Therefore all qualities, dualities and multiplicities are mere appearances and are mistakenly attributed to pure consciousness, which is by nature one and quality-less (*nirguṇa*). Śaṅkara argues that we must systematically negate (*apavāda*) all superimpositions (*adhyāropa*) and arrive at the correct understanding of the meaning of the expression “I”—an expression which can correctly designate only consciousness and nothing else. The method by which we accomplish the removal of all ignorance and attain the realization of the true nature of the Self is called by Advaitins “the method of superimposition and negation” or “the method of *adhyāropa-apavāda*.”¹¹

Another interesting and peculiar feature of Indian philosophy is that whatever be the specific method adopted by any Indian philosopher in arriving at his basic tenets, there is always an absolutely “general method” used by him in doing this. This “general method” becomes obvious when we study the general structure of just any standard classical work in Indian philosophy, particularly most of the *Sūtras* (like the *Brahmasūtra*, *Nyāyasūtra* etc.) and the commentaries written on such basic works. This general or common method is actually called the “*pūrvapakṣa-siddhānta*” method. “*Pūrvapakṣa*” means “all those positions and standpoints” (“*pakṣa*”) that are “prior” (“*pūrva*”) to “one’s own position” (“*siddhānta*”). The writer of a major philosophical work (or of a commentary on it) first states one by one all the other philosophical positions that differ from his own. Then he offers his arguments as to why the other positions are unsound and unacceptable. At this stage he also considers all possible ways in which all those positions can be modified, augmented and defended (although this has not actually been done by anyone till then). Then he shows that all these actual and possible defences are unsound. After thus showing that every conceivable rival standpoint is altogether unsound, he proceeds to set forth the soundness of his own position (*siddhānta*, literally “settled or established conclusion”) in a systematic manner. For example, if a philosopher thinks that comparison is not a correct method of knowing, he will expound the actual arguments of those who accept it and show them to be untenable; then he will also expound all possible ways in which the *pramāṇa*-hood of comparison could be defended, and show that they all are equally untenable. After this he will try to show that the job assigned to comparison by his rival philosophers can be accomplished equally well by a combination of perception and inference, and that the acceptance of comparison as an *independent* source of correct knowledge is therefore unnecessary and superfluous. In the same way, the champion of comparison as a source of correct knowledge will try to show how perception and inference, either individually or in combination, are inadequate to explain certain instances of our knowledge of things. On this ground he will maintain that comparison has to be conceded *pramāṇa*-status.

¹¹ For an excellent discussion of this method see Swami Satchidanandendra Saraswati, *How to Recognize the Method of Vedānta*, Holenarasipur: The Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya, 1964.

I have tried to give a brief presentation of the extremely complex and inter-twined topic of “method” in Indian philosophy. As I have mentioned already, we cannot place the Indian ‘method’ in any of the systematically carved out Western methods; it is none of them exclusively, but everyone of them inclusively. Hence the ‘method’ in Indian philosophy has to be seen *in* and *by* itself, without making Western methods as the points of reference.

DECONSTRUCTION

Not a Unified Methodology

Dr. Stanislaus Swamikannu SDB

1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to present Derrida's discourse on deconstruction. He is extremely cautious when he is asked to respond to the question, 'what is deconstruction?' This is partly due to the fact that for Derrida deconstruction is not a unified method. In his opinion deconstruction is neither an analysis nor a critique: it is not an analysis for the simple reason that deconstruction does not regress toward a *simple element* or toward an *indissoluble origin* for they are themselves subject to deconstruction; it is neither a critique (neither in a general sense nor in the Kantian sense) for *krinein* or *krisis* (decision, choice, judgment, discernment) itself is an object of deconstruction. It is not a method among other competing methodologies, and it cannot be transformed into one. It cannot be used in the activity of interpretation. It cannot be applied to various sciences in research. However, Derrida acknowledges the methodological connotation attached to deconstruction: "I don't consider deconstruction as a method, a general method, that should be applied to many fields. Deconstruction is not a method. *It has some methodological effects. There are some general rules that in certain limited situations you can draw out of deconstruction and apply.*"¹

Deconstruction is not even an *act* or an *operation*, not because it is passive or that it has no subject, but because it is an event that does not await the deliberation, consciousness, or organization of a subject, or even of modernity. *It deconstructs itself. It can be deconstructed. [ça se déconstruit.]* The 'it' [*ça*] is not here an impersonal thing that is opposed to some egological subjectivity. *It is in deconstruction* (the *L ittré* says, 'to deconstruct itself' [*se déconstruire*]... to lose its construction). And the 'se' of '*se déconstruire*,' which is not the reflexivity of an ego or of a consciousness, bears the whole enigma.

2. Deconstruction: Derrida Speaks

Although Derrida avoids giving any conceptual clarity to the notion of deconstruction, he does respond to questions on deconstruction. We group his responses under the following themes: 1. Conceptual filiation; 2. Deconstruction or deconstructions? 3. Deconstruction is not negative; 4. Deconstruction is affirmative; 5. Deconstruction is not a positive concept; 6. Deconstruction as incessant recontextualization; 7. Deconstruction and undecidability; 8. Deconstruction and metaphysics; 9. Deconstruction and presence; 10. Deconstruction and totalization and 11. Deconstruction and identity. When we combine both what he says negatively and positively, we do get a certain picture of deconstruction.

2.1. Conceptual Filiation

¹ Derrida "Some questions and responses," in *The Linguistics of Writing*, with D. Attridge et al., (Manchester University Press, 1987), p. 262. (Italics added).

Derrida has repeatedly admitted that in using the word *déconstruction*, he wanted to translate and adapt for his own ends the Heideggerian word *Destruktion* or *Abbau*. Each of these words signified for Derrida an operation bearing on the structure or traditional architecture of the fundamental concepts of ontology or of Western metaphysics.

In Heidegger the term *Destruktion* appears already in *Being and Time* in connection with his critique of the history of Western metaphysics. The term did not mean a simple destruction. As Charles R. Bambach points out, as early as 1920, Heidegger indicated that phenomenological de-structuring (*Destruktion*) shows itself not as pure demolition (*Zerstörung*) but rather as a certain directed dismantling (*An-bau*).² Neither should it be construed as a simple "overcoming" (*Überwindung*) of Western metaphysics. But rather it refers to a structural analysis of the already existing ontologies. *Destruktion* (de-structuring) is a structural analysis in which one tries "to destroy the traditional content of ancient ontology until we arrive at those primordial experiences in which we achieve our first ways of determining the nature of Being—the ways which have guided us ever since."³ Such a *Destruktion* is meant to think again what has been left 'unthought' or forgotten: the meaning of Being itself.

To go a step further, according to Gasché, Heidegger's understanding of *Destruktion* is related to Husserl's notion of *Abbau*.⁴ Derrida has been constantly interested in Husserl's thought. His main interest in Husserl was aimed at using the strategies of phenomenology itself to criticise and to go beyond it. He declares that in fact, "it was Husserl's method that helped me to suspect the very notion of presence and the fundamental role it has played in all philosophies."⁵ In the same text, a little further he acknowledges his distancing from phenomenology: "My discovery of the genealogical and genetic critique of Nietzsche and Freud also helped me to take the step *beyond phenomenology* towards a more radical, 'non-philosophical' questioning, while *never renouncing the discipline and methodological rigour of phenomenology*."⁶ In this sense, the whole of phenomenological tradition and Husserlian tradition have to be taken into consideration in showing the conceptual filiation of Derrida's deconstruction to Husserl.

² This citation is taken from the as yet unpublished *Nachschrift* by F.J. Brecht of Heidegger's lecture course from SS 1920, "*Phänomenologie der Anschauung und des Ausdrucks: Theorie der philosophischen Begriffsbildung*," p. 15, from May 20, 1920. Cited in Charles R. Bambach, "Phenomenological Research as *Destruktion*: The Early Heidegger's Reading of Dilthey," in *Philosophy Today*, 37/2-4 (Summer 1993), p. 118.

³ M. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 44.

⁴ Gasché also relates elsewhere Derrida's deconstruction to Merleau-Ponty's notion of *hyper-reflection*. See his "Meconstruction as Criticism," pp. 184-185. In this essay he also relates deconstruction to Lyotard's use of this notion. Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 183-183. It can also be argued that the concept (?) of deconstruction is anterior to the word deconstruction.

⁵ "Jacques Derrida: Deconstruction and the Other," in R. Kearney, *Dialogues with Contemporary Continental Thinkers* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984). p. 109.

⁶ *Ibid.* (Italics added).

We see repeated indications in Derrida's writings that it is not only the whole of phenomenological tradition that should be taken into consideration to show deconstruction's conceptual link, but also those trends in philosophy, like 'structuralism' and 'post-structuralism.' The latter refers to Husserl's phenomenology, Jacques Lacan's reformulation of psychoanalysis, Jean Paul Sartre's insistence on human freedom in his atheistic existentialism, Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutical philosophy securing a renewed place of subjectivity, Merleau-Ponty's existentialist interpretation of phenomenology, Michel Foucault's major contribution to the relations between political, administrative, and epistemological structures, Jean-Francois Lyotard's significant intervention in the current discussion of modernity and postmodernity. These different philosophies were a critical response to structuralism. In short, French post-structuralist thought as a whole has to be in some way associated with Derrida's project of deconstruction, for the latter is Derrida's contribution to the same debate. Derrida also implicitly acknowledges the fact that deconstruction was immediately associated with *structuralism*⁷ –as a criticism of the latter—which led to construing deconstruction as a negative procedure. Since in French '*destruction*' implied annihilation (closer to Nietzschean 'demolition'), he says that he examined whether the word *deconstruction* (he says that the word came to him spontaneously) would be a good French word for translating the Heideggerian word. He found the word in *L'ittré*. Fortunately he found there that "the grammatical, linguistic, or rhetorical senses [... were found bound up with a mechanical sense [portée machinique],"⁸ which he naturally adapted to what he wanted to suggest.

Though Heidegger's *Destruktion*, Husserl's *Abbau* and *Phenomenological reduction* (*epoché*), and criticism of 'Structuralism' are, as Derrida explicitly acknowledges, the close conceptual filiations of deconstruction, however, he relativises any straight-line conceptual link. The conceptual filiation of deconstruction is far more complex.

2.2. Deconstruction or Deconstructions?

There have been temptations to reduce deconstruction to one or the other of these models: linguistico-grammatical, semantic, and mechanical. Derrida would prefer to use the term in its plural form: deconstructions.⁹ In other words, deconstruction is not univocal. Derrida expresses it as follows: "If I had to risk a single definition of deconstruction, one as brief, elliptical, and economical as a password, I would say simply and without overstatement: "plus d'une langue." It is for the same reason that Derrida hesitated to call deconstruction a clearly defined methodology that can be applied to many fields.

In *Passions: Oblique Offering*¹⁰ which is his response or non-response to a collection of essays written on his thought, Derrida takes distance from two irreconcilable assimilations

⁷ There are sufficient reasons for associating deconstruction with structuralism. His constant references to the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, one of the founders of structural linguistics, his criticism of Claude Lévi-Strauss (*Of Grammatology*), and his familiarity with Russian formalism in linguistics (*Positions*) are well known, particularly in his discussions on 'sign.' Cf. WD, p. 3, 13-14.

⁸ IJF, p. 2.

⁹ Cf. p. 262.

¹⁰ Derrida, J., '*Tassions: 'An Oblique Offering*,' Trans. David Wood, in *Derrida: A Critical Reader*, (Ed.) by David Wood, (Oxford/Cambridge: Blackwell, 1992), pp. 5-35.

of deconstruction: Those who consider deconstruction to be a modern form of immorality, of amorality or of irresponsibility and those who discern encouraging signs and in increasing numbers which would testify to a permanent, extreme, direct or oblique, in any event, increasingly intense attention, to those things which one could identify under the fine names of 'ethics', 'morality,' 'responsibility,' 'subject,' etc. Derrida considers both these as opposing moralisms,¹¹ and eventually rejects them. One of the reasons given for this rejection is implicitly present in Derrida's passing comment on deconstruction in the following sentence: 'Some minds believing themselves to have found in Deconstruction ('*La Deconstruction*'), as if there were only one, [...].'¹² In other words, Derrida criticises both the above mentioned groups, those who consider deconstruction as immoral and those who hope to find an ethics in deconstruction, for making deconstruction a *univocal, homogeneous, a well defined, totalizing* procedure or method. In deconstruction, the consequence of such a totalizing procedure itself is at stake.¹³

It would be equally a mistake to reduce deconstruction to either analysis or synthesis, construction or destruction. For it would be tantamount to accepting a univocal meaning of deconstruction which Derrida has painstakingly fought against. The following words of Derrida therefore could serve as a good summary and a conclusion of what we have been trying to explain so far concerning the conceptual filiation of deconstruction: "What deconstruction is not? everything of course! What is deconstruction? nothing of course!"¹⁴

2.3. Deconstruction Is not Negative

Deconstruction has been repeatedly labelled by its critics as something negative. Equally repeatedly Derrida has been categorical in denying this criticism. As we have already observed, deconstruction was associated with structuralism. But it was associated with structuralism in a dual sense: both as a structuralist and a post-structuralist enterprise. Since the latter aspect of deconstruction was construed as a critique or dismantling of structuralism—as Derrida himself acknowledges—it was interpreted as a negative operation. However, he comments: "[T]he undoing [...] was not a negative operation. Rather than destroying, it was also necessary to understand how an 'ensemble' was constituted and to reconstruct it to this end."¹⁵ Since the word deconstruction has a negative appearance, whatever may be the strategy one follows, it is difficult to erase its negative appearance. This is why he says that this word was not a satisfactory one for what he wanted to do. It is for this reason, he says, that he was forced to "multiply the cautionary indicators and put aside all the traditional philosophical concepts, while reaffirming the necessity of returning to them, at least under erasure."¹⁶

¹¹ *ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 13. (Italics added).

¹³ Derrida, *Memoires for Paul de Man*, p. 17.

¹⁴ IJF, p. 5.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

2.4. Deconstruction Is Affirmative

Derrida goes a step further and claims that deconstruction is not only 'not' a procedure but it also entails an affirmative moment:

Deconstruction certainly entails a moment of affirmation. Indeed, I cannot conceive of a radical critique which would not be ultimately motivated by some sort of affirmation, acknowledged or not. Deconstruction always presupposes affirmation, [...] I do not mean that the deconstructing *subject* or *self* affirms. I mean that deconstruction is, in itself, a positive response to an alterity which necessarily calls, summons or motivates it. Deconstruction is therefore a vocation—a response to a call. The other, as the other than self, the other that opposes self-identity, is not something that can be detected and disclosed within a philosophical space and with the aid of a philosophical lamp. The other precedes philosophy and necessarily invokes and provokes the subject before any genuine questioning can begin. It is in this rapport with the other that affirmation expresses itself.¹⁷

However, as this above passage clearly notes, the affirmative moment that characterizes deconstruction is not the 'yes' of a subject.¹⁸ That would imply a sliding back into logocentric tradition of Western metaphysics. The 'yes' is rather the call, the summons, the appeal, the sending of the 'other,' *that resists on the one hand the totalizing endeavour of logocentrism and that at the same time initiates the deconstructive project itself*. The appeal of the other, the alleged call, is not something somewhere outside of the texts that he reads, but instead, the call of the 'other' is what lies suppressed, mastered, totalized within the logocentric interpretations of those texts. The other that calls or summons is like the 'counter-signature' that is always already at work, disrupting and disseminating the identity or self-sufficiency of any signature.¹⁹ All conscious negations and affirmations that take place in the course of deconstruction are conditioned by this non-originary original 'yes' or affirmation. In a certain sense, Derrida's deconstructive writings—which are, with some exceptions, mostly commentaries on other texts, both philosophical and literary—can be interpreted as his 'response' (involving affirmation) *necessitated* by the call or appeal of the 'other.'

Deconstruction, as a response to the call of the other is also a responsible project. Contrary to the accusations of Derrida's critics that he is 'apolitical' and 'neutral,' his response to the other implies a certain ethico-political responsibility.²⁰ However, the latter should not be construed as another mode of presence: 'responsibility for someone or something present.' In order to avoid such a misunderstanding, Derrida accumulates cautionary remarks. Deconstruction as a response should be seen as a promise that precedes one's conscious

¹⁷ P.118.

¹⁸ Cf. G. Bennington and J. Derrida, *Jacques Derrida*, Trans. G. Bennington, (Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), pp. 192-204. In these pages, Bennington reflects on the phenomenon of 'yes' and its relation to Derrida.

¹⁹ P.124. Derrida explicitly says: "Deconstruction is not an enclosure in nothingness, but an openness towards the other."

²⁰ Simon Critchley, *The Ethics of Deconstruction: Derrida & Levinas* (Oxford/Cambridge: Blackwell, 1992).

promises to this or that person, to this or that event. Such a promise is a promise made "in spite of"²¹ oneself. He does not have it here over this or that promise but promise as such. In other words, he has it over the promise one makes in spite of oneself. Derrida declares: From the moment I open my mouth, I have already promised; or rather, and sooner, the promise has seized the I which promises to speak to the other, to say something, at the extreme limit to affirm [...] The promise is older than I am.²² Such a promise, Derrida warns again, should not to be associated with the philosophy of presence. The promise of which I shall speak will have always escaped this demand of presence. It is older than I am or we are.

2.6. Deconstruction as Incessant Recontextualization

In response to the questions posed by Gerald Graff following the much publicised controversy with J. Searle, Derrida writes concerning the relation between deconstruction and context as follows: "One of the definitions of what is called deconstruction would be the effort to take this limitless context into account, to pay the sharpest and broadest attention possible to context, and thus to an incessant movement of recontextualization"²³. Since there is much at stake in this passage, we shall first explain what Derrida means by context.

Derrida introduces the concept of 'context'²⁴ while discussing the essential predicates of writing (written language) in the classical sense. One of the essential predicates of writing is that it "breaks with its context, that is, with the collectivity of presences organizing the moment of its inscription."²⁵ Writing breaks with its context of inscription by virtue of its iterability. The latter refers to the repeatable (iterable) and readable nature of written language in the absolute absence of the receiver or of any empirically determinable collectivity of receivers.²⁶ In other words: "To write is to produce a mark that will constitute a sort of machine which is productive in turn [iterable, repeatable, readable], and which my future disappearance will not, in principle, hinder in its functioning, offering things and itself to be read and to be rewritten."²⁷

The fact that the written language can be weaned from such a context means that it is by its very structure not limited to its context of production or inscription, and besides, it

²¹ "How to Avoid Speaking: Denials," Trans. Ken Frieden, In Sanford Budick and Wolfgang Iser, eds., *Languages of the Unsayable: The play of Negativity in Literature and Literary Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989). p. 13.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 14.

²³ *Limited Inc.*, Ed. General Graff, Trans. Samuel Weber and Jeffrey Mehlman, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988). p. 136.

²⁴ For a clear exposition on the concept of context in general and Derrida's understanding of the same, cf. S. IJsseling, "Derrida over tekst en kontekst," in *Deconstructie en ethiek* (Eds.) Philippe Van Houte and S. IJsseling, (Van Gorcum Assen/Masstricht: Universitaire pers Leuven, 1992), pp. 9-13.

²⁵ *Limited Inc.*, Ed. General Graff, Trans. Samuel Weber and Jeffrey Mehlman, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988).p. 9.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

should be possible to reproduce or repeat it in other contexts. Derrida goes even a step further: "No context can entirely enclose it."²⁸ In other words: "Every sign, linguistic or nonlinguistic, spoken or written (in the current sense of this opposition), in a small or large unit, can be *cited*, put between quotation marks; in so doing it can break with every given context, *engendering an infinity of new contexts in a manner which is absolutely illimitable*."²⁹ Now we can refer to Derrida's central question in the essay "Signature Event Context": Are the conditions (*les réquisits*) of a context ever absolutely determinable? From what we have said so far, Derrida's general answer is that the *context is never absolutely determinable* [italics added]."³⁰ When Derrida defines (which is not customary for him) deconstruction as an "effort to take this limitless context into account," he actually refers to *the structural impossibility of absolutely determining any context*.

But this does not mean that there are no contexts at all. Derrida says that "there are only contexts."³¹ However, these contexts are "without any centre or absolute anchoring (*ancrage*)."³² In other words, no context can absolutely fix the meaning of a written or spoken word. Derrida says: "[A] context is never able to be saturated for the determination and identification of a sense."³³

2.7. Deconstruction and Undecidability

In his written objections to Derrida's works, voicing the mood of many of his critics (American critics, and Searle in particular) after the notorious debate between Derrida and Searle, Gerald Graff says that Derrida's position has been accused of accepting 'a kind of all or nothing' choice between pure realization of self-presence and complete free-play or undecidability.³⁴ Derrida's response to this accusation has been a clarification of his understanding of undecidability. He distinguishes three different meanings of undecidability two of which belong to the realms of the dialectic and the calculable. In the realm of the dialectic undecidability consists of resisting binarity or even triplicity³⁵ which is a characteristic of the dialectic. In the realm of the calculable undecidability refers to the limits of decidability, of calculability or of formalizable completeness. The third meaning of undecidability, according to Derrida, paradoxically "opens the field of decision or of decidability."³⁶ Derrida sees undecidability as a necessary condition for any decision in the order of ethical-political responsibility. In other words, for Derrida, undecidability refers to

²⁸ *ibid.*, P. 9.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

³² *Ibid*

³³ Derrida, "Sending: On representation," in *Social Research*, p. 299.

³⁴ *Ibid.* , p. 115.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

³⁶ *ibid.*

the very structure of any decision making. He says: "Even if a decision seems to take only a second and not to be preceded by any deliberation, it is structured by this *experience and experiment of the undecidable*."³⁷

What Derrida says while responding to a question concerning his recent interest in Karl Marx is apposite. Derrida reflects on the process of inheriting a tradition. Every inheriting involves a decision or choice. He says that to inherit is not essentially to *receive* something, a *given* which one then *has*. It is an active affirmation, a response to an injunction, but it also presupposes initiative, the endorsement or countersigning of a critical choice. To inherit is to select, to sift, to harness, to reclaim, to reactivate.³⁸

Thus, there is nothing called 'the' given of a tradition which we appropriate. Instead there are, besides our active interpretation, already a plurality of 'givens' in a tradition. Such a double characteristic, plurality of a tradition and one's own selection in it, involves risks and dangers of interpretation. Without this danger of (mis?)interpretation there is no inheritance. In other words, Derrida avers that inheriting implies decisions and responsibilities. Without a double-bind, there is not responsibility. An inheritance must always include an undecidable reserve.³⁹ Undecidability does not refer to indecision, indetermination, a strategy of neutrality, postponement, etc. Instead it refers to the possibility of any and every decision making. Without the moment of undecidability every decision making is bound to end up in totalization. He says: "The effect of [... undecidability] is precisely to render all totalization, fulfilment, plenitude impossible."⁴⁰

2.8. Deconstruction and the Closure of Metaphysics

It is by now common knowledge that Heidegger's critique of metaphysics or the overcoming of metaphysics is not an end or destruction of metaphysics but a re-thinking of the history of western metaphysics by tracing it chronologically back to its pre-Socratic beginnings. A critique of metaphysics, on the basis of historical references gives the impression that Heidegger, too, seems to assume some pure, original beginning of metaphysics. Derrida often points this out. In response to R. Gasché, he says:

When Heidegger, in your [Gasché's] reading of him, assumes that behind the Greek language itself [...] there is another language, an 'unthought' for the Greeks themselves of their own language, he presupposes something like an archi-originary intactness that has been basically forgotten in advance, immediately covered over with oblivion from the first, for example by the Greeks. [...] Nevertheless, if it is not a question of returning in the direction of the Greek language, it is at least necessary to presuppose something absolutely forgotten and always dissimulated in advance behind

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ "The Deconstruction of Actuality: An Interview with Jacques Derrida," in *Radical Philosophy* 68 (Autumn 1994), p. 39.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Limited Inc.*, Ed. General Graff, Trans. Samuel Weber and Jeffrey Mehlman, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988). p. 116.

the Greek language—an arch-mother tongue, a grandmother tongue, a granny of the Greek language who would be absolutely virginal: an untouchable, virgin granny.⁴¹

Besides, Heidegger's concept of fallenness from authenticity to inauthenticity, according to Derrida, is another clue to Heidegger's nostalgia for presence. In other words, Heidegger is still not rid of presence which is a symptom of metaphysics or logocentrism for Derrida.

Derrida also re-thinks the history of Western metaphysics, not in reference to its founding moment in history, but instead in reference to its internal limits. Thus, Derrida's deconstruction could be read as an internal critique of the history of metaphysics, which reveals the limits of the latter. On the one hand, the limits are seen as that which threatens the presumed and projected unity of metaphysics. On the other hand, and this is Derrida's basic contention, the same limits are seen as the conditions of possibility of such a presumed unity.

Derrida painstakingly demonstrates this in most of his writings. His deconstruction of the metaphysics of presence has been aimed at showing that the desire for immediacy (presence) and the suspicion of mediation (absence) are themselves a necessary construction of metaphysics and they lead inevitably, in their turn, to different kinds of totalization. Derrida's grammatology (a science of writing) or “grammatological opening”⁴² is an attempt to show this through a detour of examining the relation between philosophy (metaphysics) and writing. The latter is a particularly revelatory symptom. For it helps to detect and put into question the major determination of the meaning of Being as *presence*, the determination in which Heidegger recognized the destiny of philosophy [metaphysics]. We should add that this symptom, besides putting into question the major determination of the meaning of Being as presence (immediacy), also shows how the suspicion to mediation or exclusion and repression of everything which thwarts the desire for immediacy, transparency and presence operates, and how it leads to different totalizations. Derrida's characterization of the history of Western metaphysics as logocentric and phonocentric is based on this symptom. By understanding both logocentrism and phonocentrism, we will be able to understand the significance of the symptom itself. For according to Derrida, theocentrism, the privileging of voice, merges with the determination through history of the meaning of being in general as *presence*, [Logocentrism would] be bound up in the determination of the being of the existent as presence. Thus, an excursus on logocentrism.

2.8.1. Logocentrism

Derrida often uses logocentrism as a synonym for metaphysics of presence. In this sense, logocentrism can be construed as the identification of truth and its origin—which also implies certainty—with presence or logos. Logocentrism refers to that which is 'centred' or founded on the 'logos' (= speech, logic, reason, the word of God?). Derrida uses this term (logocentrism) to characterize any signifying system governed by the notion of the self-presence of meaning, i.e., any system structured by a valorization of speech over writing, immediacy over distance, identity over difference, and (self)presence over all forms of absence, ambiguity, simulation, substitution, or negativity. Derrida says: “*The concept of [...]*

⁴¹ Cf: *The Ear of the Other*: Trans. Peggy Kamuf et al., (New York: Schocken, 1985). p. 114.

⁴² *Positions*. Trans. Alan Bass, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981). p. 4.

metaphysics, which has, in spite of all differences, not only from Plato to Hegel (even including Leibnitz) but also, beyond these apparent limits, from the pre-Socratics to Heidegger, always assigned the origin of truth in general to the logos: the history of truth, of the truth of truth, has always been the debasement of writing, and its repression outside 'full' speech."⁴³ Derrida takes his clue for logocentrism or metaphysics of presence from the debasement of writing. It is a reflection on the latter which would help Derrida to question in turn the claims and legitimacy of the Western metaphysics of presence or logocentrism.

As the previous passage from Derrida's *Of Grammatology* suggests, in the history of Western metaphysics, *speech* has been conferred both temporal and logical priority over writing. In other words, writing suffers suppression or exclusion from full speech. Derrida's choice of Nietzsche's words 'Socrates, he who does not write,'⁴⁴ as the epigraph to the first chapter "The End of the Book and the Beginning of Writing" in *Of Grammatology*, already shows that the debasement of writing is a constant in the history of Western philosophy. The written signifier is always technical and representative. It has no constitutive meaning. The derivation is the very origin of the notion of the 'signifier'. The written signifier or writing is thus the 'sign of a sign,' that is, the instrument or means by which meaning is communicated. Reflecting on Rousseau's understanding of language, Derrida says that for Rousseau writing is the 'supplement of the spoken word.'⁴⁵

According to Derrida, the reduction of writing was part and parcel of a wider phonologism and logocentrism. He is of the opinion that even de Saussure, like Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau, Hegel and Husserl, excludes writing from the field of linguistics—from language and speech—as a phenomenon of exterior representation, both useless and dangerous.

But, writing, though a necessity to preserve and transmit and express speech, is a mediation, distance and non-transparency. In writing, the history of Western metaphysics holds, there is the danger of a distortion of meaning, a loss of certainty, a lack of transparency and an absence of full presence. Derrida calls this privileging of speech or voice phonocentrism. What this presupposes is the conviction that meaning (truth, logos, consciousness, reality) is independent of the linguistic phenomenon. That is why Derrida associates phonocentrism with logocentrism, the belief that logos, truth, the self-presence of full self-consciousness, God, history, man, and other first principles, are foundational, original, transcendental and beyond the contingencies of language and other means of expression. This brings us to one of Derrida's key terms in understanding the logocentric nature of Western metaphysics. The term in question is 'transcendental signified.'

2.8.2. Transcendental Signified

It is in conversation with structuralism and semiotics, particularly in reference to de Saussure's *Cours de linguistique générale*, that Derrida arrives at this term: 'Transcendental signified'. To understand the meaning of this term we need to place it within de Saussure's

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁴⁴ "Aus dem Gedankenkreise der Geburt der Tragödie," 1. 3. *Nietzsche Werke* (Leipzig, 1903), vol. 9, part 2, i, p. 66. Cited in OG, p. 6.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 7, 244-246.

semiotics. The latter construes language as a system of differences. In language, considered as a system of differences, naturally, meaning or significance of any linguistic unit (a sign) is a function of its differences from and relatedness to all other elements in the linguistic system. Which implies that no linguistic unit can be in and of itself meaningful. De Saussure calls this the differential character of the linguistic elements (signs). The following famous conclusion of de Saussure refers to this differential character: In the linguistic system there are only differences, *without positive term*.⁴⁶ In this sense, in a linguistic system, signs are arbitrary and conventional without any natural and inherent properties to them. For Derrida says: "There can be arbitrariness only because the system of signs is constituted solely by the differences in terms, and not by their plenitude."⁴⁷ Derrida acknowledges that, for de Saussure, these two characteristics of a linguistic system, i.e., "the *arbitrary character of the sign* and the *differential character* of the sign [are] at the very foundation of general semiology, particular linguistics."⁴⁸ He further capitalizes on this by saying: "The play of differences supposes, in effect, syntheses and referrals which forbid at any moment, or in any sense, that a simple element be *present* in and of itself, referring only to itself. Whether in the order of spoken or written discourse, no element can function as a sign without referring to another element which itself is not simply present."⁴⁹

If the signifiers are arbitrary for de Saussure, then for Derrida the signifieds are also arbitrary, in that it is their differences as well, that accomplish the work; the signified in turn becomes another differential signifier. One obvious consequence of all this is that nothing can ever escape these differential and arbitrary characteristics of signs. If anything ever claims to escape completely this differential network of linguistic elements, it will be called a 'transcendental signified.' The latter, in other words, is something which is referred to by other signifiers, but itself does not refer to anything else. Thus for Derrida, "transcendental signified, is [... something] absolutely present outside a system of differences."⁵⁰ To put it differently: "[A] 'transcendental signified,' which in and of itself, in its essence, would refer to no signifier, would exceed the chain of signs, and would no longer itself function as a signifier."⁵¹ In other words, a transcendental signified puts a reassuring end to the freeplay of signs. Often Derrida generalizes this: Neither theology, nor "fundamental ontology" nor even logic is capable of 'freezing' the freeplay of the sign system.

2.9. Deconstruction of Presence

⁴⁶ de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, p. 120.

⁴⁷ *Margins of Philosophy*. Trans. Alan Boss, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984). p. 10.

⁴⁸ *ibid*.

⁴⁹ *Positions*. Trans. Alan Boss, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), p. 26. See also MP. *Margins of Philosophy*. Trans. Alan Boss, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984). pp. 10-12.

⁵⁰ *Writing and Difference*. Trans. Alan Bass, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978) p. 280.

⁵¹ *Positions*. Trans. Alan Boss, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981) p. 19-20.

The Derridean strategy of deconstruction is aimed at “the disruption of presence.”⁵² In other words, he discredits the traditional metaphysical understanding of meaning as a presence (*vorhanden*) to be exhumed.

To make enigmatic what one thinks one understands by the words "proximity," "immediacy," "presence" (the proximate [origin], the own [propre], and the pre- of presence) is his final goal. This deconstruction of presence accomplishes itself through the deconstruction of consciousness, and therefore through the irreducible notion of the trace [*Spurs*] as it appears in both Nietzschean and Freudian discourse. And finally, in all scientific fields, notably in biology, this notion seems currently to be dominant and irreducible.⁵³

Derrida acknowledges that he is not the first one to detect and criticize this metaphysics of presence. Instead, he refers to Nietzsche, Freud and Heidegger as philosophers who radically questioned the metaphysics of presence:

[W]e doubtless would have to cite the Nietzschean critique of metaphysics, the critique of the concepts of Being and truth, for which were substituted the concepts of play, interpretation, and sign (sign without present truth): the Freudian critique of self-presence, that is, the critique of consciousness, of the subject, of self-identity and of self-proximity or self-possession; and, more radically, the Heideggerean destruction of metaphysics, of onto-theology, of the determination of Being as presence.⁵⁴

However, Derrida contends, the criticism of the metaphysics of presence itself is caught up in the history of the metaphysics of presence. “[T]he enterprise of deconstruction always in a certain way falls prey to its own work.”⁵⁵ In other words, Derrida says, “We have no language, no syntax and no lexicon, which is foreign to this history; we can pronounce not a single destructive proposition which has not already had to slip into the form, the logic, and the implicit postulations of precisely what it seeks to contest.”⁵⁶

2.10. Deconstruction and Totalization

If there is one concept or procedure against which deconstruction has been constantly engaging itself, it is the concept of or the process of *totalization*.⁵⁷ This term is not univocal in its meaning or procedure. There are numerous ways of totalizing. All that Derrida would like to bring under the blanket terms 'metaphysics of presence' or 'logocentrism' or 'philosophy of presence' or 'phonocentrism,' or 'phallogocentrism' (Lacan's term), could be seen as different

⁵² *Writing and Difference*. Trans. Alan Bass, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978) p. 292.

⁵³ *Of Grammatology* Trans. Gayatri Spivak, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976) p. 70.

⁵⁴ *Writing and Difference*. Trans. Alan Bass, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978) p. 280.

⁵⁵ *Of Grammatology* Trans. Gayatri Spivak, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976) p. 24.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 280-281.

⁵⁷ Those who interpret Derrida as a rigorous philosopher in the tradition of Nietzsche, Freud, Husserl, Heidegger, Levinas, etc., invariably approach deconstruction as a critique of totalization, particularly the type of totalization proper to Hegel's absolute knowledge.

forms of totalization. Though totalization cannot be defined in a univocal way, it could be described in general as the human desire to look for, in different ways, a centre,' or an 'archè' or a 'telos' around which to gather, organize, master, possess, unify or totalize everything else. In other words, deconstruction seeks to demonstrate that any attempt to unify earth and heaven by means of the *one* structure—to explain the material in terms of the ideal or *vice versa*—will inevitably result in structurally undecidable statements which count against the explanatory force of the theory.

Deconstruction aims at locating, liberating those elements, those differences or those moments that thwart such a procedure of totalization. Deconstruction can be seen then as the (procedure?) that seeks to demonstrate, by locating the irreducible differences or alterities in a text, the conditions of possibility and impossibility of totalizing it. In attempting to demonstrate in individual texts the repression or suppression of 'otherness' or 'alterity,' Derrida's claims have been quite modest. He does not pose himself as a 'new beginning' nor as a 'point of transition' in the history of philosophy. He explicitly acknowledges this in the following passage:

From the very beginnings of Greek philosophy the self-identity of the *Logos* is already fissured and divided. I think one can discern signs of such fissures of 'différance' in every great philosopher: the 'Good beyond Being' (*epekeina tes ousias*) of Plato's *Republic*, for example, or the confrontation with the 'Stranger' in *The Sophist* are already traces of an alterity which refuses to be totally domesticated. Moreover, the rapport of self-identity is itself always a rapport of violence with the other; so that the notions of property, appropriation and self-presence, so central to logocentric metaphysics, are essentially dependent on an oppositional relation with otherness. In this sense, identity *presupposes* alterity.⁵⁸

Nevertheless, his uniqueness, his project of deconstruction, his philosophy of difference, his logic of dissemination, consists in *showing how this repression of 'otherness' or 'alterity' operates in different texts in different ways.*

2.11. Deconstruction and Identity

Memory (history) is so much a part and parcel of one's self-understanding and identity that hardly any one would doubt the significance of this thesis. However, when one asks how one forms this memory of the past (to form one's self-understanding or identity), then the issue becomes more complex. Does one remember everything of the past? Or, does one make a selection? Why does one remember and prize some events and neglect some others? Why is one selective? What motivates one's selective reading of history? Is there some constant element that withstands all the vicissitudes of history? When searching for the memory of the past where does one stop? Why does one stop there? Why does one accept something, some event, some person, etc., as the beginning point? These questions enigmatize the concept of identity.

⁵⁸ "Jacques Derrida: Deconstruction and the Other," in R. Kearney, *Dialogues with Contemporary Continental Thinkers* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984). p. 117.

Derrida asks similar questions with regard to the identities of Western philosophy, text, culture, race, sex, tradition, nation, continent, etc. In this context, we shall repeat the response that Derrida gave to Rodolphe Gasché during a 'round-table discussion on Translation' is pertinent. Gasché's question to Derrida with reference to Heidegger's difficulties with the 'unthought' of the Greek language was formulated as follows: "[T]he Heideggerian return cannot be a return to the Greek mother tongue (and to Greek thought), but to something in it, cracking it apart, and which it renders only imperfectly. [... 1 How do you situate yourself in relation to Heidegger's at least implicit recognition of a fundamental lack in every mother tongue, in this case the Greek language, but also in every language in general?]"⁵⁹

Derrida's response is twofold: First, there is nothing like an uncontaminated archi-mother tongue, some kernel that is intact; second, the conviction that there exists something like an archi-mother tongue and an intact kernel "sets in motion every kind of desire, every kind of tongue, appeal, address."⁶⁰ Derrida calls this conviction "a terrible necessity. [...] the desire for the untouchable, for virginity."⁶¹ The desire for such an intact kernel is nothing but a desire for an absolute origin or presence or archè that is uncontaminated. Derrida has been questioning through his different strategies such an uncontaminated absolute origin or presence. The following words of Derrida in response to Gasché express this in a playful way: "I would oppose desire to necessity, to *ananké*. The *ananké* is that there is no intact kernel and there never has been one. That's what one wants to forget, and to forget that one has forgotten it. It's not that something has been forgotten; rather, one wants to forget that there is nothing to forget, that there has been nothing to forget. But one can only forget that there has never been an intact kernel."⁶²

As we can already guess, Derrida's point is that the desire for an intact kernel is another form of reinstating the hierarchical oppositions original/derivative, primary/secondary, kernel/peripheral. Within a hierarchical oppositional structure, identity of something or some one would be seen as a reproduction, an imitation or a copy of an original. This is a static way of understanding identity.

Derrida's replies to questions about identities of the Western philosophical tradition and cultures in general are in the same vein. He says: "Every culture is haunted by its other."⁶³ With regard to the identity of Judeo-Christianity he makes the following observation: "Judeo-Christianity is an extremely complex entity which, in large part, only constituted itself qua Judeo-Christianity by its assimilation into the schemas of Greek philosophy. Hence what we know as Christian and Jewish theology today is a cultural ensemble which has already

⁵⁹ *The Ear of the Other*: Trans. Peggy Kamuf et al., (New York: Schocken, 1985), p. 113.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

⁶¹ *ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 115-116. Cf. also *id.*, "Sendings: On Representation," pp. 298-300.

⁶³ "Jacques Derrida: Deconstruction and the Other," in R. Kearney, *Dialogues with Contemporary Continental Thinkers* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), p. 116.

been largely 'Hellenized' He goes a step further and affirms that not only is Judeo-Christianity 'a cultural ensemble,' but so is Greek philosophy a similar hybrid. He expresses it as follows: "From the very beginnings of Greek philosophy the selfidentity of the Logos is already fissured and divided."⁶⁴ However, the 'otherness' which fissures the allegedly unified and solid Greek philosophy is not necessarily something that comes from outside. Greek philosophy or for that matter any tradition is always already divided in itself. Thus, for Derrida, "identity presupposes alterity."⁶⁵

In our view Critchley's interpretation of Derrida's deconstruction of the Western tradition brings out the enigma of identity claims implied in it in a forceful way. Basically, the complexity of the issues related to identity formation converge on the question of the form 'what is ... ?' Was this not already Heidegger's question? Is it not this question that has been the unthought thought of Western tradition? Is it not in the name of this question that Heidegger detected the onto-theological structure of Western metaphysics? Derrida too struggles with this fundamental question. But the style of posing this question and the manner in which he works this out are already characterized by his deconstructive strategy: an appropriation of the Heideggerian legacy which goes hand in hand with an expropriation. Would this then be the identity of deconstruction? Can Heidegger be the only source of the identity of deconstruction. The identity of deconstruction, as Derrida's own understanding of identity shows, has to be sought not only in Heidegger, but also to be seen in those authors he appropriates and expropriates. There is nothing called *the identity of deconstruction*. Just like any identity, it is an irreducible hybrid of ensembles. It cannot be appropriated in a unified and linear fashion. Every appropriation of deconstruction, ours included, is both an appropriation and an expropriation.

⁶⁴ "Jacques Derrida: Deconstruction and the Other," in R. Kearney, Dialogues with Contemporary Continental Thinkers (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984). p. 117.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*; Cf. also S. Critchley, Black Socrates? Questioning the philosophical tradition, " in *Radical Philosophy* 68 (Jan/Feb 1995), pp. 17-26.

METHOD FOR INDIAN CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHIZING

An Introductory Reflection

Augustine Thottakara, cmi

1. Introduction:

We are here in search of an appropriate and relevant methodology for Indian Christian Philosophizing. In the noble task of philosophizing as Indian Christians we need to harmoniously blend the two great and exalted patrimonies we possess, the *Indian* and the *Christian*, and evolve a meaningful and pertinent methodology. Keeping these two magnificent traditions in mind, I am trying to present some thoughts that crossed my mind in this regard.¹

2. Proposed Characteristics of Indian Christian Philosophizing:

We do not have a readymade methodology for our Indian Christian philosophizing; we are in search of one, or rather we are trying to evolve one. We can start our journey towards this goal by proposing some of the features such a methodology should have.

2.1. *Suffering Is the Starting Point of Philosophy in India*

An oft-repeated refrain of philosophers in India is that the starting point of all Indian thinking and philosophy is the reflection on the inner Self. Explanation of the external phenomenal world is sought in this Self, which is seen as the ground of all existence. Consequently, it is argued that Indian philosophy is more experiential than experimental, more subjective than objective, more synthetical than analytical, more a search than a research, more immanent than transcendent and more intuitive than logical. This might be true. Equally true is the statement that philosophizing in India starts with the fact of suffering in the embodied existence of humans. The starting point of Buddhist philosophy and spirituality is the fact of suffering. The first of the four noble truths, which form the basic tenets of Buddhism, is that everything is misery or suffering (*sarvam duhkham*). The basic postulate and fundamental belief of all the systems of Indian philosophy is that this life is a bondage, and that bondage causes sufferings. Samkhya philosophy, which is the oldest of all the six Vedic systems of philosophy, says that human life is constantly tormented by three types of suffering: (i) Suffering caused by one's own impaired mental status, wrong perceptions and vitiated attitudes. We ourselves are source of suffering for us (*adhyatmika-kleśa*). (ii) Suffering caused by the elemental world, by others and by the powers of nature. Other humans, other beings and forces of nature can cause suffering for us (*adhibhautika-kleśa*). (iii) Suffering caused by supra-natural beings, heavenly planets, stars, etc. Supra mundane forces and beings can be sources of our sufferings (*adhidaivika-kleśa*). The very first verse of the basic text of Samkhya philosophy entitled *Samkhya-kārika*, written by Isvarakṛṣṇa, emphatically states that philosophizing starts from the fact of these three types of

¹ A previous study of mine is of help in my present attempt.

Augustine Thottakara, "Philosophy as Darśana", in
Augustine Thottakara (Ed.), *Philosophical Education in
Indian Seminaries*, Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications,
2003, pp.29-42.

suffering. “From the sorrows caused by the three kinds of miseries proceeds a desire for the inquiry into the means of destroying these sufferings...” (*Samkhya-kārika* 1).

The Indian Christian philosopher should, I presume, be and do the same. Christian philosophizing should emerge from the actual human conditions, especially from the awareness and experience of the unwholesome predicaments of human existence. Philosophy as mere abstract and abstruse, theoretical and academic, meta-worldly and supra-normal speculation has little relevance, significance and use today. Philosophy should get out of the grips of some illuminati who find joy in arid intellectual acrobatics around some abstract concepts, which have no bearing to life and its multifarious predicaments. Every aspect of human life, especially the grief-stricken dimension of human existence, should become objects of philosophical deliberations. The awareness of miseries, pains, wants and helplessness of the poor and marginalized, the oppression, persecution and injustice inflicted upon the defenseless people by the oppressive structures of the society, etc., should become the springboard for further philosophical activity.

Buddhism realized that a genuine seeker of *nirvāṇa* has to be a benefactor of humanity, especially the suffering humanity. Mahayana Buddhism practised and propagated the great principles of *maitri* (loving friendship) and *karuṇā* (mercy). These two virtues and values are the noblest and very sublime dimensions of *ahimsā*, non-violence. The *bodhisattva* ideal of Mahayana Buddhism is a magnificent and very eminent form of selfless altruism. A liberated person willingly and readily postpones the bliss of eternal liberation for the sake of others. He/she continues in bodily existence to work for the well being and liberation of others. For Jainism *ahimsā* is the very basic principle of religiosity and the criterion and norm of spiritual life. For Jains non-violence is not only a moral virtue or an ethical principle, but also is the essential part of Jain faith and the surest means for total liberation. *Ahimsā* is also expressed in positive terms in Jainism. Thus concepts like mercy (*dayā*), benevolent friendship (*maitri*), happiness in the company of virtuous (*pramoda*), indifference in the company of wicked (*mathyastha*), etc. express that *ahimsā* is not only simply refraining from inflicting injury to other lives, but also positive care for them.

2.2. Need of the Triple Dialogue

The Federation of the Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) always insists that the Churches in Asia and Asian theologies should engage in a triple dialogue, namely, dialogue with the poverty of Asia, with its cultural diversities and religious pluralism. In its very first assembly FABC stated:

[The Church has to be] a Church incarnate in a people, a Church indigenous and inculturated. And this means concretely a Church in continuous, humble and loving dialogue with the living traditions, the cultures, the religions—in brief, with all the life-realities of the people in whose midst it has sunk its roots deeply and whose history and life it gladly makes its own. It seeks to share in whatever truly belongs to that people: its meanings and its values, its inspirations, its thought and its language, its songs and its artistry...; even its frailties and failings it assumes, so that they too may be healed. For so did God's Son assume the totality of our fallen human condition (save only for sin) so that He might make it truly His own, and redeem it in His paschal mystery.²

² *Texts, Documents and other Papers from the Federation of the*

Indian Christian philosophy too should definitely engage in this triple dialogue with the triple Asian realities. It is high time that the Indian Christian philosopher turns his/her serious attention to Asia, to Asian cultures, religions and philosophies. China has more than one billion inhabitants. Around one sixth of the present-day humanity lives there. Any cultured human should have some basic knowledge about the philosophical, cultural and religious heritage of this mammoth populace. Asian realities should provide the tools and raw materials for an Indian Christian philosopher to do philosophy. There is an urgent need of rewriting the history of philosophy, giving due importance to Asian philosophies.

As Indians we have a greater responsibility and obligation to do philosophy in the religious, cultural and philosophical context of India. There is no denying of the fact that India possesses a very ancient and immensely rich philosophical tradition. It would be a shame if an Indian Christian philosopher if he/she is not able to imbibe inspiration and impetus from this great reservoir of wisdom. This has become all the more important because of the criticism from various quarters that the Indian Christians have no regard and love for Indian philosophy, culture and spirituality; that they are alienated from the main stream national life because of their allegiance to a Semitic religion and foreign connections. An Indian Christian philosopher should have genuine appreciation for the cultural heritage of this country, its philosophies, religions, art forms and symbols. Themes of systematic philosophy like Metaphysics, Philosophy of God, Philosophy of human being, etc. should also be analysed, deliberated and taught in the light of the Indian counter-parts of these disciplines.

2.3. Science and Philosophy

Philosophizing is being done today in a very different social-cultural milieu and environment and with a different mental attitude and different objectives than the philosophizing done in the periods of Aristotle and Aquinas. All those great philosophers of the distant past lived in an ambience and social climate where speculative and abstract thinking, intellectual exercises around abstruse concepts had greater scope, relevance and acceptance. We live in an age in which primarily science and technology determine and dictate the nature, make-up and expressions of human life. Science and its discoveries have invaded almost all realms of human life. Scientific discoveries and technological innovations have definitely improved the quality of life of the humans immensely, provided them with a new vision and new power in life. The method and methodology of scientific inquiry into the mysteries of nature exert greater appeal to the searching mind. But at the same time often they pose challenges to traditional values and concepts of moral principles. Philosophy and science can and should mutually enrich, help, empower and also rectify.

Needless to say that India is one of the scientifically most advanced countries of the world, and the results of scientific discoveries are invading slowly but steadily even the remotest villages of India. Philosophizing in India should definitely take science and technology, their inventions and their methodology seriously.³

Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) in Connection with the Third General Synod of Bishops, Rome. 1974, Digna C. Dacanay (ed.), Manila: Cardinal Bea Institute, 1976, book 2, p.332.

2. 4. Philosophy as *Darśana*

In the West philosopher may be considered as an outside spectator who intellectually analyses the realities using the tools of logic, his power of reason and a defined cogitational process. In India a philosopher is an involved experiencer who, as has already been mentioned earlier, tries to find meaning to events and realities from his/her inner experience. This leads the philosopher to the vision of reality in its totality. Philosophy is *darśana*, vision of reality. For this, of course, the seeker needs also the correct spiritual disposition and purity of mind. Philosophy needs spirituality. Direct, transcendental vision or insight is the content as well as the goal of philosophy. A philosopher in this respect is not only a lover of wisdom, but also a lover vision of the true ultimate Reality; he/she is also a spiritual aspirant, a *brahma-jijñāsu*, one who intensely desires to know Brahman, God. Philosophy is not mere intellectual exercises geared up to enter into the intricacies of existence and phenomenal world by the power of reason, but it is a form of intellectual discipline supported and sustained by life of spirituality. In fact, the six systems of philosophy, which are called six visions, *sat-darsanas*, are outcomes of such direct, experiential vision and insight into the Reality by the sages and saints of the past.

Philosophy is not only a view of life, but also a way of life. Philosophy is a speculative branch of knowledge; but it has to be also praxis-oriented. Philosophy in India is not only arid cogitation, but also creative seeing (*darsana*). Philosophizing is an intellectual activity, but, being *darsana*, it is also a spiritual act. Philosophy should integrate intellect, mind, heart and the other-oriented activity. Philosopher is a researcher of truth; but he should also become a seeker and lover of truth and an aspirant of spiritual eminence. The great philosophers of ancient India were undoubtedly great sages, saints and mystics. The great Vedantins of history like Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhva were primarily saints who were philosophers. The eminent philosophers of contemporary India too, like Aurobindo, Vivekananda, and Gandhi, were men of deep spirituality. Philosophical deliberations ensued from their spiritual worldview.

The word *darśana* is used for the first time, it seems to me, in the sense of philosophy in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up* IV.5.6, where Yajnavalkya admonishes his wife Maitreyi, “The supreme Self, O Maitreyi, is to be seen through hearing, reflection and through contemplation” (*śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsna*). Therefore, real philosophizing and consequent vision of the Reality take place through these three steps. First, gather correct information from outside through the proper means for right knowledge like listening, reading, etc. (*śravaṇa*); second, critically and logically analyse these data through reflection and speculation (*manana*); and third, accept and assimilate the correct doctrinal conclusion in one’s own life through contemplation (*nididhyāsna*). The three eminent means proposed by the Upanishad then, and propagated by Sankara later, definitely constitute a model for Indian Christian philosophizing. Philosophical conclusions should become objects of prayer and they should have bearing to actually lived life.

Our philosophizing now stops short with the first two steps, namely, *śravaṇa* and *manana*. Philosophizing in India needs the third step, namely, *nididhyāsana*, meditation and

³ The two studies on “Science and Philosophy” in this book will shed more light onto this area.

contemplation. It may sound that that I am now walking in the realm of spirituality and am not talking about philosophy. Precisely that is the point. Time and again we proclaim that philosophizing should become more context-sensitive and life-oriented. Philosophical speculation, that is, the act of philosophizing, should happen in relation to the actually lived life in the specific socio-religious, economico-cultural, politico-national, and environmental-cosmic contexts in which the philosopher lives, thinks, writes, learns and teaches. We need to interiorize philosophical issues through meditation. For example, if one is teaching philosophy of human being, there is no harm in organizing meditation/prayer sessions on the existence, nature and activities of the human, and on human conditions.

2.5. Two Types of Knowledge

What is the objective or goal of philosophizing? Is philosophy an end in itself? Formerly we used to say that philosophy is the handmaid of theology, *ancilla theologiae*. Now nobody may dare to say that. Theology, philosophy, etc. are not absolute realities. They are creations of human mind, and we should realize the God is greater than theologies and philosophies. For the Indians philosophical, scriptural and theological knowledge and wisdom form only a lower type of knowledge. The *Muṇḍaka Up.* I.1.3 declares:

There are two kinds of knowledge to be acquired, as indeed the knowers of Brahman of old have said, namely, the lower knowledge and higher knowledge.

Of these the lower knowledge consists of the wisdom of *R̥gveda*, *Yajurveda*, *Sāmaveda*, *Atharvaveda*, science of phonetics, laws of rituals, grammar, etymology, poetical metrics and astronomy. And the higher knowledge is that by which the Imperishable is realized.

According to the philosophical tradition of India, the basic means for right knowledge are three, namely, perception (*pratyakṣa*), inference (*anumāna*) and verbal testimony (*śabda*).⁴ The Upaniṣad here very emphatically declares that all the knowledge and information we acquire through all these right means for right knowledge actually belongs to the lower form of knowledge (*aparā vidyā*). Even the divine and sacred knowledge enshrined in the revealed holy texts about supra-mundane and supernatural realities, even the wisdom we gather from the mouth of the revered teacher—all these knowledge data belong to the lower level of knowledge.

What is then the higher knowledge or the supreme wisdom (*parā vidyā*)? The Upaniṣad defines it as ‘the knowledge by which the Imperishable is realized’. This is an inner experience and is in the form of intuitive, immediate, direct mystical knowledge of the Divine. This is the goal of all his spiritual endeavours (*sādhana*s). It is evident that the lower knowledge (*aparā vidyā*) is the remote means and the supreme knowledge (*parā vidyā*) is the

⁴ It is to be noted here that the number of means for knowledge (*pramāṇa*) is different in different systems of Indian philosophy. The materialists would say that there is only one means for knowledge, that is, sense perception; but the later Advaita School and Kumarila School of Mimamsa would say that there are six means for acquiring knowledge.

immediate and definite means to reach the goal. Through the lower types of knowledge we gain correct spiritual perspective and select right options for life, which would in turn purify our mind and make us receptive of the higher form of experiential mystical knowledge.

In fact, India does not know pure philosophy as such, as it is understood in the West. Even the so-called philosophical systems are in the final analysis, spiritual in nature. For example the system of Nyaya deals with logic. It treats primarily the four means for right knowledge. But ultimately it would ask the question: ‘What is the use of this knowledge? Would this knowledge help me to transcend the inexorable chain of births, deaths and rebirths?’ Then the discussion slips into the deliberations about the ways and means for attaining eternal Liberation and freedom. Vaisesika which is the philosophy of nature and world, starts its foundational text, the *Vaisesika-sutra*, with the definition of dharma, and it defines dharma as that by which prosperity in life (*abhyudaya*) and eternal liberation (*nihsreyas*) are attained (*Vaisesika-sutra* I.1.1).

Philosophizing in India, thus, consists primarily of such a striving to attain the spiritual knowledge or liberation. And the Indian Christian Philosopher needs to take serious note of it. We need to redefine philosophy, I would say, very urgently. Most of us are trained in western universities. The training programme of Indian universities and seminaries is totally and thoroughly western, with some courses on Indian philosophy as corollaries. Western philosophy is too much anthro-centric; it is too speculative and too intellectually oriented, and too much conceptual and theoretical. By long tradition and training, by uncritical acceptance of western concepts, we are programmed in such a way that by the word ‘philosophy’ we can only think of and understand the western paradigm. We need to make a shift in this paradigm and understand philosophizing in the context of India. Philosophy is *darśana*, and philosophy is *aparā vidyā*, which should eventually lead us to *parā vidyā* and *para-darśana*.

Sri Mata Amritanandamayi Devi tries to integrate science and spirituality. A recent article on her in the journal *India Today* states “More and more distinguished scientists, engineers, doctors, IT professionals, management leaders, academicians and educationalists, not only from India but from all over the world, have started getting associated with Amma’s mission. Many of them have even forsaken their successful professional life and joined Amma’s institutions.”⁵ She says “The ultimate truth or knowledge is one which has no second. How can scientific and spiritual knowledge be different? Both are two facets of the same truth”. “Spiritual knowledge air-conditions the mind whereas the scientific knowledge air-conditions the body; both are required by man.”⁶

2.6. Commitment to Nation-Building

We, the Indian Christian Philosophers, need to be proud of our great country, a country that has always stood for noble values like true secularism, religious tolerance and fellowship, free exchange of ideas, and since independence for democratic values. It has

⁵Vijay P. Bhatkar, “Amma. Embodiment of Love and Selfless Service”, *India Today*, XXVIII.40 (2003 September), pp.94 ff.

⁶ Ibid., pp.94-95.

produced great sages, saints, philosophers, poets and lawgivers of world rank. However, castes and caste related discriminations were always a curse of the societal life in India. Recently many of these treasured values of secularism, religious tolerance and democracy are being hideously violated and insulted by vested interests. Christian philosophers of this country need to find out the root causes of these aberrations and propose a way out of this malaise. A nation exists where the people, though diverse, have a shared sense of identity, consider themselves as being part of a whole, to which they feel the need to belong. A nation includes all peoples, irrespective of differences of religion, caste, class, race ethnicity or language, who share a common territory and history.⁷

The Christian vision of nation building is rooted in the very theology of creation, where there is no confusion and division regarding the Christian commitment to build up and strengthen the nation. The scope of this commitment is further etched out in Jesus' teaching in the gospel in which the reign of God is proclaimed and promoted as the creation of a society where there are no marginalized since every person finds space to realize himself/herself. In the context of India the Christian vision of a just society is essential for the integrity and the harmony of the nation.⁸

2.7. Ecclesial Dimension of Philosophy

We are speaking here about the philosophizing of an Indian Christian. While we emphasize the 'Indianness' in philosophical activities, we should not lose sight of our 'Christianness'. Our call and commitment to Christ are irrevocable. As Christian philosophers we should also be aware of the ecclesial needs of today's Indian Church, like inculturation, inter-religious dialogue and inter-cultural communication. We need to be the servants and disciples of the Kingdom, and proponents of Kingdom values. We need to creatively interpret the official documents of the Church like *Optatam Totius* (Vat. II), *Sapientia Christiana*, *Fides et Ratio*, *Charter of Priestly Formation for India* (CBCI document), and *General Norms Following the Apostolic Visitation of Ecclesiastical Faculties, Seminaries and Houses of Priestly Formation* in the context of India.

2.8. Commitment to Community and Collaboration

I presume that the fraternity and fellowship among the Indian Christian philosophers should be consciously and purposefully animated and strengthened. We need to mutually support, influence and enrich, and perhaps also rectify, in our philosophical endeavours. Most of the Indian Christian Philosophers are teachers of philosophy. We need to develop and promote a culture of scholarly and brotherly collaboration and cooperation. One of the primary objectives of the Association of Christian Philosophers of India (ACPI), I presume, should be the promotion of collegiality and comradeship to motivate and enhance a communitarian *sādhana* for doing philosophy.

Although we have eminent philosophers among Indian Christian Philosophers, this eminence has not received any international recognition and acceptance. We have not perhaps

⁷ Anthoniraj Thumma and Alphonse D. Sahayam (eds.), *Christian Commitment to Nation Building*, Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 2003, p.241.

⁸ Ibid., p.242.

so far produced philosophers of international reputation. Our students write doctoral dissertations on the various contemporary western philosophers, like Heidegger, Derrida, Lonergan, Levinas, etc. Why no Indian Christian philosopher finds place among these scholars? One thing is certain, we are all caught up in the sticky web of un-philosophical concerns and responsibilities. Though pressed hard on all sides by so many extra-academic duties and responsibilities, some tenacious and resolute ones are able to produce eminent treatises of philosophy. But many have to suffocate their talents of philosophizing in the quagmire of administrative assignments. How many of us find time for serious discussion on philosophical issues and intellectual matters with our colleagues? Our staff meetings and conferences revolve primarily around money matters, administrative issues and construction works! Half-hearted part-time philosophizing will not produce eminence. Fraternity of philosophers can, to a certain extent, encourage, invigorate and fortify the philosophizing calibre of the fellow travellers. We need to build up local groups of interested philosophers to discuss relevant issues of philosophy and to philosophize. The communitarian *sadhana* has to be born!

2.9. Method of Teaching Philosophy

Philosophical education in our Institute of philosophy is not integrated to the actually lived life of the people. Courses of philosophy, as they are taught today, do not influence and impact on the activities and life situations of those involved in philosophizing. I firmly believe that philosophical teaching and learning should become part of the spiritual formation and growth of both the groups. The old Indian method of imparting wisdom to worthy disciples was the *gurukula* system. Although we cannot adapt this arrangement in its entirety, positive and relevant elements of this methodology may help us to communicate philosophical and theological education to our students more effectively.

3. Conclusion

After having proposed some of the important features that should be taken note of in evolving a methodology for Indian Christian philosophizing, we have not come to the nearness of such a methodology. All the same, let me recapitulate and sum up what has been proposed above.

There is an urgent need of paradigm shift in our approach to philosophy in the Indian context. Philosophy should not be considered as a mere speculative branch of knowledge; it should become part of our life's vision. For us, the Indian Christian Philosophers, philosophy should be *darśana*, and real *darśana* is the result of the triple means, namely, gathering of information through the means for right knowledge (*śravaṇa*), reflection and reasoning (*manana*), and contemplation (*nididyāsa*). This third dimension—the spiritual dimension—has been absent in our philosophizing; this needs to be given prime importance.

As Indians and Asians, the Indian and Asian realities should form the substratum of our philosophizing. The exigencies and enigmas of human existence in India and Asia, the cultural diversity and religious pluralism, should become objects of our philosophizing. We must be able to appreciate our own rich cultural and philosophical heritage. Those who are involved in the study and teaching of philosophy “should be given a genuine appreciation for the cultural heritage of the country—its culture, philosophy, religion, art, science and symbolism—in order to enable them to critically reinterpret the Christian cultural traditions

and to articulate the same in symbols and languages of the people.”⁹

As Christians we need to integrate Christian Wisdom in our act of philosophizing. In our enthusiasm to contextualize philosophizing, we should not lose sight of the vast reservoir of Christian philosophy, which is the product of centuries of creative and critical encounter with the problems of this life and with God’s revelation in time and space.

‘Integration’ as a concept and as an action plan, is one of the most used terms today, and also one of the felt needs of today. The distance between the secular and the sacred, the huan and the divine, this-worldly and the other-worldly, body and spirit, is very short today. We need to have an integrated view of these apparent bipolar realities. Having a yoga-mind is of great help for this integration. Yoga is integration as well as the means (*sādhana*) for this integration. An Integration of East and west, of Christian and Indian, of ancient and modern, of epistemology and experience, of speculation and praxis, of subject and object, etc., should take place in our act of philosophizing as Indian Christians.

Ā nobhadrāḥ yantu ṛtavah viśvataḥ

“Let noble thoughts come to us from all sides.”

⁹ *The charter of Priestly Formation in India*, (Delhi: CBCI Commission for Clergy and Religious, CBCI Centre, 1989, No. 3.2..3b.

UPANISHADIC METHOD¹

“The Ultimate basis for the method will have to be the very reality which the method helps to disclose” (Panikkar, 1998:22)

The Upanishads constitute a complex collection of revealed (*śruti*) literature preceded by Brāhmaṇa, Āraṇyaka and Saṁhitās. It will be too much to expect from so dispersed a literature to be made up of one consistent method and a single unified style, much less a unified literary form. What we have today with us is the ‘text’, the exact ‘context’ of which is, for the most part, missing. This does not mean that no effort has been made to retrieve and reconstruct the context, but all these efforts are mostly from within, namely, through the analysis of the texts themselves which can only help us to postulate *a posteriori* a general context applicable to the entire collection and not to individual Upanishads (Witz, 1998:24-28).

But nevertheless, this general context is not insignificant to delineate at least a general methodology followed in the literature under consideration. Even this task is not easy due to the fact that method in any philosophical texts is generally hard to describe, as against empirical sciences where the method is clearly defined and can never be merged with the contents or results and hence remains always distinct. The case with regard to philosophy is different: the method as it is being clarified, gets merged with the thought itself. Descartes and Husserl in the Western Philosophy are very good examples for this: as they started with the formulation of a clear and distinct method, it got merged with their thought and now their methods and their philosophies (rationalism and phenomenism) can hardly be distinguished.

A method is a principle of action, a procedure to attain a goal or a definite result. We can even say that the goal determines the method. We observe that throughout the history of the development of human thought and sciences, whenever some one determined to attain an entirely new goal, or set to discover a totally new invention, he invariably employed a method suited to attain the goal, if need be to alter the existing method or even employ a new one. For example, it is sufficiently evident that the goal of Vedic people was predominantly ‘existential’, namely, a desire for earthly security and prosperity and to attain this they had to employ a method of propitiating and pleasing the superior beings through oblations and sacrifices.

¹ Paper read at the annual assembly of the Association of Christian Philosophers at Bangalore, October 2003.

We can *mutatis mutandis* ask the question what is the goal of the sages who authored Upanishads? If we can specify the goal, we might be able to pin point the method used to attain the goal. One thing what we notice in the Upanishads is that the goal is not 'a priori' formulated, but the 'context' in which the seekers of the Upanishadic period lived made them to strive after a particular goal. The context of Brāhmaṇic period is characterized by the exaggerated emphasis on the cult and rituals bereft of interior motives and dispositions of true worship. The reaction of the so called 'heretics' was to attain the same objectives set forth in the ritual practices, without actually performing them. This led some of them away from the maddening and haunting crowds to remote corners of nature, the 'forest'. Hence forest constitutes to some extent the 'context' of Upanishadic literature which gives rise to the method quite commensurate with it. No more the method of sacrifices with all the ritualistic paraphernalia was relevant and meaningful. On the other hand reflective meditation and a quest for the real 'power' that makes sacrifices effective, became the goal of relentless seeking.

The Vedic literature was rightly named as '*karma kāṇḍa*' as it dealt with the cultic activity. The new quest or the goal resulted in a thorough shift in the method, the *karma* being replaced by *jñāna* giving rise another type of literature called *jñāna kāṇḍa*. The goal or quest for 'something' superior and higher than mere performance of liturgy ushers in a new period in Indian history of thought, though what was that 'something' and what is its nature etc. remained yet to be clarified. Though it is evident throughout every Upanishad that the 'quest' was always for a higher and higher reality, proposed as a supreme reality, the ideal remained for a considerable length of time unknown and unexpressed, which fact made the 'quest' itself more and more intense and vigorous, meanwhile the method used for the quest came to be almost identified with the goal itself.

If the method was a quest, a seeking, characterized by 'knowledge', then, in principle, the usual ingredients of an epistemological method should have found a place in the Upanishadic method. But the knowledge sought after by the Upanishadic sages was not clearly of empirical nature, founded on logical rules of reasoning, but it was evidently 'transcendental'. This does not mean the rules of logic or ratiocination are deliberately violated; they are very much in vogue and implicit almost in all elucidations and arguments presented to show the Ultimate Being as the ground of all that is. Even the

categories of classical Nyāya logic such as perception, inference etc. are present in their inchoate forms.

To give an example, at the great colloquium in the Janaka's Court, the following question was raised by Bhujyu "Can you tell me where the Pārikṣitas went?" Yājñavalkya replied: "They have, in truth, gone where the *Aśvamedha* sacrificers went." (Brih. 3.3.1-2) This can be stated logically (Belvalkar, 1974:195.):

All *Aśvamedha* sacrificers go to a particular region.

The Pārikṣitas were *Aśvamedha* sacrificers.

Therefore, The Pārikṣitas also went to the same region.

But the predominant character of Upanishadic knowledge was transcendental; they did not seek after the meaning of tangible, temporal, mundane realities but the ultimate ground of the Reality itself. This being a religious pursuit, the Upanishadic knowledge should be basically characterized as religious and only the categories of religion can delineate the nature and method of Upanishadic knowledge. Religion deals with the ultimate concern of human beings, studies the nature of religious consciousness and its growth, explicates the possibilities of human-divine encounter and sets the experience of the Numinous as the goal of all religious striving. If the Upanishadic knowledge is fundamentally religious, it is then founded on experience of the Numinous, or simply on mystical experience. Any reading of Upanishads make this point clear; again and again we have the such expressions as "This whole world is Brahma. Tranquil, let one worship It". (Chand. 3.14.1). "Brahma is the self-existent (*swayaḥbhū*). Adoration to Brahma" (Brih. 2.6, 3.6, 4.6; cf. also Tait. 1.4.1)

What are the categories of this experiential or mystical knowledge? The categories should be such that they evoke the experience of the Numinous and in the context of the Upanishads they are cultic, cosmic, physiological and psychological. The discovery of correlation between and within these categories constituted Upanishadic knowledge as it gave them an insight into the Numinous.

As an example, let us look into Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad 1.5.3-7 which is a text of cosmological speculation where we observe a peculiar combination of the psychological (*adhyātimika*), physical (*dibhautika*) and divine (*ādidaivika*) categories.

Verily, the self (*Ātman*) consist of speech, mind and breath.

There same are the three worlds. This (terrestrial) world is Speech. The middle (atmosphere) world is Mind. That (celestial) world is Breath.

These same are the three Vedas. The Rig-Veda is Speech. The Yajur- Veda is Mind. The Sama-Veda is Breath. The same are the gods, Manes, and men. The gods are Speech. The Manes are Mind. Men are Breath.

The interrelation between all these categories cannot be established by any philosophical analysis or through any other methods of ratiocination, but only through a method developed in the Brāhmaṇa literature called, *bandhūta* method or a method of correlation or correspondence, which lays bare the mystic and/or cultic correlations between the *ādidaivika*, *ādibhautika* and *ādhyātmika* (divine, cosmic and human) aspects of the reality. Since Vedic times the sages sought correlation between the macrocosm and microcosm; the *puruṣa s kta* hymn (RV X. 90: 9-14) is an unique example of how divine, human and cosmic could be presented as correlated in a cosmotheandric act of creation sacrifice (Panikkar, 2001: 72;Cf. Mundaka Up.2.4ff). Same correlation is found in the Brihdāraṇyaka Upanishad which begins narrating the correlation between the stars and the bones, clouds and the flesh, rivers and the bowels, mountains and the livers/lungs etc. The metaphorical description is meant to show that the same fruits of the sacrifice can be derived through meditation and worship of the cosmos in the manner of a horse sacrifice without actually performing it.

In the all pervasive sacrificial ritualism of the Brāhmaṇas the method became very sophisticated with each deity associated with its own *bandh s* or correlates like a specified function, a particular season, a mantra, a meter, a number, a place, a class of priest etc. What is important for us is to investigate how the method came to be employed in the Upanishads in order to determine the correlations between the divine, human and the cosmic categories. The bond that connects the deity and the correlates is believed to be very subtle, secret and mystic (Brih. 4.5.11; Chand. 1.1.10; Mund. 6.29; Kena 4.7); only a well initiated person could discern and understand the connection (Chand. 3.11.5; Brih 6.3.12; Svet. 6.22). Whenever such a connection is discovered, the guru asserted ‘*iti Upanishad*’ ‘This is Upanishad’ (Tait 2.9 and 3.6). There are numerous myths and some cosmogonic legends and even fancy etymologies (Brih. 1.4.1 and 3, 5.3, 13; Chand. 1.3.6f) in the Upanishads which try to explain the correlation between the thing and the *bandh s* and the *bandh s* themselves.

To provide some examples, first of all we have the *Om* mantra (Chand 1. 1-6), with Prajapati as its divine correlate who meditated and produced three Vedas which became its cultic correlates, when these three Vedas were meditated upon there came the three cosmic correlates: earth (*bhū*), atmosphere (*bhuva*1), and sky (*sva*1); from the meditation on these

produced the sacred symbol *Om*, made up of tri-monosyllables, a, u and m. This is called Loud chant (*Udgītā*), believed to be pregnant with mystic significance.

Then we have *Gāyatrī* mantra (Chand 3. 5) which has Savitrī for its divine correlate; its correlation to earth (cosmic) is determined from its etymology (*gai* and *trai* = to sing and to protect), and it is identified with the earth. The human body is said to be made up of earth and so *Gāyatrī* is identified with the earth. The centre of the human body being the heart, it is identified with the heart of human beings. The human heart supposed to enclose, ether or space (*ākāśa*), the *Gāyatrī* is identified with ether; but corresponding to the space ‘within’ there should be space ‘without’ and hence *Gāyatrī* is identified with the cosmic reality. So *Gāyatrī*, can be characterised as a cosmotheandric hymn.

The conception of *Ātman* as five-fold *Uktha* is another good example to elucidate the method of correlations or correspondence. The earth, wind, ether, waters and the luminaries constitute the five-fold *Ukthas* ‘without’. Their correlates ‘within’ are body, breath, apertures, blood-mucus-seed, and warmth. These both become the source of all other things in the world.

Prāṇa is an important category in all earliest Upanishads; it is considered as most essential among the functions of the body, it is sometimes identified with Indra as its divine, with sun as its cosmic and year or *sāma* as its cultic correlates. *Prāṇa* is also compared with *ākāśa* as the support of all beings down to the ants, both representing physiological and physical categories respectively.

As a last example let us take the well known teaching of the Sage Śāṇḍilya. (Chand. 3. 14) where we find the clear identifications of macrocosm and microcosm. The soul as microcosm is smaller than a grain of rice, or a barley corn or a mustard seed; as macrocosm it is greater than the earth, greater than atmosphere and greater than the sky.

The Upanishads made no attempts to investigate the scientific causes underneath the surface of things and mundane events but their whole energies were directed to discover the mystic correspondence that knit together the multifarious physical phenomena of the nature and the variegated psychological functions in the individual interrelated to the traditional understanding through cultic practices. For example in Brih. Up 1.2 , which is a cosmological narration with no logical connections between the different entities that have been created, it is said, that with the intention of producing a permanent entity, death practised asceticism (*tapas*) and brought death upon itself, and the dead body got transformed into the

sacrificial horse, which was, considered to be the source of immortality. What underlies within this narration is the desire or quest for immortality and the categories used to express this quest are mythical and religious.

There are, however, reasonable explanations to provide foundations to the *bandh ta* method or divine-human-cosmic correlations which are mystic in nature. Aitereya Upanishad (3.12) narrates how the divine entered into the human body by the opening in the skull called ‘the cleft’ (*vidṛti*). The Bṛhdāraṇyaka Upanishad asserts that “he entered up to the very finger nail-tips” (1.4.7.) The same Upanishad also attributes the warmth in the living body to the presence of the divine in it (5.9); again the Upanishad asserts that the Brahman became all that there is (1.4.10) which means that the divine is present in all material and inorganic creation:

Having performed austerity he created this whole world, whatever there is. Having created it, into it, indeed, he entered. Having entered it, he became both the actual (*sat*) and the yon (*tya*), both defined and the undefined, both based and the non-based, both the conscious and the unconscious, both the real and the false.
(Taittirīya Up. 2.6)

Scholars have attempted to arrange the Upanishads chronologically analyzing their contents and the development of thought (Deussen, 2000: 23-26; Blevalkar, 1974: 30-37; 333-34). We need to pay attention to the progressive growth in the religious consciousness of the sages in the Upanishadic religion which is manifested in the texts themselves. The earliest Upanishadic texts make abundant use of cultic and liturgical categories to express their religious experience and the correlation between the *bandh s* is explained mostly through mythical categories. The second stage of the growth of religious experience is expressed through more symbolic and theologico- philosophical categories and the correlation can be determined to some extent through logical categories, in the sense that some rationality can be noticed in the explanation of the reality. The third stage is characterized by contemplation and intuitive vision of the reality as One and the correlation is prominently mystical (Panikkar, 1998:54).

The growth and deepening of religious experience are eminently manifested in the progressive evolution of the conception of the Ultimate Reality came to be named as Brahman in the Upanishads. The method of correlation being applicable in every stage of the growth of the conception: from the Ṛgvedic sense of ‘Brahman = prayer’ to the Upanishadic sense of ‘Brahman= Absolute’..

The meaning of the word 'Bráhmaṇ' in the Vedas was 'sacred utterance', 'prayer' 'mantra' with its correlate Brahmán (the member of the priestly class), who utters the prayer. The prayers being stored up in the *saṁhitās* or the collections of Vedas, the Bráhmaṇ which meant prayer, came to be identified with the collections of prayers, the *Triveda: Ṛk, Sāma* and *Yajur*. The Vedas came to be believed as infinite and fountain head of all mystic power of the sacrifices. The prayers being used for the sacrifices, which if performed exactly, should result in the desired effects. The question was raised what could be the power underneath the sacrifices that yielded desired effects. Brahman being the correlate of the sacrifices, the power which made the sacrifices effective too came to be attributed to Brahman. When the priest wanted to impart highest power to any mantra, he would designate it as Brahman, so we have such terms as '*Ukhtam Brahma*' (Kausi. Up. 2.6.) '*Om iti Brahma*' (Tait. Up. 1.8.1.) and '*Brahma yajña*' (S. B. 3.1.4.15). We can observe the identifications of the correlates of Brahman with itself at every stage.

The second land mark in the growth of the conception of Brahman is noticeable when the distinction was made between '*apara*' (lower) Brahman (also called as *Śabda* or *Nāma Brahma*) and the '*para*' (higher) Brahman in the passages like Mundaka. 1.1.4-5. and Chand. 7.1.2. ff. The distinction is quite logical, the lower Brahman being at the level of Vedas and the higher Brahman is the Supreme Being, the Ultimate Cause of all that is which is a philosophical concept actually found in the cosmological texts (Brih. 1.4.11; 2.5, 5.3; Chand. 3.19; 3.18). But the narrations are replete with symbolisms which correlate Brahman with the proposed highest category. Thus we have symbols like Sun (Chand. 3.19. 1-4), Space (Chand. 1.9.1.; 3.12. 7-9; Brih. 2. 1.5; 3.7.12). He is also considered as the source of energy through which the fire burns, wind blows, and the world is moving on (Kena 4.)

In the third stage we see the conception of Brahman fully developed within the context of its correlates. Several texts (Brih. 2.1.1-20; 3.9.10-11; 4.1-2; Chand. 5.11) discuss different conceptions of Brahman and reject the incomplete opinions. These texts mark a transcendence over the earlier ones which projected a duality between the creator and the creature, divine and the human, being and non-being. Now he is considered as one all pervading reality, describing him as "the real, (*satya*) the knowledge (*jñāna*) and as the infinite (*ananta*)" (Tait. 2.1). The Brahman is the ultimate answer to human religious quest and the experience of such a numinous can be expressed only in a apophatic language, the language of *neti neti* (Brih. 4.2.4; 4.4.22; 4.5.15)

A question need to be asked, how to explain through our methodology the final stage of Upanishadic experience characterized as an identity between *Brahman* and *Ātman*. We need to observe here that there occurred in the later texts a slight shift in the methodology of quest marked by less and less interest in the world ‘outside’ and its process of creation and sustenance. The whole attention was geared towards the inner self and its realization. We can say this as a method of ‘self realization’ as there is the predominance of *adyātma* and a bracketing of *ādidāivika* and *ādibhautika*. The basic prerequisite for the quest was *tapas*, which was spontaneously embraced by the seeker involving total renunciation of the temporal goods and prosperity, and courageous acceptance of strenuous yogic discipline (*sādhana*). This we would like to highlight in order to insist upon the religious nature of the quest, as ethical excellence is a prerequisite for any authentic mystical experience.

In the earlier texts we could see how *#tman* came to be identified with *prāṇa*, or with organic functions like speech, etc. (Kena 1.4-8), then came the understanding that *#tman* should transcend all these, which gave rise to the question of the knowledge of such an *#tman*, how can it be known? The quest was to seek after the unknown, and in the history of humanity we know how great scientists have worked to discover something unknown. They had to make hypotheses and repeat the procedures again and again, make necessary changes in the procedure until one day the desired discovery was made. Even in the Upanishads, the seekers were relentless in their striving after that experience of the numinous or *#tma vidyā* and some of the narrations, presented sometimes in the form of myths, bring to light the hard path trodden by the seekers.

The entire Kaṭha Upanishad is about the story of Naciketa and his enlightenment (*Ātmavidyā*) as a result the Upanishad is known for its mystic bent of thought. The story narrates how Naciketa reached the world of the God Yama (Death), who taught him the knowledge of *#tman*. Yama tells him: “Not by reasoning (*tarka*) is this thought to be attained. Proclaimed by another it is for easy understanding” (2.9). *Ātmavidyā* being a process of self realization, it cannot be had without a *Guru* who has made this experience for himself. Only such a person can evoke the same experience in the student. Then step by step he leads him to higher and higher (3. 10-11) knowledge and deeper and deeper experience of the *#tman*. He is said to be “The Inner Soul (*antarātman*) of all things, the One Controller. (5.12) The Person of the measure of the thumb is the inner soul. Even seated in the heart of creatures...” Instruction granted to Naciketa provides a

paradigm for the attainment of religious experience followed throughout the centuries by the yogis and the sages in India.

We have another myth in Chhāndogya Upanishad (8. 7-12). We notice here that the quest and its attainment is proportional to the seeker's striving for it. Experience being unique and individual in character, there cannot be uniformity in every attempt. Spiritual attainment is conditioned by one's perseverance, commitment, faith and intensity of desire, as we know very well that the supernatural is built upon nature (St. Thomas).

Indra and Virochana are the seekers in the myth, the former represented the gods and the latter the demons. Indra is a symbolic figure of all true seekers who are persevering, well motivated and committed. Virochana represents people who wish fast results, belong to the world of 'fast-food', ready-made experience of 'total peace' by attending a single yoga or TM course. Both go to Prajāpati, and serve him for 32 years. After that they were given the first formula of *Ātmavidyā*, namely, that *ātman* is found in sense experience furnished to us in the waking state. Both leave but only Indra returns reflecting that the sense experiences "perish immediately upon the perishing of this body" and there is nothing enjoyable in it. (9.1). Virochana on the other hand, representing all the materialists who think that there is nothing above sense experience and matter, gets convinced that he has realized the ultimate goal of life. Indra, after another 32 years, was given the secret of dreaming state and then after another 32 years the knowledge of dreamless sleep and finally after another five years the experience of *turiya* state. The myth teaches that the *Ātmavidyā* is not every one's cup of tea; it also brings to light its commensurability with the seekers steadfastness.

The well known story of Maitreyi and Yājñavalkya found in Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad (2.4 and 4.5) is still another example of *Ātmavidyā*. As long as we entertain subject-object duality, we exist under empirical conditions (2.4.14). The true mystic knowledge is objectless and Yājñavalkya through his *neti neti* doctrine confirms that numinous experience is ineffable: "The Soul (*Ātman*) is not this, it is not that (*neti, neti*). It is unseizable, for it cannot be seized; it is indestructible, for it cannot be destroyed; unattached, for it does not attach itself; it unbound, does not tremble, is not injured." (4.5.15.)

Returning to *bandh ta* method, we saw that it always sought correspondence between the world outside and the world inside. Now that

seeker has experienced the unique source of energy on which the whole world and all in it has been grounded in the Brahman Experience and the immediate step was to identify this source of energy with the vital energy that humans experience as working within, the *Ātman*, the inner most essence of human individual. The energy that we experience within us is identical in essence with the energy that sets the world around us moving. The quality of spiritual energy 'within' is same as the source of energy 'without', at the heart of the Universe (Chand. 3.14). Hence we have the mystic formula of *Brahman = Ātman* (Brih. 2.5.19, 4.4.5, 4.4.25; Chand. 8.10.1, 8.11.1, 8.14.1) or *Tattvam asi*. (Brih. 1.4. 10 and Chand 6. 9-16)

As a conclusion, we would like to notice that the orientation taken in this paper is towards a 'text' centred hermeneutics, a methodology from 'within', derived through the textual contents themselves. There could be other methods. First of all there is the traditional method of Vedanta (Sri Swami, 1997: 9-27) which takes into account the commentaries on Upanishads by Jankar#c#rya and others. One can also delineate a method through literary analysis of the texts, classifying them as myths, metaphors, allegories, dialectics etc. (Ranade, 1986:23-30) One can also employ historical critical method and analyse the texts from that perspective and present a thorough exegesis. What is more important may be to propose a Upanishadic hermeneutics, which will use all hermeneutical tools available at present, but this could be a life-long research, if done, can be a great addition to existing religious literature of our times.

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THE METHOD OF THE SUBALTERNS

With Special Reference to Non-Brahmin Movements and Ambedkerian Contribution to the Dalits

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We are in an age of development, and all human beings yearn for growth. But the subalterns of various hues have been a group, who are kept under constant suppression, and down through the centuries they have found themselves unable to express their grievances. There have been sporadic attempts by some leaders and thinkers to uplift the downtrodden, as that of Marx, the various liberation movements in many continents. Yet the sad fact remains that they have been always dealt a hard blow by the governments and the upper classes and castes. Even there have been occasions when they were considered equal to or below the beasts. All preaching and philosophy has remained on the ideal level, the theory has rarely resulted in praxis. Marx, the great ideologue had lived the ideal and called his followers to strive to live that ideal in the best way possible. But the sad fact remains Marxists have betrayed Marx, just as Christians have betrayed Christ. In this paper we shall deal with the strategies needed for the subalterns to express themselves and to attain to their growth as humans, and we shall exemplify some of the movements that have employed a similar strategy or strategies. We will look at the non-Brahmin movements, and the Ambedkerian revolt and contribution in this light.

I. The Strategies Needed for the Subalterns

In this section we intend to analyse what strategies may be employed by the subalterns for their conscientization, revolt and development. One of the reasons for the lack of growth and development of the subalterns was that they were kept suppressed, and for long they had not evolved any strategies of revolt. In the Latin American countries there have been many attempts at the conscientization of the poor and downtrodden, especially the peasants. To some extent we will be drawing inspiration¹ from them to find out what strategy may be useful and effective.

The first thing needed is the recognition of dehumanization at work, not only as an ontological possibility but also as a historical reality. Dehumanization, which marks not only those whose humanity has been stolen, but also those who have stolen it, is a distortion of the vocation of becoming more fully human. This distortion occurs within history; but it is not an historical vocation, because to accept dehumanization as an historical vocation would lead either to cynicism or total despair. Otherwise, the struggle for humanization, for the emancipation of labour, for the overcoming of alienation, for the affirmation of men as persons would be meaningless. This struggle is possible only because dehumanization, although a concrete historical fact, is not a given destiny but the result of an unjust order that engenders violence in the

¹ As all know Paulo Freire has contributed a lot through his pedagogy of the oppressed for the development of a strategy for the oppressed. We shall base ourselves on his book: *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* for chalking out a strategy needed for the subalterns.

oppressors, which in turn dehumanizes the oppressed. The oppressed have a great historical task to perform: to liberate themselves and their oppressors as well. The oppressors, who oppress, exploit, and rape by virtue of their power, cannot find in this power the strength to liberate either the oppressed or themselves. Only power that spring from the weakness of the oppressed will be sufficiently strong to free both. Any attempt to 'soften' the power of the oppressor in deference to the weakness of the oppressed almost always manifests itself in the form of false generosity; the attempt stops at this. In order to have the continued opportunity to express their 'generosity', the oppressors must perpetuate injustice as well. An unjust social order is the permanent fount of this 'generosity', which is nourished by death, despair, and poverty.²

True generosity consists precisely in fighting to destroy the causes, which nourish false charity. False charity constrains the fearful and subdued, the 'rejects of life', to extend their trembling hands. Real generosity lies in striving so that those hands need be extended less and less in supplication, so that more and more they become human hands which work and, by working, transform the world. Only those who suffer the effects of oppression, the oppressed, can really understand the necessity of liberation. It will not be defined by chance but through the praxis of their quest for it, through recognizing the necessity to fight for it. And this fight because of the purpose given to it by the oppressed, will actually constitute an act of love opposing lovelessness, which lies at the heart of the oppressors' violence, lovelessness even when clothed in false generosity. But in the initial stage of the struggle, the oppressed, instead of striving for liberation, tend themselves to become oppressors, or 'sub-oppressors'. The very structure of their thought has been conditioned by the contradictions of the concrete, existential situation by which they were shaped. Indeed, their ideal is to be men; but for them, to be a 'man' is to be an oppressor. This has become their model of humanity. This phenomenon derives from the fact that the oppressed, at a certain moment of their existential experience, adopt an attitude of 'adherence' to the oppressor. The oppressed have found in the oppressor their model of 'manhood'. One of the basic elements of the relationship between oppressor and oppressed is **prescription**. Every prescription represents the imposition of one man's choice of upon another, transforming the consciousness of the man prescribed to into one that conforms to the prescriber's consciousness. Thus, the behaviour of the oppressed is a prescribed behaviour, following as it does the guidelines of the oppressor. The oppressed, having internalized the image of the oppressor and adopted his guidelines, are fearful of freedom. Freedom would require them to eject this image and replace it with autonomy and responsibility. Freedom is acquired by conquest, not by gift. It is an indispensable and inalienable condition for the quest of human completion.³

The oppressed suffer from the duality, which established itself in their innermost being. They discover that without freedom they cannot exist authentically; yet although they desire authentic existence, they fear it. They are at one and the same time themselves and the oppressor whose consciousness they have internalized. The pedagogy of liberation has to be forged *with*, not *for*, the oppressed in the incessant struggle to regain their humanity. How will the oppressed participate in the developing pedagogy of their liberation? Only as they discover themselves to be 'hosts' of the oppressor can they contribute to the midwifery of their liberating pedagogy. As long as they live in the duality where to be is to be like, and to be like is

² Paulo Freire, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, London: Penguin Books, 1990 (reprint), pp. 20-21.

³ Cf. Ibid. pp. 21-25.

to be like the oppressor, this contribution is impossible. The pedagogy of the oppressed helps them to discover that they and their oppressors are manifestations of dehumanization. Liberation is thus a childbirth, and a painful one. The human being who emerges is new, viable only as the oppressor-oppressed contradiction is superseded by the humanization of all. This perception is necessary, but not a sufficient condition by itself for liberation; it must become the motivating force for liberating action. Even an individual oppressor may feel sorry for being an oppressor, but it does not necessarily lead to solidarity with the oppressed. Solidarity requires that one enter into the situation of those with whom one is identifying; it is a radical posture. The pedagogy of the oppressed being a humanist and libertarian pedagogy, has two distinct stages: one, the oppressed unveil the world of oppression and through the praxis commit themselves to its transformation. Second, it is a stage in which the reality of oppression has already been transformed, this pedagogy ceases to belong to the oppressed and becomes a pedagogy for all human beings in the process of permanent liberation. In the first stage the pedagogy must deal with the problem of the consciousness of the oppressed and the oppressor. This change of consciousness is not an easy task especially from the part of the oppressor, for whom money is the measure of all things, and profit the primary goal. For the oppressors what is worthwhile is to have more even at the cost of the oppressed having less or having nothing. For them *to be* is *to have*; and thus to belong to the 'having' class. They are not able to perceive that, in the egoistic pursuit of having as a possessing class, they suffocate in their own possessions and no longer *are*; they merely *have*. Having more is seen as an inalienable right. The oppressors do not perceive their monopoly of *having more* as a privilege, which dehumanizes others and themselves. They blame the others for not making use of the opportunities for having more. The oppressors have a sort of sadistic love, which is a perverted love – a love of death and not of life. One of the characteristics of the oppressor consciousness and its necrophilic view of the world is sadism. Making use of science and technology the oppressor tries to maintain the oppressive order through manipulation and repression. The oppressed have no rights because they have become 'objects', which can be manipulated.⁴

Those who commit to the people need to re-examine themselves constantly. This conversion is radical as not to allow for ambivalent behaviour. Conversion to the people requires a profound rebirth; it is a new form of existence. This conversion requires constant engaging in reflection. When the situation calls for action, that action will constitute an authentic praxis only its consequences become the object of critical reflection. In this sense, the praxis is the new *raison d'être* of the oppressed; and the revolution, which inaugurates the historical moment of this *raison d'être*, is not viable apart from their concomitant conscious involvement. It is also essential to realize that when the oppressed accept the struggle for humanization they also accept, from that moment, their total responsibility for the struggle. They must realize that they are fighting not merely for freedom from hunger, but as Eric Fromm would put it: "... freedom to create and to construct, to wonder and to venture. Such freedom requires that the individual be active and responsible, not a slave or a well-fed cog in the machine... It is not enough that men are not slaves; if social conditions further the existence of automatons, the result will not be love of life, but love of death."⁵ The oppressed, who have been shaped by the death-affirming climate of oppression, must find through their struggle the way to life-affirming humanization, and this does not lie simply in having more to eat. In order to gain their humanity, the oppressed must

⁴ Cf. Ibid. pp. 25-36.

⁵ Eric Fromm, *The Heart of Man*, as quoted by Paulo Freire, p. 43.

cease to be things and fight as human beings. They cannot enter the struggle as objects in order *later* to become human beings. The struggle begins with men's recognition that they have been destroyed. Propaganda, management, manipulation cannot be the instruments of their re-humanization. The only effective instrument is a humanizing pedagogy in which the revolutionary leadership establishes a permanent relationship of dialogue with the oppressed. A revolutionary leadership must accordingly practice *co-intentional* education. This involves a continuous common reflection and action; this will lead to true participation and committed involvement.⁶ For the liberation to be effective there should be **liberative education**. Present day education according to Freire suffers from *narration sickness*. The aim of education is to fill the students with contents of the narration. Education thus becomes a 'depositing'; hence he calls it 'banking concept of education'. Such a banking concept does not admit of partnership. The banking concept of education, which is marked by sonority of words, serves the purpose of the oppressor, is also necrophilic. In opposition to banking education we can think of problem posing education which will bring about a resolution of the teacher-student contradiction. In such an education what is most important is *dialogue*, and through dialogue such a contradiction is overcome, and that is reconciliation. The method of banking education and problem-posing education are mutually opposed. Banking education attempts, by mythicizing reality, to conceal certain facts which explain the way men exist in the world; problem-posing education sets itself the task of de-mythologization. Banking education resists dialogue; problem-posing education regards dialogue as indispensable to the act of cognition which unveils reality. Banking education treats students as objects of assistance; problem-posing education makes them critical thinkers. Banking education inhibits creativity and domesticates the *intentionality* of consciousness by isolating consciousness from the world, thereby denying men their ontological and historical vocation of becoming more fully human. Problem-posing education bases itself on creativity and stimulates true reflection and action upon reality, thereby responding to the vocation of men as beings who are authentic only when engaged in inquiry and creative transformation. Thus true education is constantly remade in the praxis. In order to *be* it must *become*. Its 'duration' is found in the interplay of the opposites *permanence* and *change*. The banking method emphasizes permanence and becomes reactionary; problem-posing education roots itself in the dynamic present and becomes revolutionary. Problem-posing education is revolutionary futurity; hence it is prophetic, and so corresponds to the historical nature of man. There results a deepened consciousness of their situation, which leads men to apprehend their situation as an historical reality susceptible of transformation. Resignation, which is the result of banking education, gives way to the drive for transformation and inquiry, over which human beings feel themselves in control. The movement of inquiry should be directed towards humanization – human being's historical vocation. Such a pursuit of full humanity cannot be carried out in isolation, but only in fellowship and solidarity; therefore it cannot unfold in the antagonistic relations between oppressors and the oppressed. Problem-posing education cannot serve the interests of the oppressor, because no oppressive order would permit the oppressed to begin to question: why? In the revolutionary process, the leaders cannot utilize the banking method as interim measure, justified on grounds of expediency, with the intention of *later* behaving in a genuinely revolutionary fashion. They must be revolutionary – that is to say, dialogical from the outset. It is only through such an education the oppressed can initiate the revolutionary process. Hence proper education becomes a very important strategy.⁷

⁶ Cf. Freire, pp. 36-44

For the oppressed to be liberated, they need a true praxis – an action and reflection process. This is the meaning of Lenin’s statement: “Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement.” Revolutionary praxis must stand opposed to the praxis of the dominant elites, for they are by nature antithetical. Revolutionary praxis cannot tolerate an absurd dichotomy in which the praxis of the people is merely that of following the leader’s decisions – a dichotomy reflecting the prescriptive methods of the dominant elites. It is a unity, and in this praxis the leaders cannot treat the oppressed as their possession. Manipulation, sloganizing, ‘depositing’, regimentation, and prescription cannot be components of revolutionary praxis, precisely because they are components of the praxis of domination. It is absolutely essential that the oppressed participate in the revolutionary process with an increasingly critical awareness of their role as *Subjects* of the transformation. Dialogue with the people is radically necessary to every authentic revolution. This is what makes it a revolution, as distinguished from a military *coup*. One does not expect dialogue from a *coup* – only deceit (in order to achieve ‘legitimacy’) or force (in order to repress). Sooner or later, a true revolution must initiate a courageous dialogue with the people; its very legitimacy lies in this dialogue. In this praxis one cannot speak of an *actor*, nor simply of *actors*, but rather of *actors in intercommunication*. Denial of communion in the revolutionary process, avoidance of dialogue with the people under the pretext of organizing them, of strengthening revolutionary power, or of ensuring a united front, is really a fear of freedom. It is fear of or lack of faith in the people, and if people cannot be trusted, there is no reason for liberation; in this case the revolution is not even carried out *for the people*, but ‘*by the people for the leaders*’: a complete self-negation. The revolution is made neither by the leaders for the people, nor by the people for the leaders, but by both acting together in unshakeable solidarity. This solidarity is born only when the leaders witness to it by their humble, loving, and courageous encounter with the people. Scientific revolutionary humanism cannot believe in the myth of the ignorance of the people; for the absolutizing of ignorance is one of the myths of the oppressor ideology. The revolutionary process is dynamic, and it is in this continuing dynamics, in the praxis of the people with the revolutionary leaders, that the people and the leaders will learn both dialogue and the use of power. Dialogue with the people is neither a concession nor a gift, much less a tactic to be used for domination; it is the encounter among men to ‘name’ the world, a fundamental precondition for their true humanization.⁸

In a society which is trying to engage in revolutionary action there will be anti-dialogical and dialogical action. For a revolutionary praxis to be effective these anti-dialogical methods are to be recognized and rooted out by the dialogical process. First let us look at the anti-dialogical methods that will be employed by the oppressors, and then proceed to analyse the correctives that are to be applied through dialogical cultural action.

The first method that will be employed by the oppressors will be **Conquest**. Conquest becomes a necessity for anti-dialogical action. The anti-dialogical man, in his relations with other human beings, aims at conquering them – increasingly and by every means, from the toughest to the most refined, from the most repressive to the most solicitous (paternalism). It is necessary for the oppressors to approach the people in order to keep them passive via subjugation. This approximation does not involve *being with* the people, or require true communication. It is accomplished by the oppressors’ depositing myths indispensable to the preservation of the status quo : for

⁷ See *Ibid.* pp. 45-59.

⁸ Cf. *Ibid.* pp. 96-107

example, the myth that the oppressive order is a free society, that there is equality for all men, that anyone with initiative climb any rung in the ladder of the society, etc.⁹ The myths, that rebellion is a sin against God, that right to private property is fundamental to human development (as long as the oppressors are the only true human beings), that the oppressors are industrious while the oppressed are lazy and dishonest, that the oppressed are naturally inferior but the oppressors are superior, are made use of to perpetuate oppression. The dominant elites of today, like those of any epoch, continue to conquer others – with or without bread and circuses. The content and methods of conquest may vary historically; what does not vary is the necrophilic passion to oppress.

Another method that the oppressors employ is the **Divide and Rule** policy. Although the oppressors are a minority, they dominate and subordinate the majority, it must divide it and keep it divided in order to remain in power. The minority cannot permit itself the luxury of tolerating the unification of the people, which would undoubtedly signify a serious threat to their hegemony. Any action, which even in incipient fashion could awaken the oppressed to the need for unity, will be halted and suppressed by the oppressors by employing any method including violence. Concepts such as unity, organization, and struggle, are immediately labeled as dangerous, indeed, they are dangerous to oppressors, for their realization is necessary to actions of liberation. Also the notion of *class conflict* upsets the oppressors very much, since they do not wish to consider themselves an oppressive class. Unable to deny this they preach the need for understanding and harmony. But the unconcealable antagonism that lurks between the two classes makes this ‘harmony’ impossible.¹⁰ Dividing in order to preserve the status quo, then, is necessarily fundamental objective of the theory of anti-dialogical action. Also, the dominators try to present themselves as saviours of those whom they dehumanize and divide. This messianism however cannot hide their true intention, namely to protect themselves and their possessions; for the oppressors cannot be *with* the oppressed. A psychoanalysis of the oppressive action wills the ‘false generosity’ of the oppressor as a dimension of the latter’s sense of guilt. With this false generosity, he tries to preserve an unjust and necrophilic order, and to ‘buy’ peace for himself. In order to keep the status quo intact, it is essential for the oppressors to keep the oppressed from perceiving their strategy. Hence the former must convince the latter that they are being ‘defended’ against the demonic action of the ‘marginals, rowdies, and enemies of God’.¹¹ In order to divide and confuse the people, the

⁹ The myths of the elites were highly criticized by Pope John XXIII in his encyclical letter *Mater et Magistra*. Even in the helping of the economically poor countries by developed countries there can a lot of hidden agenda, especially to take advantage of the political situation. This according to him is a new type of colonialism, and as we know, we experience such new type colonialism today.

¹⁰ As we know Karl Marx one of those who clearly perceived the class antagonism and class conflict. He insisted on the class struggle, that is between the proletariat and the bourgeois, for the abolition of the classes; his vision was a classless society through the dictatorship of the proletariat.

¹¹ Here we can recall how the scheduled castes in India are divided by the political parties and other oppressive groups. They make them fight each other, and see that their unity is never achieved. The division that exists between *madigas* and *malas* of Andhra Pradesh is a case in point; these are made to

destroyers call themselves builders, and accuse the true builders of being destructive. This is a well-manipulated policy, and the oppressed have to be very cautious to fight it, if they want to be liberated.¹²

Manipulation is another strategy employed by the oppressors for conquest. By this the dominant elites try to make the masses conform to their objectives. Within certain historical conditions, manipulation is accomplished by means of pacts between the dominant and the dominated classes – pacts which, if considered superficially, might give the impression of a dialogue between the classes. In reality, these pacts are not dialogue, because their true objectives are determined by the unequivocal interest of the dominant elites. The presence of the people in the historical process, no longer as mere spectators, but with the first signs of aggressiveness, is sufficiently disquieting to frighten the dominant elites into doubling the tactics of manipulation. Prior to the emergence of the people there is no manipulation, but rather total suppression. In the anti-dialogical theory of action, manipulation is the response of the oppressor to the new concrete conditions of the historical process. Through manipulation, the dominant elites can lead the people into an inauthentic type of ‘organization’, and can thus avoid the threatening alternative: the true organization of the emerged and emerging people. One of the methods of manipulation is to inoculate individuals with bourgeois appetite for personal success. This manipulation is sometimes carried out directly by the elites, and sometimes indirectly, through the populist leaders. The real antidote to manipulation lies in a critically conscious revolutionary organization.¹³

Cultural Invasion is another fundamental characteristic anti-dialogical action. In this phenomenon, the invaders penetrate the cultural context of another group, and ignoring the potential of the latter, they impose their own view of the world upon those they invade and inhibit the creativity of the invaded by curbing their expression. In cultural invasion the invaders are the authors of, and actors in, the process; those they invade are the objects. All domination involves invasion – at times physical and overt, at times camouflaged, with the invader assuming the roles of a helping friend. In the last analysis, invasion is a form of economic and cultural domination. Cultural conquest leads to the cultural inauthenticity of those who are invaded; they begin to respond to the values, the standards, and the goals of the invaders. In cultural invasion it is essential that those who are invaded come to see their reality with the outlook of the invaders rather than their own; for the more they mimic the invaders, the more stable the position the latter becomes. For the cultural invasion to succeed, it is essential that those invaded become convinced of their intrinsic inferiority. The values of the invaders become the values of the invaded. The more invasion is accentuated and those invaded are alienated from the spirit of their own culture and from themselves, the more the latter want to be like them : to walk like them, dress like them, talk like them. Cultural invasion is on the one hand an instrument of domination, and on the other, the result of domination. For the reclamation of the culture from invasion requires that the revolutionary leaders initiate the ‘cultural revolution’. Cultural revolution takes the total society to be reconstructed, including all human activities, as the object of its remoulding action. It is the revolutionary regime’s maximum effort at conscientization. Cultural invasion, which serves the ends of conquest and the preservation of oppression, always involves a parochial view

oppose each other so that their unity is always kept in abeyance. The political leaders favour a group and offer some special advantages, which act as a bait for the group without realizing that they are being trapped.

¹² Cf. Freire, pp. 108-116.

¹³ Cf. Ibid. pp. 116-119.

of reality, a static perception of the world, and imposition of one worldview upon another. It implies the ‘superiority’ of the invader and the ‘inferiority’ of those who are invaded, as well as the imposition of values by the former, who possess the latter and are afraid to lose them. Cultural invasion further signifies that the ultimate seat of decision regarding the action of those who are invaded lies not with them but with the invaders. Although human beings are called to develop themselves, when are submitted to concrete conditions of oppression in which they become alienated ‘beings for another’ of the false ‘being for himself’ on whom they depend, are not able to develop authentically. The oppressed only begin to develop when, surmounting the contradiction in which they are caught, they become ‘beings for themselves’.¹⁴ In order to overcome the anti-dialogical procedures of the oppressors, revolutionary leaders must follow the path of dialogue and communication.

In contrast to the anti-dialogical action, and the techniques employed by the oppressors, which we have briefly described above, now let us consider in a schematic manner the methods to be employed by the revolutionaries for dialogical action. They are co-operation, unity for liberation, organization and cultural synthesis.¹⁵

In the dialogical theory of action, Subjects meet in **Cooperation** in order to transform the world. Here there is a meeting of subjects in the form of an intersubjectivity, where an I-Thou relationship rather than I-It relationship permeates. Cooperation, as a characteristic of dialogical action, can only be achieved through communication. Dialogue, as essential communication, must underlie any cooperation. Dialogue does not impose, does not manipulate, does not domesticate, does not ‘sloganize’. For the cooperation to be effective, confidence and trust are necessary. Although trust is basic to dialogue, it is not an *a priori* condition of the latter : it results from the encounter in which human beings are co-Subjects in denouncing the world, as part of the world’s transformation. In dialogical theory, at no stage can revolutionary action forgo *communion* with the people. *Communion* in turn elicits *cooperation*, which brings leaders and people to the *fusion*. This fusion can exist only if revolutionary activity is really human, empathetic, loving communicative, and humble, in order to be liberating.

In the anti-dialogical theory of action one of the methods employed by the oppressors was the policy of ‘divide and rule’, but in the dialogical theory the leaders must dedicate themselves to an untiring effort for unity among the oppressed – and unity of the leaders with the oppressed – in order to achieve their liberation. Thus **Unity for Liberation** becomes a necessity. The carrying out a revolutionary liberating praxis on the part of the leaders is not an easy task. The unity of the elite derives from its *antagonism* with the people; the unity of the revolutionary leadership group grows out of *communion* with the (united) people. To divide the oppressed, an ideology of oppression is indispensable. In contrast, achieving their unity requires a form of cultural action through which they come to know the why and how of their adhesion to reality – it requires a de-ideologizing. The object of dialogical action is to make it possible for the oppressed, by perceiving their adhesion, to opt to transform an unjust reality. In order for the oppressed to unite, they must first cut the umbilical cord of magic and myth which binds them to the world of oppression; the unity which links them to each other must be of a different nature. To achieve this indispensable unity the revolutionary process must be, from the beginning, cultural action. Cultural action

¹⁴ See Ibid. pp. 121-130.

¹⁵ The ideas expressed here have been beautifully summed up by Paulo Freire in his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, pp. 135-150.

must lead to the clarification of the forms of oppression, which many a time may be 'invisible'.

Organization of the people presents as an antagonistic opposition to manipulation. Organization is not only directly linked to unity, but is a natural development of that unity. The leaders' pursuit of unity is necessarily also an attempt to organize the people, requiring witness to the fact the struggle for liberation is a common task. The essential elements of witness which do not vary historically include : *consistency* between words and actions; *boldness* which urges the witness to confront existence as a permanent risk; *radicalization* leading both the witness and the ones receiving that witness to increasing action; *courage to love*; and *faith* in the people, since it is to them that witness is made. For the dominant organization means organizing themselves. For the revolutionary leaders, organization means organizing themselves with the people. The dominant elite increasingly structures its power so that it can more efficiently dominate and depersonalize; but for the revolutionary leaders organization only corresponds to its nature and objective if in itself it constitutes the practice of freedom. Accordingly, the discipline necessary to any organization must not be confused with regimentation. The people are already depersonalized by oppression – if the revolutionary leaders manipulate them, instead of working towards their conscientization, they negate the very objective of organization, i.e., liberation. The dialogical theory of action opposes both authoritarianism and licence, and thereby affirms authority and freedom. Freedom and authority cannot be isolated, but must be considered in relationship to each other. Authentic authority is not affirmed as such by a mere *transfer* of power, but through *delegation* or in sympathetic *adherence*. Authority can avoid conflict with freedom only if it is 'freedom-become-authority'. Just as authority cannot exist without freedom, and vice versa, authoritarianism cannot exist without denying freedom, nor licence without denying authority. Organization is, rather, a highly educational process in which leaders and people together experience true authority and freedom, which they then seek to establish in society by transforming the reality which mediates them.

If in the anti-dialogical situation there is cultural invasion, in the dialogical situation there is **Cultural Synthesis**. Cultural action is always systematic and deliberate form of action which operates upon the social structure, either with the objective of preserving the structure or of transforming it. Cultural action either serves domination, or it serves the liberation of the humans. Cultural synthesis is a mode of action for confronting culture itself, as the preserver of the very structures by which it was formed. Cultural action, as historical action, is an instrument for superseding the dominant alienated and alienating culture. In this sense, every authentic revolution is a cultural revolution. Those who are invaded, whatever be their level, rarely go beyond the models which the invaders prescribe for them. In cultural synthesis there are no invaders; hence, there are no imposed models. In this synthesis, leaders and people are somehow reborn in new knowledge and new action. Knowledge of the alienating culture leads to transforming action resulting in a culture which being freed from alienation. In cultural synthesis it is possible to resolve the contradiction between the world view of the leaders and that of the people, to the enrichment of both. Such a synthesis does not mean that the objectives of revolutionary action should be limited by the aspirations expressed in the worldview of the people. Neither invasion by the leaders of the people's worldview nor mere adaptation by the leaders to the aspirations of the people is acceptable. Cultural synthesis serves the ends of organization; organization serves the ends of liberation.

By employing the above mentioned methods and other historically conditioned modes of action a society has to fight against the type of oppression that is active in that society.

II. The Non-Brahmin and Dalit Movements

Our aim in this part of the paper is to look at the early movements of protest against the caste exploitation and other forms of protest in ancient and later India. We shall look at these movements from a historical perspective. As brilliantly noted by Antonio Gramsci, no movement can come into being unless it produces its own intelligentsia.¹⁶ In the Indian history what has happened to the non-Brahmin movements is that they did not have a real intelligentsia to guide and direct them. Any opposition to the existing structures was looked upon with suspicion, and was easily eliminated with the support the political power that be. The rise of Buddhism was a great historical event in India. Buddhist religion was led by non-Brahminical intellectuals constituted by the monks and the nuns of the monastic order. After Buddhism's exit all the religions and anti-caste movements that arose thenceforth functioned within the *jati* system, and hence they were assimilated by it sooner or later.¹⁷ With the establishment of the colonial society by the British rulers the assimilative capacity of the Hindu society was challenged. They ushered in new capitalist forces of production for their exploitative purposes, and modified the feudal caste relations of production instead of abolishing them. Officially in 1843 they abolished slavery, made all Indians equal before law, and threw the doors of education open to all, irrespective of caste, race, class, religion or sex. Class did not exist in India prior to the British rule; hence caste is a pre-class institution of exploitation and administration in India. With colonial regime, the two modes of production that of caste and class, came to exist. The anti-caste outlook professed mechanical materialism, while the class nationalist outlook professed Vedanta idealism.

Jotiba Phule¹⁸ was the first revolutionary democrat of India who strove for the abolition of feudal caste order. He could not link his efforts for democratic revolution with that of national independence due to the duality of the old caste system, and the new class system brought into being by the British imperialists. The imperialist rule being a class based one, the nationalist revolution was conceived as a class revolution by the high caste leaders of the National Congress. The leaders hailed exclusively from the Brahmin and Bania castes, wanted national independence without the abolition of the feudal caste order. Phule's programme of the emancipation of the Sudra peasantry from the shackles of caste, religion and landlordism was rejected by the National Congress in 1892, and thus came into being the lasting rift between the social (caste) and political (class) emancipatory movements. Even Gandhiji preferred

¹⁶ See his *Prison Books*, 1971, p. 5.

¹⁷ The movements like *Lingayat* religion led by the *Jangam* intellectuals, Sikhism led by the *Khatris* intellectuals, and the *Bhakti* movement by saints of the respective castes, are some examples in this connection.

¹⁸ Jotiba Phule (1829-1890) was the founder of *Satyashodak* non-Brahmin movement in Maharashtra. He was not satisfied with the reform of the upper caste Hindu family life, but built up the pre-conditions of grass root movements of *Sudras* and *Adi-Sudras* for the abolition of the caste system itself. Phule started the first girls' primary school in India in 1848 at Pune and taught his illiterate wife Savitri to become the first lady primary teacher in that school. He had great respect for women, and even held that they are superior to men, and preached women's emancipation to be the pre-condition for that of men.

caste as a better guarantee of social stability as compared to class. With Shahu (1874-1922), the Maharaja of Kolhapur State, the non-Brahmin movement became a mass movement. But he chose to become an Arya Samajist, instead of a Phuleyite. The radical section of the movement led by Keshavarao Jedhe merged with the National Congress in 1930 against the advice of Ambedkar. The intellectuals of Sudra peasantry fell a prey to the Gandhian Gospel of one point programme, that class based independence revolution would solve the problem of caste also. Thus they betrayed the lower castes. The rift between caste and class theories and practices was bridged at the cost of the former.

With the seventies efforts were made by Marxists and Dalits to combine the ideologies of Marxism and Phule-Ambedkarism eclectically. But it proved to be combination of two crisis-ridden philosophies. The combiners in order not to get alienated from masses, espoused even the out-dated tenets of Marxism or Ambedkarism. How are they crisis ridden? Caste philosophy does not have the most advanced tool of historical materialism, which helps one to study any society in a materialistic manner, i.e., starting not with the study of superstructure but with that of the material base constituted by the forces of production and relations of production of the society. Caste philosophy has no economic theory of its own which can help study the present caste-class society of India. But class methodology being a unilinear one, refrains from studying caste in its origin, development and death, and thus can attain knowledge only of the class character of Indian society. In studying the history of exploitation in India, perhaps, no model from outside may fit – neither Marxism, nor Western anthropology may serve the purpose. Africa, India, etc., have their own mode of production. Applying a unilinear methodology cannot go far enough in studying non-class exploitative societies like India. Perhaps, we may have to apply a multi-linear methodology of Marxism-Phule-Ambedkarism. Dalit literature has come into existence, but it has not been able to produce its own aesthetics. The Marxist-Phule-Ambedkarist aesthetics synthesizes the contributions to aesthetics by Kant, Husserl and Sartre, and draws upon Freud and Frazer. Marxism-Phule-Ambedkarism, having its own more and more advanced epistemology and having raised the understanding of the law of contradiction to a qualitatively new and higher level, is a new philosophy. Its multilinear methodology is, perhaps, the only applied philosophy in India, which has been able to lay bare the laws that regulated the pre-colonial caste society and that govern modern caste-class society.¹⁹

The Dalit²⁰ movement in India has come about in the recent history. This has come about through struggles of the scheduled castes against the upper castes. Here we shall

¹⁹ For some of the ideas in this section I am indebted to a paper written by Sharad Patil, "Non-Brahmin and Dalit Movements and their Implications for the Struggle against Caste Culture," in the book : *Religion, Ideology and Counter Culture, Essays in honour of S. Kappen*, edited by Philip Mathew and Aji Muricken, Bangalore : Horizon Books, 1987, pp. 207-225.

²⁰ The term *Dalit* means 'broken', 'downtrodden', 'oppressed', 'bent', 'fragile', etc. Hence the term can include all those who are oppressed for caste, race, or economic reasons. It is primarily applied to the scheduled castes and tribes, and can have an extended meaning to include all those who are under oppression, like women. Originally Gandhi had used the term *Harijans* for those who belonged to the scheduled castes, but because of its bad nuance, they themselves have opted for the

only just mention briefly about Dalit movement, for we will have occasion to discuss about it in detail in relation to Ambedkar whose contribution we intend delineate at some length. Any real movement of the most oppressed section, the Dalits, will have to confront the entire system. This is not to say that all collective actions by Dalits will do so; their actual development depends on the possibilities of the situation, question of alliances, support of middle castes, etc. But Dalit movements will have an inherent interest in moving in a radical direction. The basic guideline for any analysis in the interests of the oppressed people is to ask : who are the exploiters and who are the exploited? How can the exploited organize their struggle to move in the direction of liberation? And what is the relation of the structures of exploitation to the historical possibilities of moving in the direction of liberation from exploitation? It is not enough that we have good theories, for as Marx says, “Philosophers have only interpreted the world; the point is to change it.”²¹

The discovery of an identity of their own is a must for the Dalits. The efforts of various social reformers, Dr. Baba Saheb Ambedkar’s conversion to Buddhism, the establishment of a Dalit political party, the special ‘reservations’ and welfare measures taken by the government for the uplift of this community, their access to educational facilities have all combined to generate a sense of identity in this community. Ambedkar had hoped to revolutionize the lives of his people through mass conversion to Buddhism. This hope was not realized. But conversion did prove to be the first step in a steadily ongoing change; it even accelerated this change. By conversion to Buddhism, and by taking on the name ‘neo-Buddhists’, they wanted to give up the Hindu superstitions and the caste structure.

III. Ambedkar and Dalit Liberation

When we look into the pre-Independence and post-Independence history B. R. Ambedkar (1891-1956) stands out as a towering figure, because of his intellectual acumen, organizing capacity and straightforwardness. Except for the caste dominated National Congress Party he would have achieved much more. A lot of his life energy was wasted in fighting against the caste leaders. Ambedkar played three roles: that of a caste leader, that of an Untouchable²² spokesman, and that of a national statesman. In his leadership role, he was guide, guru and decision maker for his own caste, the Mahars of Maharashtra, from the mid-twenties of this century till his death. From the early 1930s onwards he was the chief spokesman of the Untouchables in the eyes of the Government of India, the Untouchable leader who had to be dealt with from the viewpoint of the Indian National Congress, and the individual most responsible for

term *Dalits*, especially after the conversion of Ambedkar and others to Buddhism.

²¹ Cf. Gail Momvedt, *Dalits and the Democratic Revolution : Dr. Ambedkar and the Dalit Movement in Colonial India*, Delhi: Sage Publications, 1996, pp. 28-31.

²² ‘Untouchable’ was a word used by Ambedkar himself for those castes lowest in the Hindu scale of pollution. The early governmental term was ‘Depressed Classes’; this was replaced by Scheduled Castes in 1935 when these castes were placed in a schedule as qualifying for special rights. Gandhi used the name Harijan, which was in current usage until recent times, except among the followers of Ambedkar. All those who were converted to Buddhism use the term Buddhist and reject all other nomenclature, including their original caste names. Since 1980s the term in current usage is Dalit, a term the meaning of which we have explained above.

India's policies of compensatory discrimination toward the Scheduled Castes. In his third role, he spoke on all phases on India's development, worked on problems of labour and law as a member of the Government, and even put aside some of his own theories to help create a viable, generally accepted Constitution.²³ Ambedkar's greatest support was from his own caste, and this massive support is what enabled him to work effectively in larger circles. As Mahars were eager for change, perhaps, Ambedkar struck a concordant note with them. His very presence created a new image. Ambedkar designed over the years, an ideology and a programme which counteracted negative self-images, made use of Mahar virtues, and urged the Mahar toward every channel open to participation in a modernizing, democratizing India. In the end he left with new images and legends, and with a new history as past and present Buddhists, so much so, an old Mahar remarked: "He took us to the stars."²⁴

Ambedkar, although an untouchable, could influence others, even foreigners by the sheer ability of his intelligence and extraordinary practical ability. His Western dress and his independent critical temperament underlined the new identity he sought for the Indian untouchables. In the political field, Ambedkar at first supported special representation for the Depressed Classes, then joint electorates with Hindus, then separate electorates, and toward the end of his life denied the workability of the reserved seats for the Scheduled Castes for which he had spent his life and energy. Ambedkar's varying approaches in the religious and political fields, however, reflect the shifting opportunities and changing political demands around him. We find a remarkable consistency in his total view. Through his speeches and writings²⁵ Ambedkar tried to inspire his followers. From his voluminous writings we can cull out some guiding principles of Ambedkar.

1. The Untouchables should revolt because they are slaves, and slavery is inherently inhuman. There is no racial difference that marks them off from caste Hindus. If Hindu religious scripture ordains the practice of untouchability, those scriptures should be rejected.

2. Only by acknowledging their slavery, by admitting their inferior position, could Untouchables unify and press for change. Only by Governmental acknowledgment of their deprivation as a class and the correction of injustice by a special treatment on a caste basis could equality eventually be reached.

3. Only Untouchables can understand their own condition and needs; hence only Untouchables themselves should lead Untouchable movements.

4. Education and politics are the chief means to equality: education so that the Untouchable will be able to participate in society on an equal plane; political agitation and participation, so that Untouchables can secure their rights and redress their economic and social grievances by law and political policy.

5. Untouchables are totally Indian. No foreign ideology, no foreign religion could help them achieve equality as Indians. India must be free before they are totally free, but their battle for freedom must never be subservient to other demands.

6. Only as some Untouchables become elite can the whole group be raised. Only if ability and ambition enable some Untouchables to be at the top of the pinnacle can the mass below realize its own potential.²⁶

²³ Eleanor Zelliot, *From Untouchable to Dalit : Essays on the Ambedkar Movement*, New Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 1996, p. 53.

²⁴ See Ibid. p. 54.

²⁵ As we know his speeches and writings run into many volumes. For lack of space and time we are not able to concentrate much on them. But some of the volumes pertaining to our theme have been consulted.

In various volumes of the works of Ambedkar²⁷ we find him taking up the cause of the Untouchables of India. He was their champion, nobody could dissuade him from fighting for their freedom. Also he had the courage to withstand the caste leaders, even Ganhiji, and tell on their face the naked truth of the oppression of the Untouchables. What he wanted was the regaining of their status as human beings with freedom for self-determination and rights. The emergence of Mahar leaders and a new spirit of militancy in the nineteenth century was due in large measure to the influence of education acquired in the army and in domestic service. Also from their ranks emerged many primary school teachers. Ambedkar in his book: *The Untouchables* published in 1948 presents his own view about the Untouchables. According to this account, untouchability originated in the practices of separation and denigration imposed on those who remained Buddhists during an early period of renascent Hinduism. Although Ambedkar himself experienced discrimination and humiliation during his youth, the Maharashtrian atmosphere of reform allowed him exceptional opportunities for education and later for leadership. He was aided by caste Hindus. The greatest fight that he undertook was the fight against caste system. Ambedkar did not find Gandhi's condemnation of untouchability radical; he reacted to Gandhi very strongly. He organized the programmes to integrate the Untouchable into the Indian society in modern, not traditional ways, and on as high level as possible.

Ambedkar, being an adept leader, knew that if the Untouchables at any time have to achieve their rightful position in Indian society, the only way was to have a proper theory and praxis. He put that in three terms: *educate*, *agitate* and *organize*. Although *Swarajya* was proclaimed as the ideal for Indian society, no untouchable believed that the upper castes will recognize the untouchables as human beings and live up to their own humanity after the attainment of *swarajya*. And, therefore, the *swarajya*, which the caste Hindus looked forward to as a goal much to be cherished, is looked upon by the untouchables as a potential calamity. He wanted them to set a time frame and win their own rights. With this in mind, Ambedkar evolved his own ideology. The salient features of this ideology may be put in these terms:

1. The untouchables might belong to the same religion, but they were not a part of the same society as the caste Hindus. They constituted a separate interest group.
2. Untouchables had historically been an exploited group; untouchability was the culmination of a religious philosophy based on inequality.
3. The philosophy of Brahmanism was a philosophy of graded inequality, and Hinduism was the same as Brahmanism. It was inflexible and had frustrated till then all previous efforts at reform in this basic feature.
4. The untouchables sought equality and justice, not favours. Social graces were unimportant.
5. Justice demanded not just proportional representation, but protective discrimination for the untouchables.
6. The untouchables would seek to attain legitimate equalitarian goals and special protection, in political and economic spheres, within the fold of Hinduism as far as possible, but would reject Hinduism if necessary.²⁸

²⁶ Zelliot, *Untouchable to Dalit*, pp. 61-62.

²⁷ See for example volumes 5, 7, and 9. He deals at length on the status and deprivation that the Untouchables are called to endure. He used to show by contrast how the caste Hindus oppress the Untouchables. Ambedkar wanted their conversion.

²⁸ M. S. Gore, *The Social Context of an Ideology : Ambedkar's Political and Social Thought*, New Delhi: Sage Publications,

What Ambedkar hated most in Hinduism was the caste system. It became so oppressive. The original *varna* system which might have been a division of labour later degenerated into an established form of discrimination, and was exalted to the level of a divine institution, and breaking its norms would bring in divine sanction. Describing the numerous and specific disabilities which the Depressed Classes had to undergo, Ambedkar said that so long as they remained in the Hindu fold, there was no salvation for them. They had to go out of the Hindu fold to secure their freedom. He used to say: “You have nothing to lose except your chains, and everything to gain by changing your religion.” Also he told them that they lacked three essential qualities for carrying out their struggle, namely, manpower, money and intellectual power, and so long as they remained in the Hindu fold they would not be able to acquire those powers. As regards the spiritual aspect of the issue, he observed that the function of religion was the uplift of the individual. For that purpose it should teach the virtues of fellow-feeling, equality and liberty.²⁹

Ambedkar established an Anti-Untouchability League with the hope to work for the amelioration of the Depressed Classes. He identified mainly three areas of work for the League. These were, (a) securing civil rights for the depressed classes, (b) ensuring equality of opportunity for them in employment, and (c) promoting greater social intercourse between caste Hindus and members of the depressed classes. The goals that Ambedkar set for the Untouchable Movement has to be analysed from two levels – the philosophic, ideational level, and the practical, programmatic level. Protest movements, particularly movements of depressed classes or communities, are in a broad sense movements to find for themselves a ‘place in the sun’, a social space in which they can live and breathe with freedom and dignity. In his Barsi Takli speech delivered in 1924, Ambedkar said, “Untouchability is worse than slavery, because slaves are known to have attained freedom even in Roman society, but untouchability is forever.” He understood the need for education for the Untouchables in order to wrest power and equality. In 1948 speaking at the Dhobi Talao High School, he said, “We cannot rise in life without education and knowledge. The upper castes at present hold the reins of political power. They are determined to keep hold of power. The education needed to win high position is still only with the upper castes. You cannot wrest this power from them without education.” In the same speech Ambedkar emphasized the need for cleanliness, tidiness and good apparel. As important as cleanliness, he said, was self-respect. He asked the students to give up servility to the upper castes. Death, he said, was preferable to a life of humiliation. In another talk at Akola in 1942, he urged, “Nurture your self-esteem. How long will you live like sheep? Learn to face injustice and fight it. If I had not done it myself I would still be called only a ‘Mahar’.” The call to ‘Educate, Agitate and Organize’, which Ambedkar had given at the time of the founding of Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha was repeated in different ways, and with newer emphasis through many years of political travail.³⁰

For Ambedkar **Religion**, as it existed, constituted another block to the realization of the goals of the Untouchables, because it sanctioned and sanctified the oppressive caste system. Hence a change of religion became another necessity for redeeming one’s self image. Ambedkar’s personal conversion announcement in 1935 was followed in 1936 by a Mahar conference in Bombay. In this conference he spoke for the need of change of religion in moving words, and all those who were present took

1993, pp. 120-121.

²⁹ Dhananjay Keer, *Dr. Ambedkar : Life and Mission*, Bombay: Sangam Books, 1987, pp. 273-274.

³⁰ Gore, *Social Context of an Ideology*, pp. 207-214.

the pledge to change to another religion. In moving words he spoke: “Religion is for man; man is not for religion. If you want to gain self-respect, change your religion. If you want to create cooperating society, change your religion. If you want power, change your religion. If you want have equality, change your religion. If you want independence, change your religion. If you want to make the world in which you live, happy, change your religion...”³¹

He also showed the sad plight of continuing to be Hindus:

Because we have the misfortune of calling ourselves Hindus, we are treated thus. If we were members of another Faith, none would dare treat us so. Choose any religion which gives you equality of status and treatment. We shall repair our mistake now. I had the misfortune of being born with the stigma of an Untouchable. However, it is not my fault; but I will not die a Hindu, for this is in my power.³²

Such passionate plea moved the hearts of people, and they were willing to take the plunge. The reason for such a decision to conversion was the rigid attitude of the caste Hindus who refused them entry into temples, to take water from the common wells, and even to make use of the common road, etc. After the announcement of 1935-36, however, there was a hiatus of 20 years before Ambedkar’s formal conversion to Buddhism took place. For the first few years he flirted with Islam and Christianity in an attempt to combine a personal need for self-respect, felt by many untouchable groups, with an astute political move that would allow Untouchables more political power. He rejected Christianity and Islam because, though formally egalitarian religions, they did not face in their origin the task of fighting the caste system. Even the Lingayat and Sikh religions, which arose in the struggle against caste system succumbed to it. The only religion which arose and grew out of the struggle against caste system and never succumbed to it was Buddhism. During the time when Ambedkar was most active on the national scene, his personal interest in Buddhism increased. He studied and wrote extensively on *Buddha and Dhamma*³³. His delayed conversion came long after the period of combining the conversion idea with political expediency, and by then reference to conversion as a political threat had lost its significance. Instead, it had reference to the great Asian Buddhist world, reputation of Buddhism as an important religion both in India and abroad, and the possibility of Buddhism as a moral force.³⁴ Ambedkar also tried to compare Marxism and Buddhism, and found Buddhism better than Marxism. Although he was not against Marx, somehow he did not find it as attractive as Buddhism. One of the reasons was that he was basically religious. He was willing to consider the economic assumptions offered by Marxism. Taking standard left economic assumptions for granted had two consequences for Ambedkar and the Dalit movement : First, it led to attempts to formulate a historical theory of caste and social struggle in India that functioned primarily at the ‘superstructural’ level, stressing factors of political conflict and ideology apart from those of economic development. Second, it effectively suppressed any dialogue with alternative economic models and ignored the degree to which a state-controlled heavy industry would effectively a Brahman and high caste-controlled economy.³⁵

³¹ Zelliot, *Untouchable to Dalit*, p. 192.

³² Ibid. p. 208.

³³ See Moon, ed., *Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar : Writings and Speeches, The Buddha and His Dhamma*, Vol. 11, Bombay: Education Department, Government of Maharashtra, 1992.

³⁴ Zelliot, *Untouchable to Dalit*, pp. 192-195.

³⁵ Omvedt, *Dalits and Democratic Revolution*, p. 230

For Ambedkar 'religion' came to have a specific meaning. In a speech delivered in Bombay (1955) on the foundation of Buddhism, he said, 'That which promises equal opportunity to all is the true religion. The rest are all false religions'. For him 'religion' had significance only insofar as it helped to establish a moral order characterized by equality, freedom and fraternity. And he was convinced that Buddhism alone could create a climate favourable to human equality.³⁶ The main reason why Ambedkar decided to opt out of Hinduism was the oppressive caste system, which made the lower castes lesser than animals. This situation was considered to be sacred and irreformable by the upper caste Hindus, because it gave them a special advantage of domination over the depressed classes. Since the leadership of the Congress Party was also vitiated with this virus he decided to opt out, and found that as the best solution.

Ambedkar saw in Buddhism a revolutionary potential and as an egalitarian religion. According to him Buddha created his *Sangha* as a model of casteless society and the laity was supposed to emulate the *bhikkhus*. He held that the anti-caste legacy was a powerful weapon for the enlightenment of the Indian masses. The great merit of neo-Buddhism is that it has revived the anti-caste heritage of the so far neglected and suppressed non-Brahminical current in Indian history, philosophy, science, literature, arts and culture. Though neo-Buddhism does not go beyond early Buddhism, it brings us to the study of later Buddhism which brought about a veritable renaissance in all fields of human endeavour in India. The Buddhist *bhikkhus* are no more full time revolutionaries. Neo-Buddhism is a religion of the laity, which was not the case with ancient Buddhism. Buddhist philosophies and culture, like all the philosophies and cultures of the great non-Brahmin current of Indian history, can be a vehicle of anti-caste enlightenment.

Ambedkar being a politician involved himself in political affairs, for he knew only through political power any transformation can come about. But he was totally disillusioned with the Congress Party and its leadership. He founded his own political party (Independent Labour Party). But Hinduism on the one hand, and traditional Marxism, on the other, thwarted all his attempts. The only way left for him was to agree to the drawing up of a compromise draft on anti-caste, bourgeois, democratic Constitution, and, in the bargain, obtain reservation for Scheduled Castes and Tribes. This was a strategic move he visualized for the abolition of caste system. But after his demise in 1956 these groups and communities drifted away from each other, and towards the Congress.

Conclusion

Although not fully exhaustively, we have dealt at some length about the method of the subalterns, and especially in relation to the position of the Dalits in India. In the first part of the paper our endeavour was to delineate the method and the strategies the oppressed will have to adopt if they have to bring about their liberation. As Ambedkar understood what people needed is true democracy. Genuine democracy will promote the interest of the well-being of the people at large. His concept of democracy revolves around the basic philosophy that our view of the relationship between individual and society has always been, not one of conflict but of harmony and cooperation born out of consciousness of single reality running through all individuals. For him the individual is a living limb of the corporate social personality. Both individual and society supplement and complement each other with the result that both get strengthened and benefited.³⁷ Oppressed people all over the world

³⁶ Gore, *Social Context of an Ideology*, pp. 238-239.

³⁷ M. G. Chitkara, *Dr. Ambedkar Towards Buddhism*, New Delhi: APH Publishing Corporation, 1997, pp. 83-83

eagerly look for such a 'golden democracy'. In his historic speech in the Constituent Assembly Ambedkar said : "We must make our political democracy a social democracy as well. Political democracy cannot last unless there lies at the base of it social democracy. What does social democracy mean? It means a way of life which recognizes liberty, equality and fraternity as principles of life."³⁸

'Dalits' (the oppressed in general) live in sub-human social conditions, abject poverty, economic exploitation, a sub-culture of submission and political powerlessness. They are considered to be a curse and are treated as untouchables. Without access to the vital economic resources and bargaining power, they become the most exploited peripheral group in any society. This has happened to the Untouchables and outcastes of India in a large measure without any hope of throwing away the yoke of oppression. In this context we can ask the question: "Who will lead the Indian democratic revolution?" The answer of the communist parties is: The Indian industrial proletariat. Ambedkar disagreed and said that a proletariat which is caste-ridden and itself inegalitarian is unfit to lead it. Unless it becomes homogenous through the abolition of the caste system, it will not be able to discharge its historic function of accomplishing the socialist revolution. Ambedkar would say that it is the social proletariat, the masses of the Scheduled Castes and Tribes, who is fit to lead such a revolution. As Paulo Freire has pointed out it is the oppressed who are their own liberators.

Quite contrary to the expectation, most policies of the post-independent India have been regarded by the Dalits as the greatest source of their frustration. Ambedkar had realized the need for higher education for the Dalits, but even today this dream of his remains unfulfilled. The plight of the Dalit students from the higher education is due to the prejudices of high caste educators and fellow students, besides inadequacies of the government's provisions and unfavourable poor social economic background of their parents. Mostly it is the activist groups who support the Dalit students and youth. But such activist groups quite often meet with opposition from the establishment and dominant castes and classes.³⁹ Also a proper ideology and literature can support any movement; hence, what is urgently needed from the part of the Dalits is development of a literature which will sustain their movement for freedom and equality. They should have the courage to throw off the weight of the traditions, especially the religious accretions and build upon new foundations. In fact, the failure of the Neo-Buddhists is that they have not been able to throw off the yoke traditional Hindu religion.

Ideologies of protest seem to perform simultaneously several functions. They articulate new values and new social goals. They uncover and make visible the inequities and injustices or 'contradictions' of the existing order of social and economic relationships, they propose and canvass the acceptance of new set of goals and social modalities, they provide justification and legitimacy for the opposition to and 'demolition' of existing structures, they create and emphasize new identities for the 'victims' of the existing order.⁴⁰ Only those leaders who have the capability to 'denounce' (denouncing the existing unjust structures that oppress the humans in various ways), and to 'announce' (announcing of a society established in justice, peace, equality and harmony) have the right to be leaders. They should have the total commitment like that of Ambedkar, who became an icon for the Dalits. Perhaps, like

³⁸ Ibid. p. 132.

³⁹ See Nandu Ram, *Beyond Ambedkar : Essays on Dalits in India*, New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications, 1995, 354-356.

⁴⁰ Gore, *Social Context of an Ideology*, p. 339.

the dream of Martin Luther King Jr., it may still remain a distant reality for many more years to come.

“The sciences have developed in an order, the reverse of what might have been expected. What was most remote from ourselves was first brought under the domain of law, and then, gradually, what was nearer: first the heavens, next the earth, then animal and vegetable life, then the human body, and last of all (as yet very imperfectly) the human mind” – Bertrand Russell

The Primacy of Science in Philosophising

Dr. Mathew Chandrankunnel CMI

Today, as we gather for the Indian Christian Philosophical conference at Jeevalaya, to reflect and chalk out the methodology for an Indian Christian philosophical perspectives for the coming decades of the twenty-first century, I am here to present the emphasis of science and technology in philosophising.

What exactly does reason or rationality means? The notion of rationality is not univocal. Rationality is used in incommensurable ways in different contexts. Rationality can mean one thing in science, something completely different in politics, ethics, economics, religion etc. Thus rationality is a concept often confused with the nature of rationality, the standards of rationality, the evidence of rationality and the ends of rationality. However, in contemporary terminology, science is considered as the refinement of reason and its representation because of its contributions to humanity that transformed human life in a radical and revolutionary way. Science is the most rigorous way of acquiring knowledge and transforming this knowledge into technical gadgets. As Hilary Putnam observes that

if what impressed the few about science from the start was its stunning intellectual success, there is no doubt that what has impressed the many is not its overwhelming material and technological success. We are impressed by this even when it threatens our very lives. (Putnam 1990: 176)

Every minute of human life and every inch space of its existence are highly influenced by science and technology. The integration of knowledge acquired by the practice of science in philosophising is not anything new; this is the best model ever presented by a scientist-philosopher. It is none other than the Aristotelian **model** presented in the beginning of thought itself; around 500 B.C. Aristotelian philosophy, if we scrutinise, can be seen that it is built upon the common sense science and cosmology developed by Aristotle and the knowledge gatherers before his times. Thus, philosophy is something that explores beyond physics, metaphysics. In this paper, therefore I am presenting the inextricable interwovenness between science and philosophy and I appeal to the philosophers to integrate the epochal scientific advancement made in our contemporary times.

What is Science and its Methodology?

Science can be understood in terms of its specific methodology and domain. The Logical Positivists at the fag end of the nineteenth century drew a methodology from the practice of science. They claimed that certainty of knowledge could be arrived at through this

methodology. A casual observation of a phenomenon is the initial stage. This observation induces curiosity to probe further and the observation is repeated under the specified initial conditions, which is known as experiment. From the available data collected from the repeated experiments, an assumption for the cause of the phenomenon is guessed. When this assumption seems to be fairly correct due to the repeated experiments, it is designated as a hypothesis. This hypothesis is verified under critical conditions and if it passes the crucial test favourably, the hypothesis is confirmed as a law. A series of such laws inextricably connected under a philosophical vision is known as a physical, chemical or biological theory. This theory is capable of explaining the present phenomenon as well as any future phenomena that humanity may encounter.

I can illustrate the methodology of science through an example. Henry Becquerel observed that the photographic plate kept air and light tight in the drawer of his table was spoiled. Curious to see the destruction of the photographic plate due to light exposition, Becquerel started investigation and discovered that the ores of uranium kept inside the table was the culprit. He assumed that uranium ores emanated certain rays that exposed the photographic plate. His continued experiment confirmed the hypothesis leading to the discovery of radium and other radio- active materials. The oft spoken story about Newton is that the curious observation of the falling of an apple led him to discover the law of gravity, namely $F = GMm/d$ where F is the force that attracts between two bodies whose mass is M and m and the distance between them is d . G is known as the universal constant of gravity. This law of gravity is capable of explaining the cohesion of solar system, falling of bodies on the earth, the ebb and tide of seawater and various other phenomena like that. So a rigorous way of acquiring data and processing knowledge is the basic foundation of science. Karl Popper further refines this Positivist definition of the methodology of science through the introduction of the concept falsification. If a theory can withstand falsification, according to Popper, it is a robust theory. Popper shows an example that the general theory of relativity of Einstein could withstand such a falsification process because it predicted the bending of stellar light near the sun. In case that bending is not observed, then the theory of relativity could be falsified. In a very simple way this can be explained as having a theory that all swans are white and discovering a black swan it can be falsified.

This methodology has certain characteristics. If anybody doubts the law or the theory, he can always test it. The testability and repeatability of experiments beyond space and time eliminated any adhocism in the acquisition of knowledge. Anybody can test it for any number of times. Thus it acquires universality. A further build up of knowledge is possible; i.e., there is no way any methodologically acquired verified knowledge could be thrown away; but to build on what is already acquired. The scientific knowledge is thus cumulative. Moreover, this knowledge can be utilised to fabricate instruments and thus facilitate life. Due to this transformation of knowledge into technology, today we have mobiles, world wide web, i.e., internet, television, modern travel facilities, and even the concept of travelling has changed. Yesterday, we travelled and experienced the world. But today, the world is coming towards us, instead of travelling, we are walking with our finger tips.

Domain

The domain or content of science can be defined narrowly or broadly. The chain of being can be divided into various concentric circles beginning with matter. Matter is studied by the disciplines such as physics, chemistry and mathematics. Beyond the physical comes the plant life that can be studied by biology, microbiology etc. The plant life transcends the physical; but it incorporates the physical. Beyond the plant life lies the animal life which could be studied by zoology, biochemistry, genetics etc. The animal life transcends the plant life and also incorporates the preceding ones. The next domain is mind and it is studied by psychology, philosophy of mind. Then the soul or the spirit is placed which can be studied by theology. Beyond comes the ground of being **The Spirit** or **God** that can be examined as mysticism. In this chain of being, till the animal level we can strictly apply the scientific methodology.

Beyond that domain, the scientific methodology collapses or we need to have a different yardstick or methodology. When we mix up the domain and the methodology category mistake arises. When the methodology of science is brought into examine the transcendental domain, problems arise. When the transcendental domain comes to explain the scientific domain, dogmatism can be the result of such crossing of borders. Both dogmatism and scientism is detrimental to progress and human existence. Dogmatism explains everything in terms of an outside force, named God even in understanding and interpreting the material phenomena while scientism denies all transcendental phenomena since it cannot be experimented with the scientific methodology because it is based on only observables. Scientism overemphasises reason while dogmatism highlights faith. There is thus the importance of avoiding a category mistake in developing a philosophy suited for India.

Aristotelian Cosmology

Man from his very inception tried to unify and comprehend the pluralistic phenomena through reason and intuition. This process continued irrespective of time and context. In the early history of civilization this unification was tried from an experiential level. Thus air, water, fire and the like seemed to be the basis of the pluralistic reality. As thought and experience matured, philosophical conclusions were intuitively drawn from sense experience and theories like form and matter were developed. Man was never satisfied with these theories and his urge to comprehend the reality forced him to pursue new avenues, methods, and to formulate new theories. In this process, science was born with its critical, experimental, and rationalistic tendencies. The search for comprehending the pluralistic world continued through different paths, both by philosophy and science with mutual distrust, though both were born out of man's quest for knowledge. Occasionally science announced that a solution to this perennial problem was at hand. But always the much desired unification escaped the grip of man's quest. The need for a unified approach of science and philosophy was strongly felt ever before. Data of science and the metaphysical visions could be fused to have a unified approach in understanding the reality.

Aristotle's scientific and cosmological treatises are a fusion of such vision and can be detected from the books, mainly in *On the Heavens*, *Dialogue on Philosophy*, *Physica*, *De Caelo*, *De Generatione et Corruptione* and *Meteorologica*. (O'Neill 1923: 78-93) In this cosmology the centre of the universe was earth and Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn and even Sun revolved around the earth while stars are fixed. He divided the cosmos into celestial and terrestrial. The celestial bodies are made up of ether and they revolve around the earth in perfect circles. (Solmsen 1960: 288-291) There is no change in the celestial world. "In the whole range of time past, so far as our inherited records reach, no change appears to have taken place either in the whole scheme of the outer most heaven or in any of its proper parts". (Aristotle 1.4.270b 13-16) While the terrestrial motion is linear and the bodies are composed of air, fire, water, and earth. Their tendency is to go up and come down and all things come to rest. The heavy bodies will fall faster to the ground than the light bodies. Aristotle also denied the concept of atoms and empty space proposed by the Atomists. Aristotle also introduced a structural force to bind together the elements. These are the opposites, namely, wet and dry and hot and cold.

In the account of our knowledge of objects Aristotle in his *Topica* started with the discussion of predicables. "We must say what are definition 'property', 'genus' and 'accident'. A definition is a phrase signifying a thing's essence (McKeon, (ed) *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, p. 191, *Topica* Book 1, Ch.5.102). In the very description of the definition Aristotle makes a distinction between the thing that is existent and its meaning or signification which has universality in the epistemological order. The individual object that is existing is describable with the aid of categories because object is in the explicate order. "Next, then we must distinguish between the classes of predicates in which the four orders in question are found. These are ten number: Essence (substance), quantity, quality, relation, place, position, state, actuality, passivity. For the accident and genus and definition and property of anything

will always be in one of these categories” (McKeon, 195, Book.1, Ch. 9). The distinction between essence (substance) and accident is central in the philosophy of nature (cosmology) of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas. All the categories, i.e., substance and the nine accidents, are both modes of being and modes of thought for Aristotle. Substance is something existing by itself and distinct from the others. Since Aristotle accepted the possibility of the plurality of substances the philosophical standpoint he took is realistic pluralism. Plainly therefore in the science of nature, as in other branches of study, our first task will be to try to determine what relates to its principles ... The principles in question must be either a) one or (b) more than one (or many). If one, it must be either 1) motionless or (2) in motion. If more than one, then either (1) a finite or (2) an infinite plurality” {(McKeon 219) (Physics, Book.1, Ch. 9)}. Aristotle argues that reality is not one in the way that Parmenides and Melissus supposed. Nor is it actual infinite principles {(McKeon 268-9) (Physics Book III Ch. 8)}. Hence physical reality is actual finite plurality. He did not envisage a common substratum, in the physical level of reality. A key notion in the cosmology of Aristotle is the fact of motion or activity. According to him a motion can not be understood without referring to three factors namely 1) a substrate 2) a 'before' and 3) an 'after' the change. Changes bring in new qualities which are accidents. Here the whole operation is in the physical order.

Aristotle moved from the empirical to the transempirical order only when he took up the issue of the cause of motion. But in his philosophy of Nature he did not find any place for the study of a motionless unique reality. "Now to investigate whether Being is one and motionless is not a contribution to the science of Nature” (McKeon 219, *Physics* Book 1, Ch. 1 & 2). Things we experience in the physical universe are in movement or are subject to change. “Everything that is in motion must be moved by something. For if it has not the source of its motion in itself it is evident that it is moved by something other than itself, for there must be something else that moves it” (McKeon 340, *Physics*, Book, VII, Ch.1). ... let us take the case in which a thing is in locomotion and is moved by something that itself is in motion and that again is moved by something else that is in motion, and that by something else, and so on continually: then the series can not go on to infinity, but there must be some first movement. (McKeon 340, *Physics*, Book, VII, Ch.1) Aristotle did not speak of the origin of physical objects in time. It might have been existing. But he spoke of a cause of motion which itself is not in motion. He concludes his arguments in *Physics* (Book. VII, Ch. 5) in favour of an unmoved movement thus: "From what has been said, then, it is evident that....in all cases of things being in motion that which primarily imparts motion is unmoved” (McKeon 373-374). He also argues that the first movement must be something that is one and eternal.

A cause that is unmoved, one and eternal has to be something distinct and different from the order of beings which are subject to activities or movement. This division of the being into unmoved and moved, one opposed to many, eternal in opposition to the temporal refers to the radical incompleteness of the understanding of the physical world from a purely scientific point of view. Hence metaphysics (philosophy) has to come in to complete the picture of the physical world which physics or any other science could not do due to the limitation of its methodology. Aristotle after having established the fact that the reality that is subject to change, real, many and finite, treated at length the modes(categories) under which they are known; from a philosophical standpoint he examined what is motion, space (place), void, and time are. It is in connection with the definition of 'Nature', motion is defined. "Nature has been defined as a principle of motion and change". We must therefore see that we understand the meaning of 'motion', for if it were unknown, the meaning of nature too would be unknown” (McKeon 253). By 'Nature', essence or substance is understood. Motion is defined as the fulfilment of that which exists potentially” (McKeon 254). "What exists potentially" is also in space and time. Motion both in the form of locomotion and increase in dimension, involves variation of place or space. Concerning the reality of place Aristotle writes: We

assume then: 1) Place is what contains that of which it is the place.

2) Place is no part of the thing.

3) The immediate place of a thing is neither less nor greater than the thing.

4) Place can be left behind by the thing and is separable.

5) All place admits the distinction of up and down, and each of the bodies is naturally carried to its appropriate place and rests there, and this makes the place either up or down.

Moreover there is no necessity “that place should be a corporeal interval: for what is between the boundaries of the place is any body which may chance to be there, not an interval in body. Further place is also somewhere, not in the sense of being in a place, but as the limit is in the limited; for not everything that is in place, but only movable body. ..” (McKeon 279) In other words place is not in a place. The innermost motionless boundary of what contains is place (McKeon 278) In this discussion a body with a measurable quantity, or a body that can occupy a place is taken for granted, and in the absence of such a body place or space becomes inconceivable. As regards the description of the reality and experience of time Aristotle has also taken recourse to a world of measurable units which are in space and are in motion. “Now we perceive movement and time together;... But what is moved is from something to something, and all magnitude is continuous, the movement too must be continuous, and if the movement, then the time, ... But we apprehend time only when we have marked motion, making by it 'before' and 'after'; and it is only when we have perceived 'before' and 'after' in motion that we say that time has elapsed” (McKeon 291, *Physics Book. Ch.II*).

The movement, magnitude and countability of a magnitude in units are the basic factors on which the perception of time depends. The picture of time that emerges from the three factors of time, namely 'before', 'after', and 'now' is that of a universe in which 'discreteness' or limited unit-type existence holds good.

A theoretical discussion of those categories such as substance, accident, quantity, quality, relation, habit etc., are given in the 10th Book of the *Metaphysics*. Aristotle's philosophy of nature (cosmology) gets distinctive features from the position he has developed in the *Metaphysics* concerning the eternal mover. In Book XII, chapters six and seven he tried to establish the following points: 1) Since movement must be eternal, there must be an eternal mover, and one whose essence is actuality. To account for the uniform change in the universe, there must be one principle which acts always alike, and one whose action varies. The eternal mover originates motion by being the primary object of desire (as it is of thought); being thoroughly actual, it can not change or move; it is a living being, perfect, separate, from sensible things, and without parts.

The concept of prime Mover

After a long analysis on physical change Aristotle concludes in *Physica* that the physical change cannot be explained without reference to an extra-physical cause – a being which does not change, and has no physical magnitude, and yet is the final cause of perpetual change in the physical world. Thus from the concept of a physical change, Aristotle proposes a being which is subject to no change or movement, but a source of perpetual change in the world which is popularly and philosophically known as 'unmoved mover'. (Allen 1957: 54) Thus Aristotle derives a philosophy from his science. His metaphysics emphasised this prime mover or unmoved mover as a necessity and is the first principle. And this prime mover is outside of the universe which has no extension. This supreme mover “initiates its change as an object of love; and other things initiate change by changing themselves”. (Barnes 1985: 64) Thus Aristotle moves from his physics or in general from his science to metaphysics or philosophy. So for Aristotle, the ground of philosophising is his science or cosmology. Similarly St. Thomas Aquinas transformed Aristotelian metaphysics into a stunning explanation for faith. Thus he was able to integrate Christian faith and reason in the most beautiful way. Thus it is our role today to follow the methodology of these great personalities and integrate the faith vision with the scientific discoveries into metaphysics and theology. So I propose that this methodology is

the best to be followed today in philosophising. Basing on the epochal discoveries made by the modern science and technology, a metaphysics that is touching the life and spirit of humanity is definitely possible and it is the need of the times because science is encroaching now the problems tackled by philosophy itself. About the origin of the universe, about the origin of life, human consciousness, the process of knowing, life as a biological continuum, matter as a physical continuum are a few of rich philosophical questions now answered by sciences.

A Philosophy based on the Epochal Discoveries of Science

Genetic Engineering, Human Genome Project, Nanoscience, Quantum Relativistic Science and Neuroscience - Mind-Body problem all these areas, there are ground breaking new discoveries that provide the context for the development of a philosophy of nature as Aristotle had developed a metaphysics from his cosmology. Allow me to summarily to explain these ground breaking scientific discoveries that have significance in the twenty-first century.

Neuroscience - Brain-Mind Problem

What is mind? How is it related to the body? It is an ancient problem that baffled the human mind from time immemorial. People from all disciplines and all walks of life tried to answer the question from their perspectives. From the very beginning of thought itself, from Plato onwards, great minds like Aristotle, Spinoza, Descartes, Russell, Dennet, Quine etc., medical experts like Hippocrates, Galen, etc., theologians like St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, psychologists like Freud, Jung, Adler etc., and physicists like Turing, Penrose, Einstein etc., are a few eminent scholars who tried to solve the mystery of the mind and its intricate relationship with the human body or brain. Many isms were born as a result of the various solutions proposed by these eminent minds. Philosophers like Ludwig Wittgenstein warned that any connection of mind with the brain is something dangerous; namely, the concept that 'we think with the brain is one of the most dangerous of ideas for a philosopher'. Since finding that the complex mind is not yielding to any particular discipline, recently, philosophy, psychology, artificial intelligence, computer science, mathematics, cognitive neuroscience and theoretical linguistics which are disciplines having different methods and aims combined as a research cluster in order to comprehend the complex mental phenomena. From the time thought blossomed in human being, she was grappling with this complex phenomenon within herself. It was always evading human grip, slipping into unknown horizons raising newer problems rather than solving any of them. Theories were developed depending on the epistemological and cultural milieu and grounding on the data about the human anatomy available at that time. The cognitive research cluster confronts the phenomena from different fronts in an effort to understand it and may be able to manipulate it. The goals of the present research are not yet clear but it has certainly bearings of the new technological culture. It replaces the phenomenological, existential categories of mental phenomena with new technical terms like computational, vectorial, state space etc., which are borrowed from the experimental sciences. The traditional view holders resist this take over of science, accusing it of iconoclasting the niceties and sacredness related with human mind, making it dreadful and mechanical. But the research group is pushing ahead proposing new hypotheses integrating mathematical concepts, neuroanatomy and philosophical perspectives to reduce the mystery and sacredness of mind into a neuro-chemical automation in terms of hard science.

These mental features of a normal human person interest the philosopher too. Sensation, perception, thinking memory, belief, intention, decision, purpose, action, pain, pleasure, emotion, mood, generosity, courage, ambition, dream, sleep, illness, curing, etc.; all these life experiences encompass the mind and that attracts any thinking person to understand the mental phenomena. From a philosophical standpoint, several solutions or explanations are given to the mind-body problem. The idealist school considers that everything is mental or constructed by the mind. The supporters of idealism are the famous thinkers like Berkeley, Fichte, Kant, Hegel, Mach, William James, Whitehead, Teilhard de Chardin etc. Spinoza,

Feigl, Schlick and others observe that mind and brain are the two aspects of the same material substance and hence their position is known as neutral monism. Eliminative materialists like Turing, Skinner, Watson and others consider that nothing is mental and everything is material. They want to reduce every mental phenomena into a matter. A more strict form of materialist reduction is followed by Epicurus, Lucretius, Hobbes, Pavlov, J.J.C. Smart, D. Armstrong, W.V. Quine and others. They try to reduce mental events to physical or physio-chemical changes and hence known as physicalism or reductionist materialism. Autonomists like Bradley and Wittgenstein were of the view that the mind and brain are unrelated. Psychophysical parallelism considers that every mental event is accompanied by a synchronous neural event. Behaviorism was prominent in the mid half of the last century, ascribing mental descriptions to patterns of behaviorism. Since behaviorism could not distinguish from real and imitation of behavior it was discarded. Leibnitz and early Freud held this view. Plato and Augustine held that mental events are caused by brain or neural events and hence this position is known as epiphenomenalism. Interactionism suggests that mental events are caused by neural or physical states and the brain is the basis for any mental event. Descartes, Popper, Chomsky are the proponents of this theory. Functionalism proposes that mental states are just functional states of complex systems. A computer model of the brain is proposed where the mind is considered as the function of the hardware brain. A mental state ends just like a functional state ends and another begins. As many functions are kept in the hardware of the computer, according to requirements we are retrieving various functions of the mind. Turing, Dennet, Putnam, Lycan, etc are the proponents of functionalism. However, all these philosophical solutions and positions indeed did not resolve the mind-body problem but made it murkier.

In her search for a real mathematical, simplified, unified theory explaining the functions of brain, Patricia Churchland encountered a theoretical vacuum. There is sufficient understanding about the behaviour of an individual neuron-its membrane properties, the spiking frequencies of the axon, the synaptic phenomenology, its patterns of organization, the migration of intercellular chemicals and its metabolism. Though many unanswered questions remain, and major breakthroughs are yet to be made, neuron is not a mystery now. But a general theoretical framework is lacking. Neuroscientists are not in favour of making hypotheses. The reasons behind are pragmatism and humility that we have not yet reached a stage to develop theories on computing neural phenomena. What is really playing the role of theories are metaphors advertised as theories. The examples are the suggestions of Van Heerden and Karl Pribram that brain functions as a hologram. When a portion of hologram is projected, the whole is visualised making theorists running after it claiming as the ultimate explanation of brain function. It failed to explain information storage and retrieval of the phenomena. Though aroused wide enthusiasm across various fields it failed to give a credible account of the brain processes and the mathematics of the hologram never tallied with the mathematics of the neural ensembles. But it inspired research in parallel modelling of brain function. Another is computer model, brain functioning as hardware and cognitive software. In an abstract sense brain acts as an in put out put processor. It is not a theory but a metaphor drawing again the dualistic distinction. But it catalyses theorizing.

First of all it is necessary to point out the fundamental things a nervous system must do and grounding on the basic operations a hypothesis can be proposed. Refinement of the theory will be done in several stages through simplifications, idealizations, approximations and generalizations. In the build up of a theory there are different choices in the input-output organization. Motor control, visual perception and memory are a few selections. Each has its merits and demerits. Much data have been collected on the visual perception. The psychology of perception, the physiology of retina, the lateral geniculate nuclei, and the visually responsive areas of the cortex. Knowledge about the characterizations of the output at various

levels are not yet found. But about motor behaviour, neuroscience knows much about the output organization while missing the input organization and its structures. Generally a theory must successfully link input-output organization.

There are certain constraints felt in the theory build up. Time factor plays a key role in theory formation. The conduction velocities of chemical components, synaptic transmission delays, frequency modulation are a few examples showing the importance of the time factor. In the visual recognition if a person takes generally 500 milli seconds then a theory hypothesizing large fluctuations in this field would not survive. That is it must be able to explain the input-output relay within the range of 100 steps since a step normally takes three to four milliseconds. A few breakthroughs like that of Patricia Churchland are available as modest beginnings in theory formation.

Genetic Science

While officially announcing the completion of Human Genome project on 26 June 2000 at White House, Bill Clinton, the President of the United States observed prophetically that “today, we are learning the language in which God created life”. As he has observed, we are living through the greatest intellectual triumph of human reason in the history of all times in understanding the instructions for how to build and run human body unleashing an enormous power of information. John Sulston, director of Sanger Centre in England, said that “we ‘have got to the point in human history where for the first time we are going to hold on our hands the set of instructions to make a human being. That is an incredible philosophical step forward, and will change, I think, the way we think of ourselves.” (Indian Express, 27 June, 2000) Through this research, human rationality is penetrating the thoughts of God as Einstein has once dreamt of. This project comes as a climax of human search for unravelling the ingrained secrets of life itself; it is a kind of cataloguing of human genes and discovering the molecular nature of cancer and other diseases such as ‘Alzheimer’s disease that diminishes the quality of human life. It also sheds light into diseases like ‘Huntington’ which attacks humans with a clock work precision. As Pope John Paul envisioned that “through the knowledge of genetics and molecular biology, scientists can look with the penetrating gaze of science into the inner fabric of life and the mechanisms that characterize individuals, thus ensuring the continuity of living species.” (Vial Correa 1999:7) This informative power, epistemological advancement can easily be converted into technological power; both constructively and destructively. Thus, genetics enables human genius to reconstruct dead animals of the bygone era and to sustain the diversity of life by cloning a number of endangered species. This new technology can be a curse because of developing new forms of germ warfare even in contaminating and destructing the entire humanity itself. Genetic engineering in general, is, thus a treasure trove of philosophical implications making an unending assault on ignorance; but bringing home unanticipated social effects such as discrimination, stigmatisation etc. Or more concretely, payment of unequal insurance payment, genetic screening before permanent appointment for jobs, before starting emotional relationships, before membership is given in clubs can happen due to the availability of genetic information. Genetic technology has also tremendous religious significance because the dynamics of life – creation – is cracked by human reason and unless care is taken in handling and manipulating this knowledge ‘death’ can prevail upon humanity instead of the promised ‘immortality’ as the metaphor from the Book of Genesis reveals. The prenatal diagnosis, stem cell research, can enhance the culture of death prevailing at present in our society by selectively culling the defective unborn child. Manipulation of genes, cutting and pasting genes from one organism to another can dehumanise the human person because there is an underpinning belief that human person is nothing other than his or her genome. A new concept of personality is derived from this genome research. Genome, either of a plant or of an animal, including that of the rational animal is the fundamental matrix of human ontic development and of its functionality. Genetic research and engineering has to be examined, thus, in its two fold processes; as an object of scientific pursuit and as an object of ethical

judgement that enable in creating a philosophy of life for the contemporary technological man. *Techne* without *Poesis* is destructive; technology without the aid of wisdom cannot be constructively administered. As a background to this moral and ethical analysis, let us examine this epochal intellectual discovery that asserts once again the evolutionary molecular origin of human life (Darwin 1859) from the unicellular organism or the nature of biological continuum and its revolutionary social and religious impacts on the human society in general. At this stage human reproduction is genetically manipulated. By just knocking off the nucleus of the ovum and replacing it with the nucleus of another cell, even from the same animal can fertilise it. Artificially cultured and then implanted in the womb a clone of the animal with all its characteristic features is born. This is known as cloning. This methodology when perfected can be applied in artificially cloning a person. The technology is available and there are many technically equipped scientists vowed to make clones. Another important scientific discovery of the twenty-first century is the sequencing of the human genetic code which is known as human genome project.

Human Genome Project

In our human body, cells are the basic unit of biological life. There are one hundred million cells are existing in human body, roughly around in 200 different forms by 47 doublings of a sperm and ovum fused to a single cell. The cell is divided into the nucleus and the cytoplasm. In the cells we find DNA, genes and chromosomes the vital powers of life. DNA has three fundamental constituents: a phosphate molecule, a sugar molecule, and a base molecule. The three components are linked together by chemical bonds in the order of phosphate-sugar base, and this combined unit is called a nucleotide. The four bases occurring in DNA are identified as Adenine(A), Guanine(G), Cytosine(C), Thymine(T). These are the fundamental biological units of life. These four bases are like the letters of a language. With these four letters genes are constituted. Genes are responsible for the individuality of the person, colour, texture, size, etc. The HGP roughly estimate that there are 30,000 genes in a human person. Chromosomes are thread like structures carrying genes. A human cell has 23 pairs of chromosomes. When a new offspring is produced, the male and female parents contribute the same number of chromosomes, and there is a fixed number of them in each cell. A DNA is made up of a large number of nucleotides stitched together like beads in a necklace which is stranded. The DNA constitutes the amino acids whose long chains are called proteins. In a DNA there are 3.1 billion varying combinations of the four bases named as Adenine(A), Guanine(G), Cytosine(C), Thymine(T). This sequencing is not arbitrary or random. Each combination is containing a vital information in the production of proteins. According to this complex manual of genes human biological life is governed from conception to death. The complete mapping of the 3.1 billion sequences of the bases is known as the Human Genome project. This Himalayan project was completed by the co-operation of the National Human research institute, Bethesda, Maryland, USA and the Craig Venter of Celera Genomics of Rockville, Maryland, USA. Though the project is said to be completed, only the sequence of ordering of the basic four bases of the DNA are only complete. The difference between one individual and another is very narrow. Only 3 million proteins out of 3.1 billion makes the difference. Or two individuals differ on the average only in one nucleotide per one thousand. Moreover, we share almost 70% similarity of DNA with fruit flies and much more with our mammalian brothers and sisters. 30% with yeast, 75% with mouse and with cow 90% and, 98.4% DNA we share with chimpanzees. Thus humans are part of the biological continuum of God's creation. (Kozhanthadam 2001)

Basing on the available data scientists interpret that only 5 % of the DNA controls the protein-producing activity of the genes and the rest 95% is junk. But this remark, perhaps might be due to the lack of complete knowledge since nature never wastes anything. This fact must truly pose a challenge for future research.

Some 50, 000 genes are related to different forms of cancer. Disease causing genes could be discovered and eliminated. The disease causing genes can be discovered and hence

foreknowledge about death itself can be made known and people can plan. The success of human genome project raises many moral and philosophical issues. The most conspicuous one is that of reductionism. Human person is reduced into biological units and its interaction. The trend is to eliminate all religious and spiritual dimensions of the human reality and to represent it as a mere machine having parts and governed by specific physical and chemical laws. A reductive materialistic philosophy is on the offing. The divide between the rich and the poor will also be very evident from the specialised genetic treatments available only for the rich. However, positively, the human genome project results can be used against caste, individual, discrimination, settling parental disputes etc. Common genetic sharing with the other life forms shows the import of having an ecological consciousness. Moreover, the genome project reveals the mastery of the creator and the complexity and mystery of creation.

Nanoscience

Another breath taking discovery on the offing is nano-technology an area of science that holds the promise to dramatically change the way we live in the new century. (Scientific American September 2001) It is the study and manufacture of structures and devices with dimensions about the size of molecule that offers a very broad stage on which the scientific research community can play. To give you an idea, a nanometer is 1,000 times smaller than a micron, a micron is thousand times smaller than a centimeter and a bacteria is 1,000 nanometers long. This is an area bordering fact and fiction, it is an art of building small. This technology envisages to create tiny things, as small as one billionth of a meter, of the size of a molecule. At present the research is going on in the micro level, and the next stage is nano level or nano world. As an example a nanomotor propelled instrument can just skate, walk or float on water surface; a camera can be injected through your veins and show the blocks in your blood vessels and come out through the tears as you might have seen in a science fiction film called *Fantastic Voyage*. It is not imagination; but on the process of developing. Nanometer-scale physics and chemistry might lead directly to the smallest and fastest transistors or the strongest and lightest materials ever made. But even though the programme is given emphasis to the physical sciences and engineering, it has something for everyone. Nanotechnology could supply instrumentation to speed gene sequencing and chemical agents to detect tumours that are only a few cells in size. It can also create robots that can multiply uncontrollably and also create deadly chemical and biological weapons. DNA in cells, including humans could be employed in computing. An artificial hip that is smeared with nanoparticles might bond tightly. Nanotechnology is serving as a rallying point for physicists, chemists and biologists to work together as a single research community. New microchips, construct rings and wires of one atom width, The real and the virtual, fact and fiction fuse here. However, science is only at the beginning stage of the technology for the future. They are going to revolutionise and transform society in an unthinkable manner. Nanotechnology will not only be to the 21st century what microelectronics was to the 20th century, but it will impact all aspects of our lives, from materials to health to communication.

Quantum Relativistic Science

Relativity theory and quantum mechanics have revolutionised the whole concept of our universe. ((Artigas 2000) Relativity theory showed that matter-space-time is a continuum and our earth is a tiny planet revolving around a mediocre star that is moves around 30,000 light years away from the centre of milky way galaxy which has one billion stars. The Milky Way galaxy is part of local group of a tiny galactic cluster and there are billions of such galactic clusters. The transformation of the stars, or the life cycles of the stars into red giant, white dwarf, neutron, black hole stages are also baffling. The search for extra terrestrial life reveals human's quest for discovering whether he is alone in this universe. The concept of matter-space-time continuum and the relationship between past, present and future in the theory of relativity has so much implications.

Quantum mechanics brings the human search into the world of the atom and nucleus, namely the micro world. The breaking and fusing of an atom unleashes immense power. Humanity transformed this knowledge in negative and positive ways. The discovery of controlling the electron beam brought the computer technology and which in turn fostered the information technology that brought the whole world from as inhabitants of a global village to as players on the same screen.

Theory of relativity and quantum mechanics cannot solve the basic problems of today. However both of these theories are founded on two opposing philosophical positions. Quantum mechanics, anti-realist and indeterministic while Relativity is deterministic and realistic. Discoveries like nonlocality, quantum teleportation all show the direction of science into a deeper level. Thus the asymptotic process of acquiring knowledge about nature fascinatingly never ends.

Philosophy of Reductionism and Determinism

An underpinning tendency in these scientific developments are the rise of a philosophy of reductionism and determinism. In the research areas of mind-body or brain-mind research, nanotechnology, Genetic Engineering, quantum relativistic cosmology the main trend is the elimination of the religious and the spiritual values and reducing the human and the universe into a mere dynamics of material forces. The transcendence we experienced in Aristotle is lacking in the modern science. For him the cause of the motion cannot be placed with the material. He went beyond the natural to a realm of supra-natural or transcendence or to a meta-physics. Unless we are involving in these discussions the religious and the spiritual dimensions will completely be eliminated by the reductionist approach. As an example, I am presenting the attitude of scientist in the field of genetic engineering.

In an editorial in *Nature* with the title “Not Everything is in the genes” criticised the tendency of some researchers in identifying genes as the cause of personal traits like alcoholism, depression, homosexuality, violence etc. The editor was sincerely afraid of the deviations that is taking place in the genetic research. Ideological interpretation, social discrimination and human rights violations are according to him rampant in this way of research. He was calling into attention of the researchers in interpreting the scientific data in a more ethical and responsible way. Modelling on the other research fields such as brain-mind studies, biological research is reducing life into mere deterministic genetic model. Molecular genetics as the foundation and by correcting the gene coding or the altering the script diseases can be eliminated for ever and qualitative changed can be introduced into all forms of life, including that of human life itself. This reductionist paradigm of the bio-medical research was indicated by Miguel Moreno Munoz and called for an immediate evaluation of the research programmes (Miguel Munoz 1997:207.). The problem with the reductionist approach is that it relies only on observable phenomena and processes denying any unobservable realities in the paradigm of reductionism. The positivist tendencies that are almost eliminated in the research of matter are still the invisible engine in the genome project.

The corollary of reductionism is determinism. The idea that catapulted determinism is that by manipulating a structure one can control the whole organism. In the genetic research by modifying the genes, the organism's function can be manipulated to a predetermined one. A disease like asthma is determined to be linked with a specific gene and by correcting that gene the organism can be eliminated of asthma or genetically determined. By correcting the structure, the function is altered or determined. Here the research might not have discovered the cause holistically or by discovering the prevalent cause and manipulating it an overarching claim is established. The whole dynamics of the organism is not at all taken into account.

Another aspect of the determinist ideology is sidelining certain diseases as inherited or hereditary and considering them as unalterable without taking into consideration the over all effects of the psychological, environmental and medical aspects. Such diseases are often in the light of this deterministic model are considered as untreatable and uncontrollable.

There is a strong tendency to identify the 'genetic self' as the personifying identity of the human person rather than the product of the cumulative life experience. The personality that is created earlier through introspection, insight and actions are to be sidelined and the scientific tools of genetic engineering are to be defining the human person. That is why cloning is creating so much of debate. In a way, genetic engineering is pathologizing the human person in terms of diseases, illnesses, genes and the ability to improve in terms of gene transfer. The unique individuality of the human person is singled out by specifying the genome structure of its parents. Thus the every aspect of humanity is geneticized and became the blue print for any organism and especially human life. As well indicated and commented by Dorothy Nelkin, the genome has become a contemporary metaphor for the soul and consciousness.(Dorothy Nelkin 1995) Genes are shared and it is passed on to the next generation and they survive the individual and almost is in the verge of interpreted as life after death. A gene survives the individual person and moves on to the other one as a stream linking many lives which could also be interpreted as the transmigration of the soul or of the personality. The result of this overarching reductionism is bringing discrimination, stigmatisation and other eugenic concerns. The easy power to acquire genetic information leads to discrimination against the individual. Individuals who are easily prone to diseases can be screened away for jobs and insurance premiums. Like race, age, sex, behaviour etc., gene can also thus become a type of differential consideration. The value of the human person is weighed according to ones physiological and pathological characteristics. As an example, it is observed that the Afro-Americans are prone to sickle cell anemia and the insurance companies raised their insurance premium though they were healthy and not prone to any disease at all (Andrews 1987) .

Certain people can be stigmatised by knowing their genetic code like prone to Huntington disease. Parents can be sued or hated by the children for giving inherited diseases like the Huntington. If the embryo is tested and found having such genes, the child in the womb would be forcefully aborted creating another moral dilemma. Genetic conditions that are unalterable become a factor of social conditioning. People who are suspected or borderline for such genetic conditions could be both discriminated and stigmatised and thus autonomous and responsible decision making will be affected by public opinion and personal attitudes of those who are handling power. The genetically designed perfect body and perfect baby will be encouraged and will become the obsession of the masses endangering the natural life.

A colonial attitude is also prevailing in the sequencing of genetic materials from the developing nations. Researchers will be recruited from such countries by multinationals and then patent the results discovered by these researchers on the genetic materials taken from the developing and underdeveloped nations. Numerous examples are citable like that of patenting the Basmati rice, medicinal effects of neem, of turmeric etc. If the poor nations are not conscious a large amount of such genetic sequencing are to be acquired by the rich developed nations. The poor nations will not be in a situation to argue their cases systematically and thus ultimately loosing their claims.

The epistemological input given by the Genetic engineering is going to deeply affect our human life as a social and religious being. The reductionist and determinist approach will eliminate the spiritual, philosophical, psychological and religious values and will count a human person as a genetic self. The genetic conditioning is going to stigmatize and discriminate the person socially. As Pope John Paul advised a group of biologists that "man is also for you the ultimate term of scientific research, the whole man, spirit and body, even if the immediate object of the sciences that you profess is the body with all its organs and tissues. The human body is not independent of the spirit, just as the spirit is not independent of the body, because of the deep unity and mutual connections that exist between one and the other. Hence the great importance for the life of the spirit, of the sciences that promote the knowledge of corporeal reality and activity." The indivisibility of the human person as an embodied spirit is emphasised by Pope John Paul and exhorts the biologists and the

researchers not to reject the religious and spiritual dimension of the human person as an unobservable.

Another consequence of the human genome project is the creation of genetic ghettos. People belonging to a certain genetic make up will come together and cling as a group developing into a ghetto. The selection and screening of human person in terms of their genetic material will really dehumanize them and the celebration of the diversity of human nature will be curtailed.

Conclusion

Science as reason, presents itself, in each culture, as a corrective to the mystical and mythical world-picture, and aims to improve it with a new-world view eliminating superstitious beliefs and bringing understanding about the universe and life and transforming that knowledge into technology in improving the life style. However, faith gives meaning and purpose to the world-view created by science and science in turn becomes a corrective to the mythical world-view. As Jan Hilgevoord correctly observes "the cosmology of the Old Testament is essentially mythical in character. The world is viewed as a three storied structure, with the earth in the centre, the heaven above and the underworld beneath. All this is the language of mythology, and the origin of the various themes can be easily traced . . . To this extent the kerygma is incredible to modern man, for he is convinced that the mythical view of the world is obsolete."(Hilgevoord 1994: 115)

As we reflect about the future of philosophical and theological pursuit in the twenty first century, my position is that the role of reason is to be highlighted. Reason can be almost identified with that of the contemporary science. Science is revealing in its epoch making discoveries about nature. Along with the book of revelation, the book of nature is to be adequately studied. As Aristotle and St. Thomas showed us the way in developing a synthesis of reason and faith, now philosophers and theologians must come out in understanding the discoveries of science and the world vision it offers. The Aristotelian metaphysics and the Thomistic philosophy and theology is based on a common sense view of the world, almost 2500 years old world vision that was prevailing in the medieval period. A sound encounter of science and theology did not happen due to the mutual suspicion and the initial hegemony of religion and the later arrogance of science. The common sense view of the world was eliminated by Galileo, Kepler, Newton, Faraday, Maxwell and thousands of other scientists. This classical vision of nature are refined by quantum mechanics and the theory of relativity in the twentieth century. Today in the twenty-first century, human genome project, nano-technology, genetic engineering, brain-mind artificial intelligence are revolutionising human conceptions. When this new world vision is integrated into and reformulated philosophy, it will become intellectually stimulating and will be in touch with the reality of today capable of tackling the unsolved problems of today arising out of a lack of value and meaning. I do not say that there was no such attempts; there were great science-spiritual stalwarts like Teilhard de Chardin etc. If the Church wanted to produce great minds like Chardin who integrated science and theology in the present century, instead of being terrified on the onslaught of scientific discoveries, Church should dynamically engage science or faith should courageously encounter reason. For this there should be an opening from the philosophers and the theologians and a thirst and a quest for understanding the dynamics of science. Also the philosopher can effectively contribute to the problems of science and new perspectives. For this there must be more and more interactions between scientists and theologians in an academic fashion. Suspending prejudices and with an open mind, both scientists and theologians should meet. The supposed to be existing gap between theology and science can be bridged by philosophy. In this thrust for a new culture, can also become a means to engage the laity. Most of the scientists are lay people and hence they could effectively become catalysts of philosophising and theologising. In this process, they can improve their own faith. This type of mutual give and take will enable the speedy advent of a new culture and environment for humanity envisaged by Aristotle and St. Thomas. A new culture will unfold

from this interaction where science will pose challenges to philosophy and philosophy will guide scientific pursuits.

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RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN SCIENCE & THE NEED FOR A NEW METHOD

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(Rough draft only)

Science perhaps is the most successful among all human creations. Most scholars and non-scholars would attribute this phenomenal success of science to its method: science can boast of having a reliable and effective method. Although the basic scientific methods were originally developed primarily in the physical sciences, soon it was extended to the biological sciences. Today it is widely used in the social sciences also, with outstanding success.

However, a close look at the evolution of the method of science over the centuries brings us face to face with a paradoxical situation: The more science grows, the less it seems to be sure of its method. In the heydays of the Mechanical Philosophy of Nature, particularly during the days of Mill, Whewell, etc., scientists claimed to be quite sure of the scientific method. In the first half of the twentieth century some of the Logical Positivists also gave the impression that they knew quite well what the scientific method should be. However, in more recent times scientists and particularly philosophers of science have become more cautious and less categorical in their claims and assertions about scientific method. Today one finds questions like: Is there something like *the* scientific method? If there is one, what is it? Some well-known scholars like Paul Feyerabend have gone to the extent of disclaiming any definite method for science.

It must be noted that this perplexity and consequent unsureness about the method of science has not come about because science has failed; in fact, science has been eminently successful. Again, it is not born of any ignorance, nor is it an irresponsible overreaction. Some of the persons involved are practicing scientists and/or well-informed philosophers of science. The perplexity seems to be not of a wanderer who has lost his way, but of an explorer who has stepped into a whole new, exciting world.

Whitehead and other scholars have pointed out that a paradox very often is a pointer to a deeper truth. This paradox invites us to take a careful look at the nature of scientific method and the relation it has to other aspects of the scientific enterprise. This paradox is the result of certain revolutionary developments in science, developments that have exposed the traditional methods as obsolete and inadequate, developments that have brought about a change in the nature and goal of science. This paper will first discuss briefly some of the inadequacies of the traditional methods used in science. Then it will present a brief discussion of some of the most important developments in contemporary science and philosophy of science that have led to the expansion of the scientific horizon. It will conclude that the new situation calls for a new method to be developed.

Some Traditional Methods of Science

Induction

Induction basically involves a move to a universalization or generalization on the basis of a careful examination of many individual cases. As Karl Popper puts it, “an inference is ‘inductive’ if it passes from singular statements (sometimes also called ‘particular’ statements), such as accounts of the results of observations or experiments, to universal statements, such as hypotheses or theories.”ⁱ Thus one examines the structure of water from many specimens collected from various sources and, having found that in all these cases a molecule of water contains two atoms of hydrogen and one atom of oxygen, concludes that all water molecules at all times and in all places have the same constitution. This method in

this form, despite being very simple and seemingly straightforward, is highly vulnerable to serious criticism, as has been pointed out by Karl Popper and others.

More sophisticated and carefully formulated forms of this method have been presented by scholars. For instance, according to William Whewell, “Induction is a term applied to describe the process of a true colligation (binding together) of Facts by means of an exact and appropriate Conception.”ⁱⁱ Mill gives four inductive methods of agreement, difference, concomitant variation and residues, of which he considers the method of difference the most certain and reliable. These and similar versions of induction show that this method is not just a matter of enumerating the results of the individual examinations and drawing a generalization from them. In fact, the proponents of this method insist that the inductive move cannot dispense with inventive talent or the leap of genius. Herschel, for instance, emphasized the role of creative imagination in the formation of theories.

The introduction of other criteria and techniques like the “consilience of induction” has strengthened the power and effectiveness of this method. According to Whewell, the incorporation of two or more generalizations into a more inclusive theory is known as consilience of induction. There is no doubt that such a confluence of diverse streams of data cannot but strengthen the theory. Whewell went to the extent of claiming that “no example can be pointed out, in the whole history of science, so far as I am aware, in which the consilience of induction has given testimony in favour of an hypothesis afterwards discovered to be false.”ⁱⁱⁱ Although the history of science cannot support fully Whewell’s claim, the consilience envisaged by him does add credibility and reliability to the method.

Philosophers like David Hume and philosophers of science like Popper have subjected induction to severe criticism, exposing its inherent weakness. Popper writes: “It is far from obvious, from a logical point of view, that we are justified in inferring universal statements from singular ones, no matter how numerous; for any conclusion drawn in this way may always turn out to be false: no matter how many instances of white swans we may have observed, this does not justify the conclusion that all swans are white.”^{iv} Induction involves an illegitimate jump from the finite to the infinite. This difficulty can be circumvented by introducing the principle of induction or what Kant called the principle of universal causation. But this move is no real solution since, as Popper points out, it leads either to the problem of infinite regress or to apriorism.

It seems to me that a far more serious problem is that induction in its basic form cannot accommodate originality and creativity in science. True, many proponents have pointed out that induction can involve creative imagination or the leap of genius. However, it is not clear how this element can be systematically introduced into the inductive method.

The Hypothetico-Deductive Method

Although no method can claim to be *the* method of science, the hypothetico-deductive method is the most commonly and most effectively employed method of science, and for this reason it deserves a special status among the methods of science. In its basic form it begins with a hypothesis the origin or source of which is not specified usually. From this proposed hypothesis an observable consequence is derived. Then an experiment is performed to ascertain the existence of the expected consequence. If the experiment gives a positive result the hypothesis is accepted as scientifically valid, and is usually given the status of a scientific theory.

The Genesis of H-D Method

Often H-D method is associated with modern scientists like Galileo, Newton, etc. However, a close look at the history of science reveals that in essence it had its origin already in Aristotelian science, although later scientists introduced certain sophistications into it and gave it the present form.

Aristotle proposed a two-part method in the investigation of nature, which may be called the inductive-deductive method, which began and ended with observation. In its twin path it first moved from observations to general principles and then from these general

principles back to observations. In the Aristotelian method a scientist first induced explanatory principles from the phenomena to be explained. This step involved the inductive move. In the second part involving the deductive step the scientist was to deduce statements about the phenomena under study from premises which included these principles. Thus this method was an attempt to fuse together both the inductive and deductive techniques. It shares many essential features of the H-D method, the main difference being that here the initial hypothesis or generalization was obtained by induction, whereas in the modern version the hypothesis can come from any source. Also in the modern version the emphasis is to derive and confirm new consequences rather than to recapture the original observations about the phenomena under consideration.

Later in the thirteenth century Robert Grosseteste and his disciple Roger Bacon took up this method and modified it in some ways. Grosseteste's version is known as "The Method of Resolution and Composition," since he looked upon the first stage as a "resolution" of phenomena into constituent elements, and the deductive second stage as a "composition" in which the elements are combined to reconstruct the original phenomena.

Although Galileo is given credit for being the first to employ the H-D method in its modern form, I have argued elsewhere that much before him Johannes Kepler in his discovery of the laws of planetary motion used it effectively, but Kepler misled us by calling his method "the a priori method."^v

Losee points out that Newton basically followed the Aristotelian method, although he called it the "Method of Analysis and Synthesis."^{vi} However, it must be noted that Newton's was no mere replay of the old version since it could claim superiority in at least two ways: emphasis on experimental confirmation of the deduced consequences and on going beyond the original inductive evidence.^{vii}

Problems of the H-D Method

Although this method can boast of having many scientific giants in its roll of practitioners and of being the most effective and successful among the various methods of science, it is not without serious problems. Many consider the mysterious nature of the source of the hypothesis a nagging problem. Kepler while replying to his persistent critic, his contemporary astronomer David Fabricius, said that his hypothesis was always solidly based on observations. "Hypothesis must be built upon and confirmed by observations."^{viii} he replied to Fabricius. Popper, on the other hand, believes that hypothesis could come from anywhere, even from the most irrational source, since all hypotheses will have to pass through the test of falsification, and the false ones will surely fail the test.

Logically, the H-D method can never claim to yield certain and sure conclusions since it commits the fallacy of "affirming the consequent." Hence this method can establish the hypothesis under investigation with probability only. Scholars have pointed out many other drawbacks in this method.

Retroduction or Abduction

The retroductive method is usually associated with Charles Peirce, Norwood Hanson, etc., and is proposed as the method of scientific discovery. Schematically this method is as follows: "1. Some surprising phenomenon P is observed. 2. P would be explicable as a matter of course if H were true. 3. Hence there is reason to think that H is true."^{ix} This method seems to be simple and can help in the introduction of novel elements into science. However, scholars have subjected it to severe criticism and have shown that it offers very little help for scientific discovery. The crucial question focuses on the source of the hypothesis H. From where does this hypothesis come? How does one know that this hypothesis is suitable for the case at hand? These and related questions remain unanswered in this method.

The Method of Falsification

Having critically examined the various methods traditionally used in science and finding them all falling short, Popper has proposed falsification as the right method of

science. According to this scheme, scientists first propose a hypothesis. It could come from anywhere and could be on anything. Once the hypothesis has been proposed, the scientist attempts to falsify or refute it. If the attempt at falsification fails, the hypothesis is said to be corroborated; otherwise it is rejected.

Popper's proposal has been hailed as insightful by many. However, scholars have pointed out many serious inherent problems with it. Perhaps the most serious problem arises with regard to basic statements which are used for carrying out the falsification test. Popper likes to consider them as neutral. But this raises problems since they have to be observations statements and for Popper all observations are theory-laden. Again, if they are empirical, they themselves need to be subjected to falsification and be corroborated. Thus corroboration becomes a prerequisite for every attempt at falsification. Hence falsification becomes dependent on corroboration and so cannot be any stronger than corroboration.

Inadequacy of the Methods

There is no doubt that the methods discussed above have done great service to science and have been instrumental in the progress of science. However, the fact remains that they are all inadequate and have fallen seriously short of attaining what they are expected to accomplish. The method of science is to serve as the means to achieve the goal science has set for itself: the acquisition of true and reliable knowledge about the structure and operations of the universe. Francis Bacon in the seventeenth century, while advocating his inductive method, had claimed that his scientific method would enable its practitioners to go back to the pre-Fall days. This meant that by the use of the scientific method humans would be able to have perfect and exact knowledge, as Adam and Eve were said to have before they disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden. Mill later claimed that his inductive method, particularly the Method of Difference, would yield infallible knowledge about the universe. Similarly, Whewell guaranteed that the scientific method he proposed would be foolproof, particularly if consilience of induction could be achieved. But history has shown that all these proponents were overoptimistic. In the rest of this paper I will argue that not only have these methods been inadequate in the past, but also certain recent developments in science and the philosophy of science render them even more inadequate, thereby underscoring the need for evolving a new method of science.

Certain Recent Developments in Science

Recent developments in science, particularly since the twentieth century, have exposed most strikingly the inadequacy of the existing scientific methods. In the past it was claimed that science with its powerful method could yield absolute knowledge, i.e., knowledge that was valid for all at all times. However, the theory of relativity has shown that no such absolute knowledge is possible and that all knowledge is relative to a frame of reference.

It was further claimed that science with its powerful method could give us definite and determinate knowledge about the universe. However, quantum theory with the discovery of wave-particle duality has shown that our universe is indeterminate and so our knowledge cannot be free from a certain degree of indeterminateness and indefiniteness.

It was also claimed that science could give us certain and exact knowledge. But the uncertainty principle of Heisenberg has shown that all scientific knowledge is beset with a certain amount of uncertainty, and there is no way of eliminating it completely.

In the past it was claimed that all personal elements like subjectivity could be eliminated, at least in principle if not in practice, from the process of acquiring scientific knowledge. But Heisenberg's uncertainty principle and Bohr's complementarity principle show that this is an impossible dream. There is a certain unavoidable intrusion of subjectivity in quantum science. This can be explained as follows. Every experiment involves a necessary interaction between the observer and the observed since if there is no interaction, then no information is possible. All interaction would involve interference, however small. Objectivity demands that there be no interference of the observer on the object observed that

would affect the outcome of the experiment. In all experiments claiming objectivity it is assumed that the act of observation does not affect the object observed. However, in the quantum mechanical world, as shown in Heisenberg's Gamma Ray Microscope thought experiment, this assumption cannot be upheld. Hence complete objectivity is not possible, thereby allowing a certain intrusion of subjectivity.

Bohr's complementarity principle also leads to a similar conclusion. According to Bohr, what is observed is the phenomenon, i.e., observation obtained under specific circumstances, including the experimental setup. In other words, what is observed is the aspect specified by the experimental setup. This means that the experimental setup in a way becomes determinative of what observations results are obtained. The experimental setup in a way decides what results are obtained from the experiment. This means what is observed is in some way determined by how it is observed. Again, since the experimental or instrumental setup can be considered an extension of the observer, the observer becomes part of the observed. In such a situation there cannot be any complete objectivity. Thus the recent developments in science show that the methods used cannot give us completely objective, exact and certain knowledge.

Certain Recent Developments in the Philosophy of Science

Certain recent developments in the philosophy of science also reveal serious deficiencies in the existing methods of science and call for evolving a new method. All scientific experiments involve observation in one form or other, direct or indirect. In the past it was assumed that one could make observations in a theory-neutral way. But today it has been made abundantly clear that all observations are theory-laden, loaded with theory, dependent on theory. The theory one holds or the theoretical background plays an important role in deciding what observational result is obtained. This need not discredit the value and importance of observation since observation influenced by a true theory brings valuable information. But the fact remains that observation can no longer be considered a purely theory-neutral affair.

In the past it was believed that science was independent of the worldview of the scientist. This meant that a scientist brought up in the western culture will come with the same kind of theories as one brought up in the eastern culture. Today many philosophers of science are challenging this claim. The school of Historicism or Social constructivism, under the leadership of Thomas Kuhn, Paul Feyerabend, etc., have argued that the worldview of the scientist colours and controls the science of the scientist. Although such extreme views are untenable, it seems to me that a moderate influence of the worldview cannot be ruled out. For instance, science basically consists in asking pertinent questions and getting appropriate answers from nature. The type of answer received is very much contingent upon the type of the question put. Since reality is multifaceted, any number of questions can be put to nature from a variety of perspectives. The type of question one asks will depend on the concerns and needs one has, and these in turn are often conditioned by ones worldview. Thus the science of a scientist cannot be fully neutral to his/her worldview.

In the past scientists assumed the principle of isolation: a particular part of the universe under consideration could be treated as a fully isolated system having no influence from the outside. Today, thanks to developments in quantum theory, it is becoming clearer and clearer that ours is a unified and interconnected universe and cannot be fully insulated against all external influence.

In the past it was believed that there was a sharp distinction between matter and spirit or the material and the nonmaterial, and attempt was made to keep the latter out of science. Some even denied any existence of the world of the spiritual or nonmaterial. Although consciousness was considered in the case of psychosomatic conditions in the medical world, it was believed that in the physical sciences it had no role to play. But today many philosophers of quantum science assign a definite role to consciousness in certain phenomena like the reduction or collapse of the wave-packet.

In the past there was a concerted effort to keep off all personal elements from science, mainly because it was identified with the form of subjectivity that reduced epistemic claims to the idiosyncracies of the individual. But many scholars point out that the personal element cannot be overlooked in science, particularly in the context of scientific knowledge. Thus the philosopher-scientist Michael Polanyi emphasizes the importance of personal knowledge in science. According to him, “We shall find Personal Knowledge manifested in the appreciation of probability and of order in the exact sciences, and see it at work even more extensively in the way the descriptive sciences rely on skills and connoisseurship. At all these points the act of knowledge includes an appraisal; and this personal coefficient, which shapes all factual knowledge, bridges in doing so the disjunction between subjectivity and objectivity.”^x

Furthermore, although the mathematical, analytical approach has been highly productive and successful in many areas of science, today the inadequacy and poverty of this method are being brought to light. It is pointed out that this part by part, piecemeal approach fails to do justice to the totality of the organism and system. The need for a holistic, system approach along with the analytical is becoming more and more evident.

All these new developments are pointing out the inadequacy of the existing methods of science and are calling for developing a new one.

The Genetic Revolution and Its Implications

The genetic revolution with developments in genetic engineering, cloning, genome projects, nanotechnology, etc., is the most important achievement of science in recent times. One of the immediate consequences of these developments is that it emphasizes the interconnectedness of nature. The genes are intimately connected to every aspect of a living being; any change in the genetic makeup affects the rest of the being. The important findings in genetics reaffirm that a living being is a unified harmonious whole.

The genetic revolution underscores the linkage of the organism with the rest of the universe as well. The most recent findings in genetics reveal that the genetic structure alone cannot determine the nature and operations of the organism; the environment also plays a significant role in the constitution of the organism. Thus a living organism is harmoniously unified within itself and with the environment. All these considerations make a holistic approach necessary.

The developments associated with the genetic revolution are rewriting the nature and scope of science in significant ways. In the past science could bring about only accidental changes. Today, thanks to these developments, science is in a position to bring about substantial changes in humans. In the past science could touch humans only from the outside; today it can touch and transform humans from the inside. In the past science could affect what humans have and want to have; today it can affect what humans are and want to be. Humans are the master and creator of science. But today the domain of science has widened and deepened so as to be able to reshape the very same humans. This is not just a quantitative change in the nature and scope of science, but a qualitative one. Since method of science is parasitic on the nature of goal of science, it seems to me that a qualitative change in the method of science is called for.

Some Ingredients of the New Method

The principal theme of this paper is that since the existing methods of science are inadequate to achieve the goal of science by exploiting the many possibilities opened up by recent developments in science, there is need for evolving a new method of science. However, at this stage it is impossible to say what this new method will be. Nor is it within my competence to list exhaustively the different elements such a method should have. This section will remain explorative and suggestive of some of the principal ingredients such a method should include.

Some Presuppositions of the Old Method

The traditional methods of science had a number of presuppositions. These methods arose mostly from the sixteenth century onwards during which the mechanistic worldview dominated the scientific world, according to which the universe was looked upon as a gigantic machine operating on the laws and principles of mechanics. Hence their presuppositions are mostly those of the mechanical philosophy of nature.

1. Reducibility

It was believed that the universe was divisible into individual, independent components. The totality of the universe was nothing but the summation of these parts. As in a machine, parts could be added or removed without any significant impact on the whole. Emergent properties had no place in this perspective. This breakup into parts facilitated the analysis and study of the universe and its phenomena since they were easily manageable and mathematically analyzable.

Today it is being realized that this reductionist strategy is an endless road. For instance, scientists hoped to solve the problem of constitution of material reality by means of this strategy. But today they are nowhere close to solving the mystery of matter. Some have even given up the reductionist strategy and have adopted others to solve the problem of the constitution of matter.

Furthermore, this presupposition does violence to the holistic dimension of organisms and fails to explain adequately the dimensions of life, consciousness, intelligence, etc.

2. Isolatability

It was held that the parts thus divided could be treated successfully in isolation, the rest of the universe having no significant impact on them. In case some elements outside were relevant, then their impact could be determined exactly and integrated into the analysis and study.

This assumption failed to do justice to the widely-observed interconnectedness of the universe. Today, thanks to the many recent developments, the interconnectedness of the universe is getting more and more confirmed. For instance, the Human Genome Project reveals how interconnected the different parts of the human body are. Not only that, the study of the genome of various other animals show close interconnectedness between them. Humans share 98.4% of DNA with chimpanzees. With the cow the DNA shared is 90%, while with the mouse it is 75% and with yeast it is 30%.

3. Immutability

Scientific knowledge was supposed to be characterized by immutability; once a claim was established as scientific, it must remain true for all times. Change was looked upon as a sign of weakness. Scientific method was expected to yield unchanging knowledge.

Today evolution is looked upon as a universal phenomenon, not just a biological one. The physical universe and the biological universe are all evolving. Human knowledge is evolving, science itself is evolving. The traditional method overlooks this overwhelming set of developments.

4. Mathematizability

Another claim made by traditional scientific methods was that the scientifically interesting part of the universe was quantifiable and measurable. In fact, science showed very little interest in non-quantifiable phenomena. This had many important benefits since because of this scientific knowledge could claim to be exact, objective, certain and predictable.

This requirement had serious negative consequences. It limited the domain of science to the narrow world of measurables. The wide world of non-measurables and the qualitative world were left out of the ken of science. The world of feelings, emotions, etc., were left out. Along with them hunches, intuitions, etc., also became alien to science.

5. Materiality

Science reduced the real universe to the world of three dimensional space and one dimensional time. Everything beyond was considered not only unscientific, but by some even unreal. It did not deny phenomena like sensing, thinking, etc. But they were all reduced to an epiphenomenon of matter.

This concern for materiality opposed all forms of immateriality in science. Spiritual beings and spiritual experiences were banned from the world of science. Mysticism and mystical experiences were anathematized.

Recent scientific developments are challenging these claims. For instance, relativity tells us that the real universe is a four-dimensional continuum, our experiential world of three dimensional space and one dimensional time being only a special case. Other theories argue for even higher dimensions. It is pointed out that many paradoxes we confront today could be eliminated if we accept the multi-dimensional universe.

6. Superiority of Rationality

Reason and rationality were considered the path to true knowledge. Other human experiences like emotions and feelings were unreliable and suspect. Science was looked upon as the paradigm of rationality, non-rational and much less irrational elements having no place in science. This meant also that hunches, intuitions and other extra-perceptual knowledge forms were outside of the realm of science.

There is no doubt that reason is reliable and gives us better control over the situation, whereas emotion and feeling are not law-governed and hence unpredictable. However, the power and influence of feeling and emotion in human life can hardly be exaggerated. As Hume has put it, "Reason is and ought to be slave of the passions." In some ways passions are more a part of human and animal existence than reason. As I have mentioned, today science is making its entry into the very being of humans. Then science can hardly afford to sideline the world of passions.

In the past science banned emotions and feelings since they were unpredictable. But today the uncertainty principle tells us that the reason-based scientific world is also unpredictable. The difference in unpredictability between reason and emotion seems to be a matter of degree. Hence unpredictability need not be a sufficient reason to ban emotion from the scientific world.

7. Universalizability

Another expectation from science was that its findings be of universal applicability and validity. Scientific truths were for all persons, at all times and in all places. Scientific method was to be geared to ensure the attainment of such truths.

This meant that scientific findings must be independent of all particular, personal elements. A direct outcome of this requirement was objectivity: an objective claim was independent of the personal elements of particular individuals.

We have seen already that in the light of the uncertainty principle and the complementarity principle, strict and complete objectivity is impossible in science. We have also seen that according to Polanyi and others a certain amount of personal element is not only unavoidable in science, but is even necessary for science. It is true that the subjective, idiosyncratic elements can be a hindrance to science, but keeping all personal elements out of science seems to be unjustified.

All these elements, although they served a useful purpose in the beginning stages, eventually led to an alienation of humans from science. It has led to a kind of dehumanization of science. Because of them science has lost touch with humanity, human values, human concerns and human welfare. Environmental degradation, the impending threat of a nuclear holocaust, etc., are expressions of this alienation.

Science cannot remain as before. The situation has changed. As we have seen, today the nature of scope of science has expanded and deepened to enter the very being of humans and other creatures. Since scientific method needs to be changed in accordance with changes in the nature of aim of science, a new method of science is called for.

Some Elements of the New Method

What we suggest is not so much an abandonment of the traditional methods as a broadening of their horizons to include other elements as well. It seems to me that a holistic approach should be integrated into the new scientific method. Also it should take seriously the interconnected nature of our universe and natural phenomena. The evolving nature of the universe and our knowledge about the universe will have to be conceded. Non-material and emergent properties can no longer be sidelined. Furthermore, the personal elements, intuitions, hunches, and extra-perceptual elements will have to be taken seriously.

Also science needs to take ideas and techniques from other disciplines, other systems and other cultures. For instance, the personal intuitive knowledge is emphasized in the eastern traditions. Several scholars have pointed out the close similarity between some of the conclusions of contemporary science and the intuitive findings of the sages of the East. Some critics have tried to explain this similarity away as a mere accidental coincidence. However, the parallel is too striking to be deemed a coincidence.

In the past the fear was that taking all these “messy” items was risky and can lead to confusion. But today it seems to me that science is in a position to develop measures to steer it clear of such confusion. Besides, the secret of the success of science was that it was willing to take calculated risks. Developing a new method of science along the lines suggested above seems to me a risk worth taking.

PHENOMENOLOGICAL HERMENEUTICS

The Twin-Method of Contemporary Continental Philosophy

Among the various methods that contemporary Western philosophy has employed, no other method has wielded such popularity and prominence as phenomenology and hermeneutics. This paper attempts to look into this twin-method as a single method, since one has grown into the other: phenomenology into hermeneutics.⁴¹ We are able to consider them together because of the basic similarity that exists between them, despite the minor differences. We shall first briefly consider phenomenology as developed by Husserl (I), and then we shall look into the way in which Heidegger deviated from Husserlian phenomenology and developed it into ‘hermeneutical phenomenology’ (II), and in the final part we shall try to show the importance and value of ‘phenomenological hermeneutics’ (III).

I

Phenomenology as a method was discovered and developed by Edmund Husserl;⁴² and it took a definitive shape only after a long period of intellectual struggle with the vague insight

⁴¹ The reason why we have titled this paper as ‘phenomenological hermeneutics’, rather than ‘hermeneutical phenomenology’—this expression is more popular as it is used by Heidegger, Ricoeur, etc.—is precisely to show that we take hermeneutics as developed from and related to phenomenology.

⁴² Edmund Husserl was born in Prossnitz in Mähren (Moravia)—then it was in Austria, but now it has become part of Czechoslovakia—in 1859 of Jewish parents. He did his studies in the three universities of Leipzig (astronomy, physics), Berlin (mathematics) and Vienna (mathematics and philosophy). In Vienna he did his doctorate on “The Contributions to the Theory of Calculus of Variations,” and there he attended the lectures of Franz Brentano, and was

he received while he was involved in research on the foundations of mathematics and logic. We do not intend to consider—the purview of this paper does not demand it either—the various phases⁴³ through which Husserl made his intellectual traverse in order finally to arrive at the method of phenomenology. We shall be exclusively concerned about the salient features of phenomenology as a method, such as intentionality, phenomenological reduction of essence, phenomenological epoché, etc. But before we go into the details of them, we need to make a few introductory clarifications.

The term ‘phenomenology’⁴⁴ brings to our mind the Kantian distinction between phenomenon (that which appears) and noumenon (the thing in itself, what is behind the appearance). Husserl does not accept such a distinction; there is nothing behind the phenomenon as the noumenon. According to him, only phenomenon is given, and in it is given the essence of that which is. Phenomenology is the methodological attempt to clarify the phenomenon through an investigation of the subjective consciousness, the objective content of which is the phenomenon. Although Husserl distinguishes between science and phenomenology—the former deals with facts, whereas the latter with essences—he wanted phenomenology to have scientific rigour and philosophical radicalism. As philosophy has to give absolute foundation to all other sciences, it has to be absolutely radical and as rigorous a science as possible.⁴⁵ When he speaks of scientific rigour, he has in mind deductive science like mathematics—a system of knowledge in which each step is built upon its preceding one in a necessary sequence. Such a rigorous connection requires ultimate clarity in basic insights and systematic order in building further upon them.⁴⁶ Phenomenological philosophy should

impressed by the way he linked philosophy and science. Husserl also taught successively in three universities: in Halle, in Göttingen, and in Freiburg. There seems to be a rough correspondence between the three places of his teaching and the three phases of his thought. His mature thought began with a concern for the foundations of mathematics, continued with the development of phenomenological method and concluded with a kind of idealism. He died in 1939 at the age of seventy-nine. All his manuscripts are preserved at the Husserl-Archives in Louvain, established by Herman Van Breda in 1938.

⁴³ Many of the historians of philosophy refer to three phases in Husserl: the pre-phenomenological, phenomenological and the phase of pure phenomenology.

⁴⁴ The term ‘phenomenology’ was used for the first time by J.H.Lambert (1728-77) in his *Neues Organon*. Thereafter the important thinkers who used it in their philosophy are: Herder, Kant, Fichte, Hegel, and Brentano. With Husserl the term gets a definitive meaning, Cf., *Historisches Wörterbuch der Philosophie*, Bd., 7, s.v. “Phänomenologie.”

⁴⁵ Husserl has not wavered from his insistence on the ideal of a rigorous science for philosophy from his *Philosophie der Arithmetik* (1891) to *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften* (1936). But he has given a definitive shape to this conviction in his “*Philosophie als strenge Wissenschaft*” (1911). Cf., Joseph Kockelmans, *Edmund Husserl’s Phenomenology* (Indiana: Purdue University Press, 1994), p. 11; Herbert Spiegelberg: *Phenomenological Movement: A Historical Introduction* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1982), pp. 72ff.

have, according to Husserl, a radicalism of foundation, which positive sciences cannot possibly have. Philosophy has to base itself on a radical—presuppositionless and absolute—foundation. Husserl looks for the ultimate foundation in an original intuition of the things themselves. Hence his maxim “to the things themselves” (*zu den Sachen selbst*) means that we must return to the immediately given and original data of our consciousness,⁴⁷ since the things themselves in their radicality are to be found in the very consciousness of the knowing subject. Thus Husserlian phenomenology claims to have the ideal of scientific rigour and philosophical radicalism.

With this introductory clarification we are prepared to look into the notion of intentionality, which is the very core and unique contribution of phenomenological method. Husserl acknowledges that it was Brentano who called his attention to this unique phenomenon. According to the theory intentionality, there is a parallelism between the subjective act and the objective content. In Husserlian terminology this parallelism came to be known as that between *noesis* (subjective act) and *noema* (objective content). The noetico-noematic parallelism stands for a necessary relation between the intentional act and the intentional object. It signifies that all *cogito* necessarily implies a *cogitatum*; all consciousness is consciousness *of* something. Thus intentionality, by destroying the myth of separating the *cogito* and the *cogitatum*,⁴⁸ reconciles the subjective and the objective. Spiegelberg clarifies Husserl’s notion of intentionality by referring to four of its characteristics.⁴⁹ They are the following: intentionality *objectivates* insofar as the perspectival narrowness of the intentional act widens itself so as to embrace the intentional object; intentionality *unifies* insofar as the various perspectives are synthesized in the very same referent; intentionality *relates* insofar as it is able to go beyond the boundary of the ‘fact’ and thus to be related to its ‘horizon’;⁵⁰ and finally intentionality *constitutes* insofar as the intentional object ‘originates’ or ‘is constituted’ in the intentional act. The intentional object is not the brute factual object, but what is constituted *in* and *by* the intentional act. It is nothing other than the ‘essence’, which Husserl intended to reach by means of his phenomenological method.

Husserlian phenomenology is aimed at the knowledge of the ‘essence’, rather than mere ‘facts’ which constitute the object of empirical sciences. Every contingent thing can have an essential being, an *eidos*, which can be apprehended in its purity by a phenomenological method. Husserl distinguishes between the ordinary experience of the empirical ego, and the transcendental experience or intuition by the transcendental ego. The phenomenologist is interested only in the transcendental experience, which is the essential intuition proper. Essences, for him, are “not the ‘empirical generalities’ that provide us with types encountered in experience but rather ‘pure generalities’ that place before our minds pure possibilities whose validity is completely independent of factual experiences.”⁵¹ In order to arrive at the

⁴⁶ In his Amsterdam Lectures of 1926 Husserl clarifies it in a footnote, saying that the ‘rigour’ of positive sciences is not adequate enough for philosophy. Cf., Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement*, p.76.

⁴⁷ J. Kockelmans, *Edmund Husserl’s Phenomenology*, p. 14.

⁴⁸ Cf. *Ideas-I*, pp. 199-216; as cited by J.J.Kockelmans, *Edmund Husserl’s Phenomenology*, p. 18.

⁴⁹ J.J.Kockelmans, *Edmund Husserl’s Phenomenology*, pp. 98-99.

⁵⁰ For Husserl, horizon is the setting, consisting of the indefinite possible experiences. It is by relating the actual to the possible, that one is able gradually to intuit the essence.

⁵¹ Husserl, *Ideas*, I: 8-11; as quoted by J.J.Kockelmans, *Edmund*

essence Husserl proposes primarily 'imaginative variation',⁵² which can be understood only in the light of his notion of 'horizon'. An object is actually apprehended only within the horizon (setting) of possible apprehensions. The essence extends beyond the limits of what is arrived at in actual perception. By imaginative variation one moves from the limitation of the actual experience to the indeterminacy of possible experience or horizon. By this process of linking the actual to the possible—the process of widening the horizon—Husserl claims to reach deeper into the pure eidetic sphere.

The act of grasping the essence is referred to by Husserl in different terms, such as eidetic reduction, phenomenological intuition, transcendental experience, etc. It points to the process of penetrating into the very original or essential residue, gradually revealing the pure subjectivity as the exclusive source of all objectivity. In his *Ideas* Husserl distinguishes between two types of reductions: eidetic reduction and transcendental reduction.⁵³ The former refers to the reduction of (the universal and timeless) *essence* from (the particular and historical) *fact*; but the latter points to the reduction of the *real* (existent) from the *non-real* (non-existent).⁵⁴ Essences as the pure noemata of the pure consciousness are real, whether or not it is reduced from the existent or non-existent object. In most of his works Husserl uses these reductions synonymously, and he speaks of different levels of reduction according to the purity of subjectivity giving rise to more or less pure objectivity. In short, reduction to the essences means 'constitution' of the objectivity *in* and *by* my subjectivity. The objectivity is transcendently related to the subjectivity by intentionality.

Another important notion in phenomenological method is *Epoché* (bracketing). Husserl wanted phenomenology to be a rigorous and apodictic science. In his search for apodictic evidences, "Husserl turns to Descartes' method of doubt, but he changes the act of doubt into an act of 'bracketing,' into a mere suspension of judgment, a mere *epoche*."⁵⁵ The act of 'bracketing' goes with the act of 'reduction';⁵⁶ in order to intuit the pure essence in the purity of the subjectivity, a radical elimination of the non-essential is required. This process of elimination is referred to as 'bracketing'. The factual or the existential is kept in parenthesis or brackets. The thing under consideration may have factual existence, but it is of no significance whatsoever with regard to its essence. The process of bracketing has to take place both on the subjectivity and on the objectivity. The phenomenologist must be free from all cultural, philosophical and existential bias in order to arrive at the pure objectivity. The *epoché* demands that the phenomenologist take a distance from the various solutions, which

Husserl's Phenomenology, p. 15.

⁵² Together with 'imaginative variation' Husserl proposes also 'inductive generalization' which is not typically phenomenological in character. Hence many Husserlians do not make mention of it.

⁵³ In his *Crisis of European Sciences*, and *Encyclopedia Britannica* Article, Husserl speaks of phenomenological reduction in the place of eidetic reduction.

⁵⁴ It is not of importance that the object factually exists or not. That is why something can be intentionally present, even if it is factually absent.

⁵⁵ J.J. Kockelmans, *Edmund Husserl's Phenomenology*, p. 16. See also, R. Bernet et al., *An Introduction to Phenomenology*, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1995), pp. 66ff.

⁵⁶ The act of intuiting or reduction is the positive, and that of bracketing is the negative aspect in the same process of 'going back to the things themselves' or the essence.

in the course of history have been proposed for different philosophical problems. It calls for an ascetic neutrality with regard to the object in question. The purity of the objectivity is on a par with that of the subjectivity. By eliminating the factual and existential aspects through the process of *bracketing*, Husserl claims to reach the essence of reality—back to the things themselves.

Phenomenological method as developed by Husserl, thus, deals with the insight into the essence without regard to the existential aspects. It is not a question of making the phenomenon appear in its ‘factual reality’, but in its ‘immanent reality’ to consciousness. This is made possible by the phenomenological or intentional constitution *in* and *by* consciousness. The intentionally constituted phenomenological object is the ‘essence’ of reality, which remains *immanent* to consciousness, and *transcendent* to factual existence.

We have given a rough outline of phenomenological method as conceived and developed by Husserl. This has inspired many a contemporary Western thinker into using it in their philosophizing. Although most of the contemporary thinkers make use of the basic insights of Husserlian phenomenology, hardly anyone uses it in its original purity; they, deviating from strict Husserlian phenomenology, have made different versions of phenomenology. Martin Heidegger⁵⁷ is the most outstanding among them with his ‘hermeneutical phenomenology’.

II

Heidegger’s hermeneutical phenomenology got developed mainly in the context of his larger quest for a ‘fundamental ontology’ in the earlier phase of his thought. ‘Hermeneutics’ for him is not a *method*⁵⁸ that he makes use of in his thought, but it is rather his philosophy itself.⁵⁹ Hence clarification of his method of hermeneutical phenomenology amounts to a clarification of his earlier philosophy. For our purpose, we shall limit ourselves to shedding some light onto the *what* of Heidegger’s hermeneutical phenomenology, and the *how* of its development from Husserlian phenomenology.

Heidegger’s philosophy is a way-making movement (*Be-wägung*) awakened by the urgency he felt to distance himself from deteriorating Western philosophy, characterized by its

⁵⁷ Heidegger was born at Meßkirch in South Germany of Catholic parents in 1889. After his university studies he came in contact with Husserl and his phenomenology. The Husserlian method and Aristotelian concern for the question of Being made Heidegger develop a philosophy, that has brought about a revolution in Western thought-structure. In the midway of his philosophical career, Heidegger felt the need to get away from his first point of departure, and developed a thought that was more poetic in style and profound in meaning. After having given rise to such a philosophy, spread out in the numerous works of his, Heidegger died in 1976.

⁵⁸ Heidegger gives a new meaning for method: “Der Weg heißt griechisch *odos*, *meta* heißt ‘nach’; *methodos* ist der Weg, auf dem wir einer Sache nachgehen.” Heidegger, *Der Satz vom Grund*, 5. Aufl., (Pfullingen: Neske, 1978), p.111.

⁵⁹ He has not clarified ‘hermeneutics’ as a method anywhere in his writings, except for a few pages of etymological meaning of ‘phenomenology’ in the introductory section of his *Sein und Zeit*, 15. Aufl. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1979, (pp. 27-39); *Being and Time*, transl., J. Macquarrie and Robinson, 3rd ed., Oxford: Blackwell, 1973 (pp.49-63).

oblivion of Being (*Seinsvergessenheit*). The whole strength of his philosophy consists in his placing himself in contrast to the monolithic structure of Western philosophy,⁶⁰ which has been nothing but an epistemology, a theory of knowledge. In such a tradition Being (*Sein*) was conceptualized as beingness (*Seiendheit*), truth was reduced to correctness, and reality was looked at in its brute objectivity.⁶¹ The philosophical acumen of Heidegger did not allow him to be another someone flowing along with the old philosophical current of last two millennia. Hence he launched a new philosophical venture—fundamental ontology—with the sole aim of clarifying the meaning of Being through an analysis of Dasein. His hermeneutical phenomenology got developed as he carried out this project.

Heidegger begins with an etymological analysis of the term ‘phenomenology’, which is compounded of the Greek terms: *phainomenon* and *logos*. After a careful look through the ancient texts for the original meaning of these terms, Heidegger shows that *phainomenon* means ‘that which shows itself in itself’ and *logos* means ‘letting something be seen as unhidden’. Thus he formulates the meaning of phenomenology as follows: “to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself.”⁶² From this provisional meaning of phenomenology, it is clear that that ‘letting be seen’ (*logos*) and ‘showing itself’ (*Phainomenon*) are complementary and relative; that is, something can show itself only insofar as it is let be seen. The process of ‘letting be seen’ is needed since phenomenon—it is not any entity (*Seiendes*), but the Being of entities (*Sein des Seienden*)—remains mostly vague and hidden. Since phenomenology clarifies the Being of entities, it has to be ontology. “Phenomenology is our way of access to that which is to be the theme of ontology,....Only as phenomenology is ontology possible.”⁶³ In order to lay bare the meaning of Being Heidegger begins with an analysis of Dasein⁶⁴ as it has an onto-ontologico-fundamental priority over other entities.⁶⁵ It is in this context that Heidegger finds that phenomenology has to be hermeneutical. “...The meaning of phenomenological description as a method lies in *interpretation*. The *logos* of the phenomenology of Dasein has a character of *hermeneuein* [interpreting]...”⁶⁶ The ‘letting be seen’ (*logos*) of the phenomenology of Dasein is nothing but interpreting. Thus for Heidegger phenomenology becomes hermeneutical phenomenology. This interpretation (*Auslegung*) or letting-be-seen takes place on the *understanding* of Being, with which Dasein is essentially endowed; this needs to be clarified.

⁶⁰ R. Rorty, “Overcoming the Tradition: Heidegger and Dewey,” in *Nachdenken über Heidegger*, ed., Ute Guzzoni (Hilderheim: Gerstenberg, 1980), p. 268.

⁶¹ Johnson Puthenpurackal, “The Radicality of Heideggerian Hermeneutics,” in *Hermeneutics: Truth and/or Meaning*, ed., (Kondadaba: St. John’s Seminary, 1994), p. 36.

⁶² “Das was sich zeigt, so wie es sich von ihm selbst her zeigt von ihm selbst her sehen lassen.” *Sein und Zeit*, p. 34; *Being and Time*, p. 58.

⁶³ Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, p. 35; *Being and Time*, p. 60.

⁶⁴ Dasein, which literally means ‘Being-there’, is the ontological term for the human being. It is the ‘there’, the disclosure of Being.

⁶⁵ Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, pp. 11-15; *Being and Time*, pp. 32-35. For a concise explanation, cf., J.J. Puthenpurackal, *Heidegger: Through Authentic Totality to Total Authenticity*, pp. 8-11.

⁶⁶ Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, p. 37; *Being and Time*, p. 61.

The notion of ‘understanding’ according to Heidegger is totally different from what is ordinarily taken as ‘intellectual comprehension’. It is the ability of Dasein for its Being. To quote from Heidegger, “*Understanding is the existential Being of Dasein’s own potentiality-for-Being; and it is so in such a way that this Being discloses in itself what its Being is capable of.*”⁶⁷ He clarifies this potentiality-for-Being (*Seinkönnen*) as a potentiality-for-Being-in-the-world, since Dasein is essentially Being-in-the-world. It is on this understanding as openness to or potentiality for Being, that interpretation is based. It is a rendering explicit or clarification of what has already been vaguely understood. That which is disclosed in understanding is made to stand out explicitly in interpretation by illuminating the *in-order-to* (*Um-zu*), which is same as the ‘as-structure’. When the hermeneutical sight ‘sees’ what something is for, its in-order-to, it sees it *as* this something: *as* a pen, *as* a hammer, *as* useful, etc. Such an interpretation or existential hermeneutics takes place in Dasein’s existential living in the world—concernful dealing with things and solicitous relation with persons.⁶⁸ Thus something is interpreted as a hammer in the existential dealing of hammering; someone is interpreted as loving in the existential relation of love.

The ‘as-structure’ of interpretation is based on the ‘fore-structure’ of understanding.⁶⁹ Understanding as Dasein’s concernful and solicitous existence in the world is the horizon or the hermeneutical situation. It is from this fore-structure of understanding—the horizon of the world—that something is let stand out *as* this something in Dasein’s existential dealing with it. Thus the process of ontological interpretation is nothing other than Dasein’s letting-be-seen in its existential living. Human existence, according to Heidegger, is *hermeneutical*. What is let-be-seen or interpreted is the Being/meaning of something, and it comes to be in Dasein’s hermeneutical existence. Thus meaning is not anything that is locked up in the object nor is it an external label given at random by the subject. Meaning emerges from the merging of the object’s ‘showing itself’ and the subject’s ‘letting be seen’; and it is articulated in interpretation, and remains articulable in understanding.

The special relation between understanding and interpretation creates a circularity of argument, since interpretation makes explicit only what has already been understood. Are we caught up in a vicious circle, or a hermeneutical circle?

In the ordinary conception the process of knowledge is a linear movement—a quantitative acquiring of knowledge. The notion of hermeneutical circle has brought about a revolution. Traditionally hermeneutical circle was understood in terms of the whole and the parts—parts are considered within a whole, which itself can be understood in respect to its constituent parts.⁷⁰ Heidegger has changed the old circle of the whole and the parts into a phenomenological circle of the implicit and the explicit, of pre-thematic and thematic, of anonymous horizon and explicitly named object.⁷¹ It is more appropriate to use the dialectics

⁶⁷ “Verstehen ist das existenziale Sein des eigenen Seinkönnens des Daseins, so zwar, daß dieses Sein an ihm selbst das Woran des mit ihm selbst Seins erschließt.” *Sein und Zeit*, p. 144; *Being and Time*, p. 184.

⁶⁸ Johnson Puthenpurackal, “The Radicality of Heideggerian Hermeneutics,” p. 40.

⁶⁹ The fore-structure consists of fore-having, fore-sight and fore-conception. For a diagrammatic presentation and clarification of the relation between the as-structure and the fore-structure, cf., J.J. Puthenpurackal, op. cit., p. 30.

⁷⁰ J. Bleicher, *Contemporary Hermeneutics* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1980), p.102.

of implicit and explicit in the case of Heidegger's hermeneutical philosophy.⁷² Hence it is not a vicious circle—a constant back and forth movement between two identical poles. For Heidegger hermeneutics is the process of clarification of the as-structure—a movement from the vagueness of the fore-structure to the clarity of the as-structure. Hermeneutical circle thus is the constant hermeneutical movement from vagueness to clarity of the *same*, or better, *differently same*.⁷³ Hermeneutical understanding is a going *deeper* rather than a growing *wider*. By going into the *intensively deepest*, hermeneutics embraces the *extensively widest*.

We can get to the deeper meaning of hermeneutics and hermeneutical circle by clarifying the close link between 'retrieval' (*Wiederholung*) and 'interpretation' (*Auslegung*). Since hermeneutics is a clarification of what remains vague or hidden, it is a 'recovery' or 'fetching back' (*wieder-holen*) of what remains latent. The project of recovery which is the hermeneutical strategy of *Being and Time* has much to owe to the Kierkegaardian notion of 'repetition' and the Husserlian call to a 'return to the origins'.⁷⁴ Heideggerian hermeneutics is a recovery of the origins, a going back to one's very own,⁷⁵ a return to the primordial and the authentic, which calls for the 'courage for repetition'. Heideggerian hermeneutical circle contains two aspects: the existential and the ontological, a recovery of the self and the recovery of Being. Both belong together. By heeding to the call of conscience in 'resoluteness' (*Entschlossenheit*) Dasein recovers its authentic potentiality-for-Being (*Seinkönnen*). This recovery of one's authentic self goes with the recovery of Being—reality in its as-structure or meaning—in its explicitness from the fore-structure of one's understanding of Being. The interpretation of one's Being (self) cannot be separated from that of the Being of entities, as Dasein is essentially Being-in-the-world. The function of hermeneutics is *aus-legen*, *ex-ponere*, to lay out, to expose, to uncover, to recover, to make explicit what we already implicitly understand.⁷⁶ Through such a recovering of the self and of Being, hermeneutics "brings us to stand in the place that we already occupy. It returns us to ourselves, brings us home. It is appropriation and home-coming: coming into our own again."⁷⁷

⁷¹ John D. Caputo, "Hermeneutics as the Recovery of Man," in *Hermeneutics and Modern Philosophy*, ed., B.R. Wachterhauser (New York: State University of New York Press, 1986), p. 433.

⁷² Derrida, a critic and admirer of Heidegger agrees that his *Sein und Zeit* is guided by the logic of the implicit and the explicit.

⁷³ We use the expression 'differently same' to indicate that the same does not remain identically same, but grows into greater clarity.

⁷⁴ For a detailed study of this twofold influence on Heidegger, cf., Caputo, "Hermeneutics as Recovery of Man," (Art. Cit.); W.V. Spanos, "Heidegger, Kierkegaard and the Hermeneutic Circle," in *Martin Heidegger and the Question of Literature*, ed., W.V. Spanos (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1979), pp. 115-48.

⁷⁵ In Heidegger's later thought, this notion is given greater prominence, and it is expressed in poetic terms of 'home-coming' (*Heimkehr*), a return to one's 'fatherland' (*Vaterland*) to speak the 'mother-tongue' (*Muttersprache*).

⁷⁶ Johnson Puthenpurackal, "The Radicality of Heideggerian Hermeneutics," pp. 42-43.

⁷⁷ John D. Caputo, "Hermeneutics as Recovery of Man," p. 434.

III

Now that we have traversed through the twin-roads of Husserlian phenomenology and Heideggerian hermeneutics, we can now bring them together into a single road where they meet together. Although there exists great difference between them, the purview of our study does not demand that we dwell on it.⁷⁸ It is the underlying similarity that is the basic inspiration behind this study.

Phenomenology and ontological hermeneutics can be considered both as a critique of and an alternative for the traditional Western philosophy characterized by subject-object dichotomy—the subject that knows and the object that is known.⁷⁹ Husserl initiated the process of doing away with the subject-object separation with his theory of intentionality or the noetico-noematic structure. Heidegger has worked it out more radically with his ontological hermeneutics of Dasein as Being-in-the-world. Thus both of them insisted on the impossibility of separating the subject from the object, noetic act from noematic content, intentional experience from intentional object, the Being of Dasein from the Being of the world. Heidegger spared no effort to insist on the priority of *ontology* (of Being-in-the-world) over *epistemology*⁸⁰ (of subject standing over against the object). According to Heidegger, Dasein is related to the world, not as a knower to the known, but with a relation of existential dealings of concern and solicitude. Dasein's Being-in-the-world is more fundamental than its

⁷⁸ There are several studies relating Heidegger and Husserl. Some of the studies in English are the following: Elliston, "Phenomenology Re-interpreted: From Husserl to Heidegger," *Philosophy Today* (1977): 273-83; Schneider, "Husserl and Heidegger: An Essay on the Question of Intentionality," *Philosophy Today* (1977): 368-75; Michael Murray, "Husserl and Heidegger: Constructing and Deconstructing the Greek Philosophy," *Review of Metaphysics* XLI, pp. 501-18; S. Breton, "From Phenomenology to Ontology," *Philosophy Today* (1960): 227-37; Schacht, "Husserlian and Heideggerian Phenomenology," *Philosophical Studies* (1972): 293-314; Timothy Stapleton, *Husserl and Heidegger: The Question of a Phenomenological Beginning* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983).

⁷⁹ In fact the different schools of Western thought came about as a result of the different emphasis that is placed either on the subject or on the object. Thus we note the swinging of the pendulum from one to the other in rationalism to empiricism, idealism to positivism, etc. Kant made an attempt to reconcile the subjective and the objective or rationalism and empiricism. But in phenomenology this reconciliation is worked out better.

⁸⁰ In comparison to Heidegger, Husserl is referred to as an 'epistemologist' since he is concerned about the *knowledge* of essences. But Husserl's use of the term 'knowledge', according to my understanding, cannot be taken as in the traditional sense of subject trying to know the object intellectually. We are able to conclude it from the way he explains the whole phenomenological process, which tries to do away with the subject-object dichotomy.

knowledge of the world. "Knowing is a mode of Dasein founded upon Being-in-the-world."⁸¹ Thus he emphasizes the priority of ontology over epistemology.⁸²

The greatest merit of phenomenological hermeneutics is its unique way in which reality is considered. In traditional philosophy reality has been largely looked at in its brute objectivity—a position of extreme realism. In such a conception meaning or being is inherently present in the object. Thus a table is a table irrespective of its being used as a table by the humans. Even when it is used as a cot to sleep on, it does not cease to be a table, until it is made a cot by a material change. Thus the Being of something has been exclusively dependent on the object. Phenomenological hermeneutics has brought about a revolution, not by switching over to the other alternative of subject-dependence,⁸³ but by transcending the either/or structure of subject-object dichotomy. Thus meaning is neither exclusively locked up in the object, nor is it exclusively imposed by the subject; it rather comes to be in the existential meeting between the subject and object, and in the transcending of their dichotomy. Reality is seen here not in its crude objectivity, but as intentional object as related to the humans. Thus for instance, a *gate* or a *door* is not anything that is made on a wall by removing a bit of it and re-shaping it with something else, but it is rather the possibility of entry and exit, of welcome and rejection, of opening and closing. The intentional meaning of *presence*, for instance, is not to be taken as the physical presence with one's body—as opposed to one's physical absence—but as the *presencing*⁸⁴ with one's existential person. Such a presence can be had even when the other is physically absent.⁸⁵ At the same time, physical presence does not necessarily imply intentional and personal presence. One may be physically so close to me, but intentionally can be far away from me. It goes without saying as to where the priority has to be placed: physical presence or intentional presence.

Both phenomenology and hermeneutics have yet another important merit; they consider reality as dynamic, as different from the traditional conception of it as static. With the notions of phenomenological intuition and hermeneutical circle, a definitive and conclusive understanding of anything is ruled out. Phenomenological intuition is the process by which the 'essence' is gradually revealed. Hermeneutical circle refers to the never-ending process of moving from vagueness to clarity of the same. Thus both phenomenology and hermeneutics have destroyed the myth of 'absolutism' in knowledge. Such a myth could survive only on a philosophy of *dead* concepts with absolute clarity, certainty, and precision. With reality as dynamic⁸⁶ the certainty of knowledge is no more possible. According to such a position,

⁸¹ Heidegger, *Sein und Zeit*, p. 62; *Being and time*, p. 90.

⁸² This priority is well reflected in all of Heidegger's works. It is evident from the contrasting terms and expressions that he has employed. Thus he distinguishes between 'interpretation' (*auslegung*) and 'assertion' (*Aussage*), 'hermeneutical as' and 'apophantical as', ontology and epistemology, readiness-to-hand and presence-at-hand, etc.

⁸³ D. Sinha distinguishes between 'subject-dependence' and 'subject-relatedness'. In phenomenology meaning is not exclusively made dependent on subject, but only related to the subject. Cf., Debabrata Sinha, *Studies in Phenomenology* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1969), p. 60.

⁸⁴ We use the expression 'presencing', taking inspiration from Heidegger, in order to highlight the dynamic meaning of presence.

⁸⁵ Gabriel Marcel developed his phenomenology of presence from his experience of a deeper presence—the intentional presence—of his mother who dies when he was quite young.

Being, truth⁸⁷ or meaning cannot be encapsulated in static concepts or enframed in perennial definitions; they are in the process of dynamic coming-to-be.⁸⁸

With the conception of reality as *intentional* and *dynamic*, philosophy gets a poetic depth. Such a depth is evidently present wherever phenomenology and hermeneutics are made use of, as for instance, in aesthetics, in theology, in mystical writings, in poetry, etc. Even before phenomenological and hermeneutical method got formulated, it had been covertly in use at least in art and poetry. But after Husserl and Heidegger gave a philosophical formulation to phenomenology and hermeneutics, reality has got *new 'life'*, language has got *more 'depth'*, art has got *wider 'meaning'*, philosophy has got *greater 'relevance'*.

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FROM DICHOTOMY TO PERICHORESIS AN OVERVIEW OF WESTERN PHILOSOPHICAL METHODS

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The term 'method' is derived from the Greek 'methodos' ('road to). Hence etymologically the term refers to the way of doing something⁸⁹, the system of procedure to obtain or reach the end intended. It is the way of procedure from the known to the unknown, from a given starting point to final propositions in a determined field of knowledge. In speculative sciences it indicates the road to propositions concerning that which exists or is thought to exist; whereas in normative sciences it indicates the road to the norms governing the doing of something. In the sciences, the use of correct methods is most important in order to make certain that the conclusions are correctly connected with the starting point and the foundation. Every scientific method is the road from the known starting point to a result which in one or the other is linked to this starting point. This connection can be established through logical reasoning or deduction, or through induction, synthesis, or analysis.⁹⁰ The characteristic

⁸⁶ It was Nietzsche who with his philosophy of life initiated the way of looking at reality as dynamic. Heidegger was very much influenced by Nietzsche on this question.

⁸⁷ For a concise study on the dynamic notion of truth, propounded by Heidegger, cf., Johnson Puthenpurackal, "Truthfulness to the Truth as Openness to the Open: The Heideggerian Perspective," *Vijñānadīpti*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (2002).

⁸⁸ In the later Heideggerian philosophy the dynamic conception of reality has reached its zenith and purity, when he speaks of it in terms of the 'subjectless' presencing of the present. Thus the Being of the tree is the *treeing* of the tree, the coming-to-be of the tree, the presencing of the tree, etc.

⁸⁹ There is a difference between 'method' and 'methodology.' Method is a way of doing something; whereas methodology is a study of method.

⁹⁰ Henry Van Laer and Henry J. Koran, *Philosophy of Science* (Louvain: Duquesne University, 1956) 55.

feature of the discipline of philosophy is the existence of different methods in it. When there was no distinction between science and philosophy and all knowledge was philosophy, it was thought that the task of philosophy was to give a complete and coherent account of the universe as a whole. This view originated in ancient Greece and lasted for several centuries in the West until alternatives to it were developed. This paper includes brief overviews of a few of the prominent Western philosophical methods with the humble proposal of an alternative view that might take into account some of their concerns.

Speculative Method

The intellectual development reached its climax in Athens as the various streams of Greek thought converged there during the fifth century B.C. The age of Pericles saw Athens at the peak of its cultural creativity and political influence. The development of democracy and technical advances in agriculture and navigation encouraged humanistic spirit and speculative method. Pre-socratic philosophers⁹¹ had been relatively isolated in their speculations. Now in Athens such philosophical speculation became more representative of the city's intellectual life as a whole, which continued to move toward conceptual thought, critical analysis, reflection, and dialectic.⁹²

Dialectic Method

Dialectic method of Socrates and Plato was essentially a method of discussion and debate in which the participants progressed from one point to another, each one disputing the point of the other until they could reach an undisputable point. It consisted in reasoning through

⁹¹ The first known pre-Socratic philosopher Thales speculated that water was the original substance out of which all others are formed. He maintained that the earth rests on water. He also believed that the magnet has a soul in it as it moves the iron; further, that all things are full of gods. Anaximander, the second philosopher of the Milesian school, held that all things come from a single primal substance, but that it is not water, or any other of the substances that we know. It is boundless, eternal and ageless, and it encompasses all the worlds. The primal substance is transformed into various substances, which are again transformed into each other. Anaximenes, the last of the Milesian triad, makes further advances. For him, the fundamental substance is air. The soul is air; fire is rarefied air. When condensed, air becomes first water, then earth, and finally stone. He also thought that the earth is shaped like a round table, and that air encompasses everything. The most important stage in this evolution was reached in the latter half of the fifth century with the emergence of the sophists. With the sophists, philosophy turned away from its earlier, more speculative and cosmological concerns to skepticism, rationalism and atheism. It was in this highly charged cultural climate that Socrates developed his famous dialectical method.

⁹² Richard Tarnas, *The Passion of the Western Mind* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1993) 25.

rigorous dialogue as a method of intellectual investigation intended to expose false beliefs and elicit truth. The strategy was to take up a sequence of questions with whomever one was in discussion, relentlessly analyzing one by one the implications of the answers in such a way as to bring out the flaws and inconsistencies inherent in a given belief or statement. Attempts to define the essence of something were rejected one after another as being either too wide or too narrow. Often such an analysis ended in complete perplexity. Yet such times it was clear that philosophy was concerned less with knowing the right answers than with the strenuous attempt to discover those answers. To practice philosophy in the dialectic method was continually to subject one's thoughts to the criticism of reason in earnest dialogue with others. Genuine knowledge was not something that could simply be received from another secondhand, but was rather a personal achievement, won only at the cost of constant intellectual struggle and self-critical reflection.⁹³

Retortive Method

Towards the end of the patristic period, St. Augustine tried to answer the problem of certainty with his method of retorsion.⁹⁴ He held that the skeptics are mistaken in assuming that certainty of knowledge is impossible and that human can achieve only "probable knowledge," i.e., ideas whose validity is highly probable. Since any degree of probable knowledge implies an approach toward completely certain knowledge, the assumption of probably valid truths presupposes the existence and attainability of absolute truths. If the skeptic argues that no real objects of his sensory experience exist, nevertheless he cannot doubt the fact that his perception does exist. The person who doubts all truths is caught in a logical dilemma, for one must exist in order to doubt; in fact, no matter what else one doubts, one proves one's own existence through the act of doubting. Nor is it of any use to suggest that one might err in thinking that one exists, for 'even if one errs, one exists' (*Si fallor, sum*).⁹⁵

Scholastic Method

The scholastic method – a creative synthesis of several previous methods – of Thomas Aquinas further supported the Augustinian view of certainty. Thomas was certain of concepts having their foundation in sense perception. He accepted Abelard's view of the relationship between universals and particulars, including the Aristotelian thesis that Plato's universals can be found only in particular things which thus become actualities detectable in sense experience. For Aquinas too, the universal nature, the essence, of a thing exists immanently in the object itself as part of the real world, but this universal characteristic (this substantial form of an object) is also an idea or concept separated from its object when it is abstracted by the human mind. As a part of the real world, the universal essence never exists independently of its object. Yet, before nature was created, these universals (essences) existed in the mind of God as archetypes or ideas which God used in creating the universe. Thus the Moderate Realism of Aquinas accepts not only Aristotle's view that universals exist in individual objects (*universalis in re*) but also asserts that universals exist in the mind of God prior to the particular objects (*universalia ante rem*) and in the mind of human (as concepts) after the

⁹³ Ibid, 34-35.

⁹⁴ Retorsion compels assent to an argument by showing self-contradiction in the counter-argument. See *Soliloq.* I, 6,12.

⁹⁵ *Contra Academicos*, 3,10, 23.

particular object has been created (*universalia post rem*). Thus truth is understood as the conformity between mind and object.⁹⁶

Cartesian Method

Descartes was also bothered by the same question of certainty. He became fascinated by the question of whether there was anything we could know for certain. He distinguished between certainty and truth. For him, certainty is a state of mind, whereas truth is a property of statements which usually relates to the way things are out there in the external world. But Descartes believed that only if one had grounds for certainty could one know that one had hold of the truth. The pursuit of truth involves the pursuit of certainty. He wanted that the method he was looking for would have to be one which not only delivered the goods in the form of worthwhile conclusions but could also defend itself against the arguments of sceptics. So he engaged himself in what might be called *pre-emptive scepticism* by which he wanted to put the foundations of knowledge beyond the reach of scepticism. He did it in three stages. First, he laid aside things that just on ordinary commonsensical grounds one might possibly find doubtful. For instance, he reminded himself of such well-known facts as that straight sticks can look bent in water. But he wanted to go beyond such ordinary kind of doubt. Second, he doubted that at any given moment he was awake and perceiving anything at all. For he had often dreamt in the past that he was perceiving things, and when he was dreaming, he had thought that he was seeing people, or tables, or whatever, around him. But, of course, he had woken up and found it was all illusion. Third, he imagined a malign spirit whose sole intent was to deceive him as much as it could. However, the point at which the doubt stops is the reflection that he is himself engaged in thinking. No malicious demon can ever make one to believe that one is thinking when one is not. If one has a false thought, that is still a thought. So his fundamental first certainty was 'I think, therefore I am' (*Cogito ergo sum*).⁹⁷

Empiricist Method

The empiricist method of philosophy advocated by Locke, Berkley, and Hume held that *all* essential truths about the world were discoverable only by empirical experience. Thus, reason was substituted by empirical experience. It was above all John Locke who set the tone for empiricist method by affirming the foundational principle of empiricism: 'There is nothing in the intellect that was not previously in the senses' (*Nihil est in intellectu quod non antea fuerit in sensu*). All knowledge of the world must rest finally on human's sense experience. Through the combining and compounding of simple sense impressions or 'ideas' (defined as mental contents) into more complex concepts, the mind can arrive at sound conclusions. The mind is at first a blank tablet, a passive receptor of its experience. The mind possesses innate powers, but not innate ideas as cognition begins only with sensation. However, Berkeley pointed out that all experience is nothing more than experience, i.e., all mental representations of supposed material substances are finally ideas in the mind. Therefore, the existence of a material world external to the mind is an unwarranted assumption. All that can be known with certainty to exist is the mind and its ideas. 'To be' does not mean 'to be a

⁹⁶ George Panthanmackel, *In Struggle and Dialogue With: A Concise History of Western Medieval Philosophy* (Bangalore: ATC, 1992) 61-62.

⁹⁷ Bryan Magee, *The Great Philosophers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987) 80-85.

material substance'; rather, 'to be' means 'to be perceived by a mind (*esse est percipi*). David Hume drove the empiricist method to its logical end, making use of Berkeley's insight while turning it in a direction more characteristic of the modern secular scepticism growingly visible from Montaigne through Bayle and the Enlightenment. As an empiricist who grounded all human knowledge in sense experience, Hume agreed with Locke's general orientation and Berkeley's criticism of Locke's theory of representation while he disagreed with Berkeley's idealist solution. Human experience is indeed of the phenomenal only, and there is no way to ascertain what is beyond it. Like Berkeley, Hume could not accept Locke's views on representative perception, but neither could he accept Berkeley's identification of external objects with internal ideas rooted in the mind of God.⁹⁸

Critical Method

The intellectual challenge that faced Kant was a seemingly impossible one: on the one hand, to reconcile the claims of science to certain and genuine knowledge of the world with the claim that experience could never give rise to such knowledge; on the other hand, to reconcile the claim of religion that human was morally free with the claim of science that nature was entirely determined by necessary laws. With these several conflicting claims, an intellectual crisis of profound complexity had emerged. Kant's method of resolution of that crisis was equally complex, brilliant, and weighty in its consequences.⁹⁹

According to Kant, the human mind does not passively receive sense data, but it actively structures them. Human, therefore, knows objective reality to the extent that reality conforms to the fundamental structures of the mind. All human knowledge of the world is channelled through the mind's own categories. The necessity and certainty of scientific knowledge are embedded in the mind's perception and understanding of the world. The mind does not conform to objects; rather, objects conform to the mind. Human can attain certain knowledge of the world, not because one has the power to penetrate to and grasp the world in itself, but because the world is saturated with the principles of one's own mental organization. Hence, human could know things only as they appear, not as they are in themselves. A genuine philosophical method should investigate the formal structure of the mind and analyze the nature and limits of human reason. Although reason cannot decide matters transcending experience, it can determine what cognitive factors are intrinsic to all human experience and inform all experience with its order.¹⁰⁰

Analytical Method

Analytical philosophy refers to various contemporary methods of analysing the language. Other names for it are 'philosophical analysis,' 'logical analysis,' and 'scientific philosophy.' The names 'logical positivism,' 'scientific empiricism,' and 'neo-positivism,' refer to the tendency within analytical philosophy which has as its main target the 'verification principle,' i.e., the criterion of truth consists in its capacity of being verified by sense experience. The second branch of analytical philosophy is 'linguistic analysis' as it emphasizes the analysis of the language used in philosophy.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Richard Tarnas, *The Passion of the Western Mind*, 333-337.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 341.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 343-348.

¹⁰¹ Teoddoro de la Torre, *Popular History of Philosophy* (Texas: Lumen Christi Press, 1986) 368-369.

The verification principle and language analysis are not incompatible; both can be found in one movement. Furthermore, one should not confuse ‘analytical philosophy’ with symbolic logic. The latter is a system of expressing the rules of correct thinking through mathematical symbols, instead of using words as in traditional logic. Symbolic logic is only an instrument of philosophy rather than a philosophical position. Although its use is strongly advocated by most analytical philosophers to avoid some ambiguities proper to conventional words, it is not required by all philosophical analysts.¹⁰²

Pragmatic Method

Pragmatism is a philosophical method founded by three American philosophers: Charles Sanders Peirce, William James and John Dewey. Peirce argued that the function of inquiry is not to represent reality, but rather enable us to act more effectively. He was critical of the ‘copy theory’ of knowledge which had dominated philosophy since the time of Descartes. He was also one of the first philosophers to say that the ability to use signs is essential to thought.¹⁰³ Peirce’s thought was further extended by James, whose *The Principles of Psychology* (1890) broke with the associationism of Locke and Hume. James held that ‘“The true”...is only the expedient in our way of thinking.’¹⁰⁴ Truth is what ‘works,’ and not merely an idea of a harmony between thought and the things, since one could make a judgment about this only by means of thought and the things are accessible only within thought. Ideas are true to the extent that they help us to enter into satisfactory relationships with other parts of our experience.¹⁰⁵ James and Dewey both wanted to reconcile philosophy with Darwin by making human being’s pursuit of the true and the good (cultural evolution) continuous with the activities of the lower animals (biological evolution). Dewey criticized the Cartesian notion of the self as a substance which existed prior to language and culture, and substituted an account of the self as a product of social practices. Dewey, whose primary interests were in cultural, educational and political reform rather than in specifically philosophical problems, developed the implications of pragmatism for ethics and social philosophy.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Ibid; Ludwig Wittgenstein is hailed as the one who gave analytical philosophy its definite shape. There are two clearly identifiable phases in Wittgenstein’s philosophy: Early and Later Wittgenstein. *The Early Wittgenstein* holds that only those propositions which picture facts are true or false, because only facts can be verified by experience. Therefore, all metaphysical propositions about the world as a unit or about the spiritual soul or values – which are not empirically verifiable – are senseless. *The Later Wittgenstein* likened words to tools in a toolbox. Words are used to assert, question, command, describe, report, speculate, joke, ask, thank, curse, greet, pray, and so on. Each use of language is part of an activity. Language games are as countless as the uses of words. Words by themselves have no meaning, they acquire a distinct meaning from each distinct use.

¹⁰³ Richard Rorty, “Pragmatism”, in *Concise Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000) 704-705.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Julian Marias, *History of Philosophy*, Tr. by Stanley Appelbaum and Clarence C. Strowbridge (New York: Dover Publications, 1967) 397.

Phenomenological Method

The main objective of the phenomenological method is the enlarging and deepening of the range of our immediate experience¹⁰⁷ under the watchword ‘to the things themselves’ (*Zu den Sachen selbst*). Its interpretation may vary; but the common concern is that of giving the phenomena a fuller and fairer hearing than traditional empiricism has accorded them. Negatively it expresses a revolt against an approach in philosophy that takes its point of departure from crystallized beliefs and theories handed down by a tradition which often perpetuates preconceptions and prejudices. In this respect phenomenology stands for a kind of rebellion against the trend in modern science which begins with simplifying abstractions and ends with a minimum vocabulary of scientific concepts. The method consists of a series of steps, of which the later will usually presuppose the earlier ones¹⁰⁸: investigating particular phenomena, investigating general essences, apprehending essential relationships among essences, watching modes of appearing, watching the constitution of phenomena in consciousness, suspending belief in the existence of phenomena, and interpreting the meaning of phenomena.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ Richard Rorty, “Pragmatism”, in *Concise Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000) 704-705.

¹⁰⁷. Herbert Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement* (London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994) 678-679.

¹⁰⁸. *Ibid.*, 682-715.

¹⁰⁹ The first three steps have been accepted, at least implicitly, and practised by all those who have aligned themselves with the phenomenological movement; the later ones only by a smaller group. For instance, the gestaltists, in declaring their partial solidarity with phenomenology, usually accept only the principle of descriptive research without subscribing to the investigation of essences and essential relations. 1. *Investigating the Particular Phenomena*: Under this heading three operations are included: phenomenological intuiting, phenomenological analyzing, and phenomenological describing. *Phenomenological intuiting* is one of the demanding operations, which requires utter concentration on the object intuited without becoming absorbed in it to the point of no longer looking critically. *Phenomenological analysing* comprises the distinguishing of the constituents of the phenomena as well as the exploration of their relations to and connections with adjacent phenomena. In his later writings Husserl often uses the expression ‘intentional analysis’ as an equivalent to phenomenological analysis. By itself the expression suggests nothing but analysis which pays systematic attention to the parallel aspects of intending act (*noesis=cogitations*) and intended content (*noema=cogitata*). More specifically, intentional analysis focuses on the way in which intentional act and intentional referent correspond to one another. *Phenomenological describing* concentrates on the central or decisive characteristics of the phenomenon. To this extent description already involves a consideration of essences. 2. *Investigating General Essences (Eidetic Intuiting)*: In order to apprehend the general essence we have to look at the particulars as *examples*, i.e., as instances that stand for the general essence. Thus using the particular red of an individual rose as a point of departure we can see it as an instance of a certain shade of red in general. But we can also see it as exemplifying redness and, finally, colour as such. Thus the intuiting of particulars provides stepping stones for the apprehension of the general essences. Seeing red as red we also see redness, the general essence which is exemplified in all of them. 3. *Apprehending Essential Relationship*: These essential relationships are actually of two types: relationships within a single essence and relationships between several essences. In the case of *relationships within single essence*, we are concerned with the question whether its components are or are not essential to it. Thus, in the case of the triangle we have to determine whether three sides, three angles, and certain shapes and sizes of these sides and angles are necessary to them or required by the essence ‘triangle’ or whether they are merely compatible with it. *Relationships between several essences* are established by the procedure of imaginative variation too. Keeping one essence constant we try to combine it with various other essences, leaving off some of its associates, substituting others for them, or adding essences not hitherto encountered together with them. 4. *Watching Modes of Appearing*: Phenomenology is the systematic exploration of the phenomena not only in the sense of *what* appears, but also the way in which things appear. These ways of appearing are usually overlooked in our preoccupation with what appears. There are actually at least three different senses of

Deconstructive Method

In a deconstructive reading the text in question is shown to harbour contradictory logics which are standardly ignored. Very often it is a matter of locating certain clearly-marked binary opposition (as for instance between nature and culture, speech and writing, concept and metaphor, or philosophy and literature) and showing that their order of priority is by no means as stable as the text seeks to maintain. That is to say, there is a counter-logic at work whereby those distinctions can be shown to break down, or to generate a reading markedly at odds with author's overt intent. This leaves open the possibility that texts may mean something other and more than is allowed for by any straight-forward appeal to the authorial intention.¹¹⁰

Transcendental Method

Transcendental method is a way of reflecting upon and interpreting the previous conditions of the possibility of an act of knowledge. Such a way of interpreting has been understood by Kant in his Critique of Pure Reason: "I entitle *transcendental* all knowledge which is occupied not so much with objects as with the mode of our knowledge of objects in so far as this mode of knowledge is to be possible *a priori*."¹¹¹ The method aims at discovering and explaining the

appearance which a careful study of the modes of givenness must distinguish: I). The side or aspect of the given object from which we know the object as a whole. II). The appearance of the object may be the perspectively 'deformed' or slanted view which the sides offer to the perceiver (*Abschattung*=*perspective shading-off*). III). The third one is called modes of clarity. The same object, appearing with the same sides and in the same perspective, may still be given with very different degrees of clarity and distinctness. 5. *Exploring the Constitution of Phenomena in Consciousness*: It consists in determining the way in which a phenomenon establishes itself and takes shape in our consciousness. An illustration of such a constitution can be the experience of getting oriented in a new city, whose 'picture' gradually takes shape in our mind, or the way in which the personality of someone we meet takes shape in our mind, beginning with our first impressions, with the observations of his/her movements, followed by the hearing of his/her voice, etc. 6. *Suspending Belief in Existence (epoche = reductions)*: Husserl himself associated the original and basic meaning of the reduction with the mathematical operation of 'bracketing' (*Einklammerung*). The underlying idea of this metaphor is that we are to detach the phenomena of our everyday experience from the context of our natural living, while preserving their content as fully and as purely as possible. The actual procedure of this detachment consists in suspending judgment as to the existence or non-existence of this content. This does not mean that we deny or even doubt its existence to the extent of writing it off, as Descartes had done. Reduction facilitates genuine intuiting, analyzing, and describing of the given. For it frees us from our usual preoccupation with 'solid reality', which makes us brush aside what is 'merely in our imagination' or 'by convention only' as unworthy of our attention. This does not mean that suspension of existential beliefs is indispensable for an unbiased stock-taking of phenomena. What is all important in phenomenology is that we consider all the data, real or unreal or doubtful, as having equal rights, and investigate them without fear or favour. The reduction will help us to do justice to all of them, especially to those which are under the handicap of initial suspicion as to their existential claims. 7. *Interpreting Concealed Meanings (Hermeneutic¹⁰⁹ Phenomenology)*: The hermeneutic phenomenology aims at the discovery of meanings which are not immediately manifest to our intuiting, analyzing, and describing. The interpreter has to go beyond what is directly given (in this way it goes beyond the original programme of phenomenology itself). The interpreter has to use the given as a clue for meanings, which are not given, or at least explicitly given. Heidegger's¹⁰⁹ analysis of *Dasein* and Sartre's existential psychoanalysis provide the main examples of such interpretations. Heidegger takes certain structures of human being, such as the fundamental moods, as indications (*Anzeigen*) for a certain meaning which is not immediately manifest, namely, 'concern' (*Sorge*) and being-toward-death (*Sein zum Tode*).

¹¹⁰ Christopher Norris, "Deconstruction," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Ed. Edward Craig, Vol.2 (London and New York: Routledge, 1998) 836.

¹¹¹ Norman Kemp Smith (Tr), *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason* (London: Macmillan, 1992) 59.

knowledge which is prior and which makes possible every knowledge of objects. This knowledge is not explicitly available before all other kinds of knowledge. It is a pre-knowledge, a basic knowledge, which is implicit in every kind of empirical knowledge, and it can be made explicit only through a reflection upon the previous conditions of the possibility of empirical knowledge by both transcendental reduction and transcendental deduction. *Transcendental reduction* is a thematic uncovering of the conditions and presuppositions implied in the immediate data of consciousness. It is a return from that which is thematically known to that which is unthematically co-known in the act of consciousness. It is a return to that which is pre-known (pre-apprehended) as a condition of the act. *Transcendental deduction* is the movement of the mind from this previous datum uncovered reductively. In transcendental deduction, the mind deduces *apriori* the empirical act of consciousness, its nature, its possibility and its necessity from the previous datum uncovered reductively. In other words, *reduction* proceeds from a particular experience to the conditions of its possibility; whereas *deduction* proceeds from these conditions to the essential structures of the same experience. These movements are in constant interaction, influencing each other. Yet one can be more emphasized than the other. For instance, Kant emphasized reduction; whereas Fichte and Schelling emphasized deduction.¹¹²

ENDINGS

A philosophical method is established through logical reasoning, i.e., through deduction, induction, synthesis, or analysis. The characteristic feature of philosophy is the existence of different methods in it. The Pre-socratic philosophers mainly followed a speculative method that continued to move toward certainty and truth through conceptual thought, critical analysis, reflection, and dialectic. Dialectical method of Socrates and Plato was essentially a method of debate in which the participants progressed from one point to another, each one disputing the point of the other until they could reach a point of certainty. Towards the end of the patristic period, St. Augustine demonstrated that the skeptics are mistaken in assuming that certainty of knowledge is impossible. The scholastic method of Thomas Aquinas further supported the Augustinian view of certainty. Descartes was also bothered by the same question of certainty. He became fascinated by the question of whether there was anything we could know for certain. The empiricists' response was that *all* essential truths about the world were certainly discoverable through experience. However, Kant argued that no certain and genuine knowledge of the world could be possible only through experience without the *apriori*, categorial structures of the mind. For the analytic philosophers, the criterion of certainty and truth is the 'verification principle,' while the pragmatists hold on to the view that 'truth is what works.' The foundational principle of phenomenological method is the indubitability or certainty of the fact, act and object of consciousness. In a deconstructive reading the text in question is *certainly* shown to harbour contradictory logics which are standardly ignored. Transcendental method, of course, is a way of reflecting upon and interpreting the *necessary apriori* conditions of the possibility of an act of knowledge.

The Western philosophy's preoccupation with 'the problem of the bridge', or the problem of dichotomy of the subject and object, probably necessitated its frequent emphasis on certainty and truth, invariably inherent in all its philosophical methods too. A close look at these philosophical methods centred around certainty and truth will reveal to us that the Western philosophy has wandered away from its original path forgetting its root, and thus deserving the critical analysis of Heidegger. According to Heidegger, the term 'philosophy' is derived from

¹¹² Emerich Coreth, *Metaphysics*, English Edition by Joseph Donceel with a Critique by Bernard Lonergan (New York: Seabury Press, 1973) 37.

the Greek root *philosophia*. It is usually translated as ‘love of wisdom.’ But, for Heidegger, the word *philosophi* has its origin in *philosophos* coined by Heraclitus. The word is originally an adjective like *philaguros* (loving silver) or like *philotomos* (loving honour). An *aner philosophos* is not a ‘philosophical man.’ In this way the Greek adjective *philosophos* is completely different from the adjective philosophical. An *aner philosophos* is *hos philei to sophon* (he who loves *sophon*). *Philein* (to love) in the Heraclitean sense means *homolegei*, to speak in the way in which the *Logos* speaks, to speak in correspondence with the *Logos*. This correspondence is in accordance with the *sophon*. Accordance is *harmonia*, that both are originally united to each other because they are at each other’s disposal. For Heraclitus, this *harmonia* is the distinctive feature of *philein* (loving)¹¹³. *Sophon* means *Hen Panta* “One (is) all.” ‘All’ means all things that exist, the whole, the totality of beings. *Hen* means the One, the unique, the all-uniting. All beings are united in Being.¹¹⁴ *Hen Panta* means “One (is) all.” If One is all, the one should be identical with and distinct from all and ‘all’ presuppose One. As ‘all’ presuppose One, One is to be in ‘all’; ‘One in all’ means ‘One is All’. All is multiplicity or diversity or many; One is in many. Therefore, philologically, philosophy is the love of the *sophon* (*Hen Panta*), love of the One in Many, love of Being in beings.

As we further reflect on the notion of Being in beings, One in many, we discover a **perichoresis**¹¹⁵ (mutual indwelling) of Being and beings, i.e., Being (One) in beings (many) and beings (beings) in Being (One). It can be explained in a twofold manner: First, Being (One) is that which is in some way or something. That which is in some way or something is in its own way. When each being is in its own way, all beings are in their own ways (many). When all beings in their own ways (many), there would be a plurality of beings (many) in Being (One). Second, Being is that which is in some way or something. That which is in some way or something is indeterminate. That which is indeterminate is that which is not determinate. That which is not determinate is that which is not. That which is not is non-being. Non-being is the other of Being. The other of Being is *distinct* from Being. The distinct otherness of Being is not apart from Being, though from Being. What is from Being (in as much as it is from Being) is *identical* with Being. Hence Being contains within itself both identity and distinction, the sameness and alterity, the one and the many, or there is a *perichoresis* of the one in the many and the many in the one without being dichotomous.

¹¹³. Martin Heidegger, *What is Philosophy?*, Tr.by William Kluback and Jean T.Wilde (Plymouth: Vision, 1989) 46-47.

¹¹⁴. Ibid., 47-49.

¹¹⁵ *Perichoresis* is usually used in Christian Theology to refer to the mutual indwelling of the three divine persons by which notwithstanding their distinction, they are present to each other on the grounds of common nature, their origin, their relations, and so mutually share in all the divine perfections.

UPANISHADIC METHOD

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“The Ultimate basis for the method will have to be the very reality which the method helps to disclose”

(Panikkar, 1998:22)

The Upanishads constitute a complex collection of revealed (*śruti*) literature preceded by Brāhmaṇa, Āraṇyaka and Samhitas. It will be too much to expect from so dispersed a literature to be made up of one consistent method and single unified style, much less a unified literary form. What we have today with us is the ‘text’, the exact ‘context’ of which is, for the most part, missing. This does not mean that no effort has been made to retrieve and reconstruct the context, but all these efforts are mostly from within, namely, through the analysis of the texts themselves which can only help us to postulate *a posteriori* a general context applicable to the entire collection and not to individual Upanishads (Witz, 1998:24-28).

But nevertheless, this general context is not insignificant to delineate at least a general methodology followed in the literature under consideration. Even this task is not easy due to the fact that method in any philosophical texts is generally hard to describe, as against empirical sciences where the method is clearly defined and can never be merged with the contents or results and hence remains always distinct. The case with regard to philosophy is different: the method as it is being clarified, gets merged with the thought itself. Descartes and Husserl in the Western Philosophy are very good examples for this: as they started with the formulation of a clear and distinct method, it got merged with their thought and now their methods and their philosophies (rationalism and phenomenism) can hardly be distinguished.

A method is a principle of action, a procedure to attain a goal or a definite result. We can even say that the goal determines the method. We observe that throughout the history of the development of human thought and sciences, whenever some one determined to attain an entirely new goal, or set to discover a totally new invention, he invariably employed a method suited to attain the goal, if need be to alter the existing method or even employ a new one. For example, it is sufficiently evident that the goal of Vedic people was predominantly ‘existential’, namely, a desire for earthly security and prosperity and to attain this they had to employ a method of propitiating and pleasing the superior beings through oblations and sacrifices.

We can *mutatis mutandis* ask the question what is the goal of the sages who authored Upanishads? If we can specify the goal, we might be able to pin point the method used to attain the goal. One thing what we notice in the Upanishads is that the goal is not ‘a priori’ formulated, but the ‘context’ in which the seekers of the Upanishadic period lived made them to strive after a particular goal. The context of Brāhmaṇic period is characterized by the exaggerated emphasis on the cult and rituals bereft of interior motives and dispositions of true worship. The reaction of the so called ‘heretics’ was to attain the same objectives set forth in the ritual practices, without actually performing them. This led some of them away from the maddening and haunting crowds to remote corners of nature, the ‘forest’. Hence forest constitutes to some extent the ‘context’ of Upanishadic literature which gives rise to the method quite commensurate with it. No more the method of sacrifices with all the ritualistic paraphernalia was relevant and meaningful. On the other hand reflective

meditation and a quest for the real ‘power’ that makes sacrifices effective, became the goal of relentless seeking.

The Vedic literature was rightly named as ‘*karma kāṇḍa*’ as it dealt with the cultic activity. The new quest or the goal resulted in a thorough shift in the method, the karma being replaced by *jñāna* giving rise another type of literature called *jñāna kāṇḍa*. The goal or quest for ‘something’ superior and higher than mere performance of liturgy ushers in a new period in Indian history of thought, though what was that ‘something’ and what is its nature etc. remained yet to be clarified. Though it is evident throughout every Upanishad that the ‘quest’ was always for a higher and higher reality, proposed as a supreme reality, the ideal remained for a considerable length of time unknown and unexpressed, which fact made the ‘quest’ itself more and more intense and vigorous, meanwhile the method used for the quest came to be almost identified with the goal itself.

If the method was a quest, a seeking, characterized by ‘knowledge’, then, in principle, the usual ingredients of an epistemological method should have found a place in the Upanishadic method. But the knowledge sought after by the Upanishadic sages was not clearly of empirical nature, founded on logical rules of reasoning, but it was evidently ‘transcendental’. This does not mean the rules of logic or ratiocination are deliberately violated; they are very much in vogue and implicit almost in all elucidations and arguments presented to show the Ultimate Being as the ground of all that is. Even the categories of classical Nyāya logic such as perception, inference etc. are present in their inchoate forms.

To give an example, at the great colloquium in the Janaka’s Court, the following question was raised by Bhujyu “Can you tell me where the Pārikshitas went?” Yājñavalkya replied: “They have, in truth, gone where the *Aśvamedha* sacrificers went.” (Brih. 3.3.1-2) This can be stated logically (Belvalkar, 1974:195.):

All *Aśvamedha* sacrificers go to a particular region.

The Pārikshitas were *Aśvamedha* sacrificers.

Therefore, The Pārikshitas also went to the same region.

But the predominant character of Upanishadic knowledge was transcendental; they did not seek after the meaning of tangible, temporal, mundane realities but the ultimate ground of the Reality itself. This being a religious pursuit, the Upanishadic knowledge should be basically characterized as religious and only the categories of religion can delineate the nature and method of Upanishadic knowledge. Religion deals with the ultimate concern of human beings, studies the nature of religious consciousness and its growth, explicates the possibilities of human-divine encounter and sets the experience of the Numinous as the goal of all religious striving. If the Upanishadic knowledge is fundamentally religious, it is then founded on experience of the Numinous, or simply on mystical experience. Any reading of Upanishads make this point clear; again and again we have the such expressions as “This whole world is Brahma. *Tranquil*, let one *worship* It. (chand. 3.14.1). “Brahma is the self-existent (*swayambhu*). Adoration to Brahma” (Brih. 2.6, 3.6, 4.6; cf. also Tait. 1.4.1)

What are the categories of this experiential or mystical knowledge? The categories should be such that they evoke the experience of the Numinous and in the context of the Upanishads they are cultic, cosmic, physiological and psychological. The discovery of correlation between and within these categories constituted Upanishadic knowledge as it gave them an insight into the Numinous.

As an example, let us look into Bṛhdāraṇyaka Upanishad 1.5.3-7 which is a text of cosmological speculation where we observe a peculiar combination of the psychological (*adhyātimika*), physical (*adibhautika*) and divine (*ādidaivika*) categories.

Verily, the self (Ātman) consist of speech, mind and breath.

There same are the three worlds. This (terrestrial) world is Speech. The middle (atmosphere) world is Mind. That (celestial) world is Breath.

These same are the three Vedas. The Rig-Veda is Speech. The Yajur- Veda is Mind. The Sama-Veda is Breath. The same are the gods, Manes, and men. The gods are Speech. The Manes are Mind. Men are Breath.

The interrelation between all these categories cannot be established by any philosophical analysis or through any other methods of ratiocination, but only through a method developed in the Brāhmaṇa literature called, *bandhūta* method or a method of correlation or correspondence, which lays bare the mystic and/or cultic correlations between the *ādidāivika*, *ādibhautika* and *ādhyātmika* (divine, cosmic and human) aspects of the reality. Since Vedic times the sages sought correlation between the macrocosm and microcosm; the *puruṣa sūkta* hymn (RV X. 90: 9-14) is an unique example of how divine, human and cosmic could be presented as correlated in a cosmotheandric act of creation sacrifice (Panikkar, 2001: 72; Cf. Mundaka Up.2.4ff). Same correlation is found in the Brihdāraṇyaka Upanishad which begins narrating the correlation between the stars and the bones, clouds and the flesh, rivers and the bowels, mountains and the livers/lungs etc. The metaphorical descriptions is meant to show that the same fruits of the sacrifice can be derived through meditation and worship of the cosmos in the manner of a horse sacrifice without actually performing it.

In the all pervasive sacrificial ritualism of the Brāhmaṇas the method became very sophisticated with each deity associated with its own *bandhūs* or correlates like a specified function, a particular season, a mantra, a meter, a number, a place, a class of priest etc. What is important for us is to investigate how the method came to be employed in the Upanishads in order to determine the correlations between the divine, human and the cosmic categories. The bond that connects the deity and the correlates is believed to be very subtle, secret and mystic (Brih. 4.5.11; Chand. 1.1.10; Mund. 6.29; Kena 4.7); only a well initiated person could discern and understand the connection (Chand. 3.11.5; Brih 6.3.12; Svet. 6.22). Whenever such a connection is discovered, the guru asserted '*iti Upanishad*' 'This is Upanishad' (Tait 2.9 and 3.6). There are numerous myths and some cosmogonic legends and even fancy etymologies (Brih. 1.4.1 and 3, 5.3, 13; Chand. 1.3.6f) in the Upanishads which try to explain the correlation between the thing and the *bandhus* and the *bandhus* themselves.

To provide some examples, first of all we have the *Om* mantra (Chand 1. 1-6), with Prajapati as its divine correlate who meditated and produced three Vedas which became its cultic correlates, when these three Vedas were meditated upon there came the three cosmic correlates: earth (*bhū*), atmosphere (*bhuvah*), and sky (*svah*); from the meditation on these produced the sacred symbol *Om*, made up of tri-monosyllables, a, u and m. This is called Loud chant (*Udgītā*), believed to be pregnant with mystic significance.

Then we have *Gāyatrī* mantra (Chand 3. 5) which has Savitrī for its divine correlate; its correlation to earth (cosmic) is determined from its etymology (*gai* and *trai* = to sing and to protect), and it is identified with the earth. The human body is said to be made up of earth and so *Gāyatrī* is identified with the earth. The centre of the human body being the heart, it is identified with the heart of human beings. The human heart supposed to enclose, ether or space (*ākāśa*), the *Gāyatrī* is identified with ether; but corresponding to the space 'within' there should be space 'without' and hence *Gāyatrī* is identified with the cosmic reality. So *Gāyatrī*, can be characterised as a cosmotheandric hymn.

The conception of Ātman as five- fold *Uktha* is another good example to elucidate the method of correlations or correspondence. The earth, wind, ether, waters and the luminaries constitute the five-fold *Ukthas* ‘without’. Their correlates ‘within’ are body, breath, apertures, blood–mucus-seed, and warmth. These both become the source of all other things in the world.

Prāṇa is an important category in all earliest Upanishads; it is considered as most essential among the functions of the body, it is sometimes identified with Indra as its divine, with sun as its cosmic and year or sāma as its cultic correlates. *Prāṇa* is also compared with *ākāśa* as the support of all beings down to the ants, both representing physiological and physical categories respectively.

As a last example let us take the well known teaching of the Sage Śāṇḍilya. (Chand. 3. 14) where we find the clear identifications of macrocosm and microcosm. The soul as microcosm is smaller than a grain of rice, or a barley corn or a mustard seed; as macrocosm it is greater than the earth, greater than atmosphere and greater than the sky.

The Upanishads made no attempts to investigate the scientific causes underneath the surface of things and mundane events but their whole energies were directed to discover the mystic correspondence that knit together the multifarious physical phenomena of the nature and the variegated psychological functions in the individual interrelated to the traditional understanding through cultic practices. For example in Brih. Up 1.2 , which is a cosmological narration with no logical connections between the different entities that have been created, it is said, that with the intention of producing a permanent entity, death practiced asceticism (*tapas*) and brought death upon itself, and the dead body got transformed into the sacrificial horse, which was, considered to be the source of immortality. What underlies within this narration is the desire or quest for immortality and the categories used to express this quest are mythical and religious.

There are, however, reasonable explanations to provide foundations to the *bandhūta* method or divine-human-cosmic correlations which are mystic in nature. Aitereya Upanishads (3.12) narrates how the divine entered into the human body by the opening in the skull called ‘the cleft’ (*vidṛti*). The Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad asserts that “he entered up to the very finger nail-tips (1.4.7.) The same Upanishad also attributes the warmth in the living body to the presence of the divine in it (5.9); again the Upanishad asserts that the Brahman became all that there is (1.4.10) which means that the divine is present in all material and inorganic creation:

Having performed austerity he created this whole world, whatever there is. Having created it, into it, indeed, he entered. Having entered it, he became both the actual (*sat*) and the yon (*tya*), both defined and the undefined, both based and the non-based, both the conscious and the unconscious, both the real and the false.

(Taittirīya Up. 2.6)

Scholars have attempted to arrange the Upanishads chronologically analyzing their contents and the development of thought (Deussen, 2000: 23-26; Blevalkar, 1974: 30-37; 333-34). We need to pay attention to the progressive growth in the religious consciousness of the sages in the Upanishadic religion which is manifested in the texts themselves. The earliest Upanishadic texts make abundant use of cultic and liturgical categories to express their religious experience and the correlation between the *bandhūs* is explained mostly through mythical categories. The second stage of the growth of religious experience is expressed through more symbolic and theologico- philosophical categories and the correlation can be determined to some extent through logical categories, in the sense that some rationality can

be noticed in the explanation of the reality. The third stage is characterized by contemplation and intuitive vision of the reality as One and the correlation is prominently mystical (Panikkar, 1998:54).

The growth and deepening of religious experience are eminently manifested in the progressive evolution of the conception of the Ultimate Reality came to be named as Brahman in the Upanishads. The method of correlation being applicable in every stage of the growth of the conception: from the Ṛgvedic sense of 'Brahman = prayer' to the Upanishadic sense of 'Brahman= Absolute'..

The meaning of the word 'Bráhmaṇ' in the Vedas was 'sacred utterance', 'prayer' 'mantra' with its correlate Brahman (the member of the priestly class), who utters the prayer. The prayers being stored up in the samhitas or the collections of Vedas, the Bráhmaṇ which meant prayer, came to be identified with the collections of prayers, the *Triveda: Ṛk, Sāma and Yajur*. The Vedas came to be believed as infinite and fountain head of all mystic power of the sacrifices. The prayers being used for the sacrifices, which if performed exactly, should result in the desired effects. The question was raised what could be the power underneath the sacrifices that yielded desired effects. Brahman being the correlate of the sacrifices, the power which made the sacrifices effective too came to be attributed to Brahman. When the priest wanted to impart highest power to any mantra, he would designate it as Brahman, so we have such terms as '*Ukhtam Brahma*' (Kausi. Up. 2.6.) '*Om iti Brahma*' (Tait. Up. 1.8.1.) and '*Brahma yajña*' (S. B. 3.1.4.15). We can observe the identifications of the correlates of Brahman with itself at every stage.

The second land mark in the growth of the conception of Brahman is noticeable when the distinction was made between '*apara*' (lower) Brahman (also called as *Śabda* or *Nāma Brahma*) and the '*para*' (higher) Brahman in the passages like Mundaka. 1.1.4-5. and Chand. 7.1.2. ff. The distinction is quite logical, the lower Brahman being at the level of Vedas and the higher Brahman is the Supreme Being, the Ultimate Cause of all that is which is a philosophical concept actually found in the cosmological texts (Brih. 1.4.11; 2.5, 5.3; Chand. 3.19; 3.18). But the narrations are replete with symbolisms which correlate Brahman with the proposed highest category. Thus we have symbols like Sun (Chand. 3.19. 1-4), Space (Chand. 1.9.1.; 3.12. 7-9; Brih. 2. 1.5; 3.7.12). He is also considered as the source of energy through which the fire burns, wind blows, and the world is moving on (Kena 4.)

In the third stage we see the conception of Brahman fully developed within the context of its correlates. Several texts (Brih. 2.1.1-20; 3.9.10-11; 4.1-2; Chand. 5.11) discuss different conceptions of Brahman and reject the incomplete opinions. These texts mark a transcendence over the earlier ones which projected a duality between the creator and the creature, divine and the human, being and non-being. Now he is considered as one all pervading reality, describing him as "the real, (*satya*) the knowledge (*jñāna*) and as the infinite (*ananta*)" (Tait. 2.1). The Brahman is the ultimate answer to human religious quest and the experience of such a numinous can be expressed only in a apophatic language, the language of *neti neti* (Brih. 4.2.4; 4.4.22; 4.5.15)

A question need to be asked, how to explain through our methodology the final stage of Upanishadic experience characterized as an identity between Brahman and Ātman. We need to observe here that there occurred in the later texts a slight shift in the methodology of quest marked by less and less interest in the world 'outside' and its process of creation and sustenance. The whole attention was geared towards the inner self and its realization. We can say this as a method of 'self realization' as there is the predominance of *adyātma* and a bracketing of *ādidāivika* and *ādibhautika*. The basic prerequisite for the quest was *tapas*,

which was spontaneously embraced by the seeker involving total renunciation of the temporal goods and prosperity, and courageous acceptance of strenuous yogic discipline (*sādhana*). This we would like to highlight in order to insist upon the religious nature of the quest, as ethical excellence is a prerequisite for any authentic mystical experience.

In the earlier texts we could see how atman came to be identified with *prāṇa*, or with organic functions like speech, etc. (Kena 1.4-8), then came the understanding that Atman should transcend all these, which gave rise to the question of the knowledge of such an Ātman, how can he be known? The quest was to seek after the unknown, and in the history of humanity we know how great scientists have worked to discover something unknown. They had to make hypotheses and repeat the procedures again and again, make necessary changes in the procedure until one day the desired discovery was made. Even in the Upanishads, the seekers were relentless in their striving after that experience of the numinous or *Ātma vidyā* and some of the narrations, presented sometimes in the form of myths, bring to light the hard path trodden by the seekers.

The entire Katha Upanishad is about the story of Naciketa and his enlightenment (*Ātmavidyā*) as a result the Upanishad is known for its mystic bent of thought. The story narrates how Naciketa reached the world of the God Yama (Death), who taught him the knowledge of Ātman. Yama tells him: “Not by reasoning (*tarka*) is this thought to be attained. Proclaimed by another it is for easy understanding” (2.9). *Ātmavidyā* being a process of self realization, it cannot be had without a Guru who has made this experience for himself. Only such a person can evoke the same experience in the student. Then step by step he leads him to higher and higher (3. 10-11) knowledge and deeper and deeper experience of the Atman. He is said to be “The Inner Soul (*antarātmā*) of all things, the One Controller. (5.12) The Person of the measure of the thumb is the inner soul. Even seated in the heart of creatures...” Instruction granted to Naciketa provides a paradigm for the attainment of religious experience followed throughout the centuries by the yogis and the sages in India.

We have another myth in Chhāndogya Upanishad (8. 7-12). We notice here that the quest and its attainment is proportional to the seeker’s striving for it. Experience being unique and individual in character, there cannot be uniformity in every attempt. Spiritual attainment is conditioned by one’s perseverance, commitment, faith and intensity of desire, as we know very well that the supernatural is built upon nature (St. Thomas).

Indra and Virochana are the seekers in the myth, the former represented the gods and the latter the demons. Indra is a symbolic figure of all true seekers, persevering, well motivated and committed. Virochana represents people who wish fast results, belong to the world of ‘fast-food’, ready-made experience of ‘total peace’ by attending a single yoga or TM course. Both go to Prajāpati, and serve him for 32 years. After that they were given the first formula of *Ātmavidyā*, namely, that Ātman is found in sense experience furnished to us in the waking state. Both leave but only Indra returns reflecting that the sense experiences “perish immediately upon the perishing of this body” and there is nothing enjoyable in it. (9.1). Virochana on the other hand, representing all the materialists who think that there is nothing above sense experience and matter, gets convinced that he has realized the ultimate goal of life. Indra, after another 32 years, was given the secret of dreaming state and then after another 32 years the knowledge of dreamless sleep and finally after another five years the experience of turiya state. The myth teaches that the *Ātmavidyā* is not every one’s cup of tea; it also brings to light its commensurability with the seekers steadfastness.

The well known story of Maitreyi and Yājñavalkya found in Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upanishad (2.4 and 4.5) is still another example of *Ātmavidyā*. As long as we entertain subject-object duality, we

exist under empirical conditions (2.4.14). The true mystic knowledge is objectless and Yājñavalkya through his *neti neti* doctrine confirms that numinous experience is ineffable: “The Soul (Ātman) is not this, it is not that (neti, neti). It is unseizable, for it cannot be seized; it is indestructible, for it cannot be destroyed; unattached, for it does not attach itself; it unbound, does not tremble, is not injured.” (4.5.15.)

Returning to *bandhuta* method, we saw that it always sought correspondence between the world outside and the world inside. Now that seeker has experienced the unique source of energy on which the whole world and all in it has been grounded in the Brahman Experience and the immediate step was to identify this source of energy with the vital energy that humans experience as working within, the Ātman, the inner most essence of human individual. The energy that we experience within us is identical in essence with the energy that sets the world around us moving. The quality of spiritual energy ‘within’ is same as the source of energy ‘without’, at the heart of the Universe (Chand. 3.14). Hence we have the mystic formula of Brahman = Ātman (Brih. 2.6.19, Chand. 8.10.1, 8.11.1, 6.14.1) or *Tattvam asi*. (Brih. 1.4. 10 and Chand 6. 9-16)

As a conclusion, we would like to state that this paper is far from complete as it does not do adequate justice to the complex subject matter. It is only a first draft, to be improved with more insights through further study and after obtaining the response of the participants of the ACPI.

Secondly, the orientation taken in this paper is towards a ‘text’ centred hermeneutics, a methodology from ‘within’, derived through the textual contents themselves. There could be other methods. First of all there is the traditional method of Vedanta (Sri Swami, 1997: 9-27) which takes into account the commentaries on Upanishads by Sankaracarya and others. One can also delineate a method through literary analysis of the texts, classifying them as myths, metaphors, allegories, dialectics etc. (Ranade, 1986:23-30) One can also employ historical critical method and analyse the texts from that perspective and present a thorough exegesis. What is more important may be to propose a Upanishadic hermeneutics, which will use all hermeneutical tools available at present, but this could be a life-long research, if done, can be a great addition to existing religious literature of our times.

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METHODOLOGY FOR AN INDIAN CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHIZING

Augustine Thottakara, cmi

1. Introduction

We are here in search of an appropriate and relevant methodology for Indian Christian Philosophizing. In the noble task of philosophizing as Indian Christians we need to harmoniously blend the two great and exalted patrimonies we possess, the Indian and the Christian, and evolve a meaningful and pertinent methodology. Keeping these two magnificent traditions in mind, I am trying to present here some thoughts that crossed my mind in this regard. An article that I published before was helpful to me to do this work.¹¹⁶

2. Suffering is the Starting Point of Philosophy in India

An oft repeated refrain of philosophers in India is that the starting point of all Indian thinking and philosophy is the reflection on the inner Self. Explanation of the external phenomenal world is sought in this Self, which is seen as the ground of all existences. Consequently, it is argued that Indian philosophy is more experiential than experimental, more subjective than objective, more syncretical than analytical, more a search than a research, more immanent than transcendent and more intuitive than logical. This might be true. Equally true is the statement that philosophizing in India starts with the fact of suffering in the embodied existence of humans. The starting point of Buddhist philosophy and spirituality is the fact of suffering. The first of the four noble truths, which form the basic tenets of Buddhism, is that everything is misery or suffering (*sarvam duhkham*). The basic postulate and fundamental belief of all the systems of Indian philosophy is that this life is bondage, and that bondage causes sufferings. Samkhya philosophy, which is the oldest of all the six Vedic systems of philosophy, says that human life is constantly tormented by three types of suffering: (i) Suffering caused by one's own impaired mental status, wrong perceptions and vitiated attitudes. We ourselves are source of suffering for us (*adhyatmika-kleśa*). (ii) Suffering caused by the elemental world, by others and by the powers of nature. Other humans, other beings and forces of nature can cause suffering for us (*adhibhautika-kleśa*). (iii) Suffering caused by supra-natural beings, heavenly planets, stars, etc. Supra mundane forces and beings can be sources of our sufferings (*adhidaivika-kleśa*). The very first verse of the basic text of Samkhya philosophy entitled *Samkhya-kārika*, written by Isvarakṛṣṇa, emphatically states the philosophizing starts from the fact of these three types of suffering. "From the sorrows caused by the three kinds of miseries proceeds a desire for the inquiry into the means of destroying these sufferings..." (*Samkhya-kārika* 1).

The Indian Christian philosopher should, I presume, do the same. Christian philosophizing should emerge from the actual human conditions, especially from the awareness and experience of the unwholesome predicaments of human existence. Philosophy as mere abstract and abstruse, theoretical and academic, meta-worldly and supra-normal speculation has little relevance, significance and use today. Philosophy should get out of the grips of some illuminati who find joy in arid intellectual acrobatics around some abstract concepts, which have no bearing to life and its multifarious predicaments. Every aspect of human life, especially the grief-stricken dimension of human existence, should become objects of philosophical deliberations. The awareness of miseries, pains, wants and helplessness of the

¹¹⁶ Augustine Thottakara, "Philosophy as Darśana", in Augustine Thottakara (Ed.), *Philosophical Education in Indian Seminaries*, Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 2003, pp.29-42.

poor and marginalized, the oppression, persecution and injustice inflicted upon the defenseless people by the oppressive structures of the society, etc., should become the springboard for further philosophical activity.

Buddhism realized that a genuine seeker of *nirvāṇa* has to be a benefactor of humanity, especially the suffering humanity. Mahayana Buddhism practised and propagated the great principles of *maitri* (loving friendship) and *karuṇā* (mercy). These two virtues and values are the noblest and very sublime dimensions of *ahimsā*, non-violence. The *bodhisattva* ideal of Mahayana Buddhism is a magnificent and very eminent form of selfless altruism. A liberated person willingly and readily postpones the bliss eternal liberation for the sake of others. He/she continues in bodily existence to work for the well-being and liberation of others. For Jainism *ahimsā* is the very basic principle of religiosity and the criterion and norm of spiritual life. For Jains non-violence is not only a moral virtue or an ethical principle, but also is the essential part of Jain faith and the surest meant for total liberation. *Ahimsā* is also expressed in positive terms in Jainism. Thus concepts like mercy (*dayā*), benevolent friendship (*maitri*), happiness in the company of virtuous (*pramoda*), indifference in the company of wicked (*mathyastha*), etc. express that *ahimsā* is not only simply refraining from inflicting injury to other lives, but also positively care for them.

3. Need of the Triple Dialogue

The Federation of the Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) always insists that the Churches in Asia and Asian theologies should engage in a triple dialogue, namely, dialogue with the poverty of Asia, with its cultural diversities and religious pluralism. In its very first assembly FABC stated:

(The Church has to be) a Church incarnate in a people, a Church indigenous and inculturated. And this means concretely a Church in continuous, humble and loving dialogue with the living traditions, the cultures, the religions - in brief, with all the life-realities of the people in whose midst it has sunk its roots deeply and whose history and life it gladly makes its own. It seeks to share in whatever truly belongs to that people: its meanings and its values, its inspirations, its thought and its language, its songs and its artistry - ; Even its frailties and failings it assumes, so that they too may be healed. For so did God's son assume the totality of our fallen human condition (save only for sin) so that He might make it truly His own, and redeem it in His paschal mystery.¹¹⁷

Indian Christian philosophy should too definitely engage in this triple dialogue with the triple Asian realities. It is high time that the Indian Christian philosopher turns his/her serious attention to Asia, to Asian cultures, religions and philosophies. China has more than one billion inhabitants. Around one sixth of the present-day humanity lives there. Any cultured human should have some basic knowledge about the philosophical, cultural and religious heritage of this mammoth populace. Asian realities should provide the tools and raw materials for an Indian Christian philosopher to do philosophy. There is an urgent need of rewriting the history of philosophy, giving due importance to Asian philosophies.

As Indians we have a greater responsibility and obligation to do philosophy in the religious, cultural and philosophical context of India. There is no denying of the fact that India possesses a very ancient and immensely rich philosophical tradition. It would be a shame if an Indian Christian philosopher if he/she is not able to imbibe inspiration and impetus from this great reservoir of wisdom. This is all the more important today, when the sinister and aggressive Hindutva forces are accusing Indian Christians that they have no regard and love

¹¹⁷ *Texts, Documents and other Papers from the Federation of the Asian Bishops' Conferences (FABC) in Connection with the Third General Synod of Bishops, Rome. 1974, Digna C. Dacanay (ed.), Manila: Cardinal Bea Institute, 1976, book 2, p.332.*

for Indian philosophy, culture and spirituality; that they are alienated from the main stream national life because of their allegiance to a Semitic religion and foreign connections. An Indian Christian philosopher should have genuine appreciation for the cultural heritage of this country, its philosophies, religions, art forms and symbols. Themes of systematic philosophy like Metaphysics, Philosophy of God, Philosophy of human being, etc. should also be analysed, deliberated and taught in the light of the Indian counter-parts of these disciplines.

4. Science and Philosophy

Philosophizing is being done today in a very different social-cultural milieu and environment and with a different mental attitude and different objectives than the philosophizing done in the periods of Aristotle and Aquinas. All those great philosophers of the distant past lived in an ambience and social climate where speculative and abstract thinking, intellectual exercises around abstruse concepts had greater scope, relevance and acceptance. We live in an age in which primarily science and technology determine and dictate the nature, make-up and expressions of human life. Science and its discoveries have invaded almost all realms of human life. Scientific discoveries and technological innovations have definitely improved the quality of life of the humans immensely, provided them with a new vision and new power in life. The method and methodology of scientific inquiry into the mysteries of nature exert greater appeal to the searching mind. But at the same time often they pose challenges to traditional values and concepts of moral principles. Philosophy and science can and should mutually enrich, help, empower and also rectify.

Needless to say that India is one of the scientifically most advanced countries of the world, and the results of scientific discoveries are invading slowly but steadily even the remotest villages of India. Philosophizing in India should definitely take science and technology, their inventions and their methodology seriously. We will be enlightened more on this issue by the paper on science.

5. Philosophy as *Darśana*

In the West philosopher may be considered as an outside spectator who intellectually analyses the realities using the tools of logic, his power of reason and a defined cogitational process. In India philosopher is an involved experiencer who, as has already been mentioned earlier, tries to find meaning to events and realities from the inner experience. This leads the philosopher to the vision of reality in its totality. Philosophy is *darśana*, vision of reality. For this, of course, the seeker needs also the correct spiritual disposition and purity of mind. Philosophy needs spirituality. Direct, transcendental vision or insight is the content as well as the goal of philosophy. A philosopher in this respect, is not only a lover of wisdom, but also a lover vision of the true ultimate Reality; he/she is also a spiritual aspirant, a *brahma-jijñāsu*, one who intensely desires to know Brahman, God. Philosophy is not mere intellectual exercises geared up to enter into the intricacies of existence and phenomenal world by the power of reason, but it is a form of intellectual discipline supported and sustained by life of spirituality. In fact, the six systems of philosophy, which are called six visions, *sat-darsanas*, are outcomes of such direct, experiential vision and insight of the Reality of sages and saints of the past.

Philosophy is not only a view of life, but also a way of life. Philosophy is a speculative branch of knowledge; but it has to be also praxis-oriented. Philosophy in India is not only arid cogitation, but also creative seeing (*darsana*). Philosophizing is an intellectual activity, but, being *darsana*, it is also a spiritual act. Philosophy should integrate intellect, mind, heart and the other-oriented activity. Philosopher is a researcher of truth; but he should also become a seeker and lover of truth and an aspirant of spiritual eminence.

The great philosophers of ancient India were undoubtedly great sages, saints and mystics. The great Vedantins of history like Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhva were primarily saints who were philosophers. The eminent philosophers of contemporary India too, like Aurobindo, Vivekananda, and Gandhi, were men of deep spirituality. Philosophical deliberations ensued from their spiritual worldview.

The word *darśana* is used for the first time, it seems to me, in the sense of philosophy in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Up* IV.5.6, where Yajnavalkya admonishes his wife Maitreyi, “The supreme Self, O Maitreyi, is to be seen through hearing, reflection and through contemplation” (*śravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsna*). Therefore, real philosophizing and consequent vision of the Reality take place through these three steps. First, gather correct information from outside through the proper means for right knowledge like listening, reading, etc. (*śravaṇa*); second, critically and logically analyse these data through reflection and speculation (*manana*); and third, accept and assimilate the correct doctrinal conclusion in one’s own life through contemplation (*nididhyāsna*). The three eminent means proposed by the Upanishad here, and propagated by Sankara later, definitely constitute a model for Indian Christian philosophizing. Philosophical conclusions should become objects of prayer and they should have bearing to actually lived life.

Our philosophizing now stops short with the first two steps, namely, *śravaṇa* and *manana*. Philosophizing in India needs the third step, namely, *nididhyāsana*, meditation and contemplation. You may object that I am now walking in the realm of spirituality and am not talking about philosophy. Precisely that is the point. Time and again we proclaim that philosophizing should become more context-sensitive and life-oriented. Philosophical speculation, that is, the act of philosophizing, should happen in relation to the actually lived life in the specific socio-religious, economic-cultural, political-national, and environmental-cosmic contexts in which the philosopher lives, thinks, writes, learns and teaches. We need to interiorize philosophical issues through meditation. For example, if you are teaching philosophy of human being, there is no harm in organizing meditation/prayer sessions on the existence, nature and activities of human, on human conditions.

6. Two Types of Knowledge

What is objective or goal of philosophizing? Is philosophy an end in itself? Formerly we used to say that philosophy is the handmaid of theology, *ancilla theologiae*. Now nobody may dare to say that. Theology, philosophy, etc. are not absolute realities. They are creations of human mind, and we should realize the God is greater than theologies and philosophies. For Indians philosophical, scriptural and theological knowledge and wisdom form only a lower type of knowledge. The *Muṇḍaka Up*. I.1.3 declares:

There are two kinds of knowledge to be acquired, as indeed the knowers of Brahman of old have said, namely, the lower knowledge and higher knowledge.

Of these the lower knowledge consists of the wisdom of *R̥gveda*, *Yajurveda*, *Sāmaveda*, *Atharvaveda*, science of phonetics, laws of rituals, grammar, etymology, poetical metrics and astronomy. And the higher knowledge is that by which the Imperishable is realized.

According to the philosophical tradition of India, the basic means for right knowledge are three, namely, perception (*pratyakṣa*), inference (*anumāna*) and verbal testimony (*śabda*).¹¹⁸ The Upaniṣad here very emphatically declares that all the knowledge and information we acquire through all these right means for right knowledge actually belongs to the lower form of knowledge (*aparā vidyā*). Even the divine and sacred

¹¹⁸ It is to be noted here that the number of means for knowledge (*pramāṇa*) is different in different systems of Indian philosophy. The materialists would say that there is only one means for knowledge, that is, sense perception; but the later Advaita School and Kumarila School of Mimamsa would say that there are six means for acquiring knowledge.

knowledge enshrined in the revealed holy texts about supra-mundane and supernatural realities, even the wisdom we gather from the mouth of the revered teacher – all these knowledge data belong to the lower level of knowledge.

What is then the higher knowledge or the supreme wisdom (*parā vidyā*)? The Upanisad defines it as ‘the knowledge by which the Imperishable is realized’. This is an inner experience and is in the form of intuitive, immediate, direct mystical knowledge of the Divine. This is the goal of all his spiritual endeavours (*sādhana*s).

It is evident that the lower knowledge (*aparā vidyā*) is the remote means and the supreme knowledge (*parā vidyā*) is the immediate and definite means to reach the goal. Through the lower types of knowledge we gain correct spiritual perspective and select right options for life, which would in turn purify our mind and make us receptive of the higher form of experiential mystical knowledge.

In fact, India does not know pure philosophy as such, as it is understood in the West. Even the so-called philosophical systems are in the final analysis, spiritual in nature. For example the system of Nyaya deals with logic. It treats primarily the four means for right knowledge. But ultimately it would ask the question: ‘What is the use of this knowledge? Would this knowledge help me to transcend the inexorable chain of births, deaths and rebirths?’ Then the discussion slips into the deliberations about the ways and means for attaining eternal Liberation and freedom. Vaisheshika which is philosophy of nature and world, starts its foundational text, the *Vaisheshika-sutra*, with the definition of dharma, and it defines dharma as that by which prosperity in life (*abhyudaya*) and eternal liberation (*nihsreyas*) are attained (*Vaisheshika-sutra* I.1.1).

When I say that there is a spiritual dimension and objective for philosophizing in India, you would again accuse me that I am talking like a spiritual master of seminarians and not like a philosopher. But that is philosophizing in India. And the Indian Christian needs to take serious note of it. We need to redefine philosophy, I would say very urgently. Most of us are trained in western universities. The training programme of Indian universities and seminaries is totally and thoroughly western, with some courses on Indian philosophy as corollaries. Western philosophy is too much anthropo-centric; it is too speculative and too intellectually oriented, and too much conceptual and theoretical. By long tradition and training, by uncritical acceptance of western concepts, we are programmed in such a way that by the word ‘philosophy’ we can only think of and understand the western paradigm. We need to make a shift in this paradigm and understand philosophizing in the context of India. Philosophy is *darśana*, and philosophy is *aparā vidyā*, which should eventually lead us to *parā vidyā* and *para-darśana*.

Sri Mata Amritanandamayi Devi tries to integrate science and spirituality. A recent article on her in the journal *India Today* states “More and more distinguished scientists, engineers, doctors, IT professionals, management leaders, academicians and educationalists, not only from India but from all over the world, have started getting associated with Amma’s mission. Many of them have even forsaken their successful professional life and joined Amma’s institutions.”¹¹⁹ She says “The ultimate truth or knowledge is one which has no second. How can scientific and spiritual knowledge be different? Both are two facets of the same truth”. “Spiritual knowledge air-conditions the mind whereas the scientific knowledge air-conditions the body; both are required by man”.¹²⁰

7. Commitment to Nation-building

¹¹⁹Vijay P. Bhatkar, “Amma. Embodiment of Love and Selfless Service”, *India Today*, XXVIII.40 (2003 September), pp.94 ff.

¹²⁰ Ibid., pp.94-95.

We need to be proud of our great country, a country that has always stood for noble values like true secularism, religious tolerance and fellowship, free exchange of ideas, and since independence for democratic values. It has produced great sages, saints, philosophers, poets and lawgivers of world rank. However, castes and caste related discriminations were always a curse of the societal life in India. Recently many of these treasured values of secularism, religious tolerance and democracy are being hideously violated and insulted by vested interests. Christian philosophers of this country need to find out the root causes of these aberrations and propose a way out of this malaise.

A nation exists where the people, though diverse, have a shared sense of identity, consider themselves as being part of a whole, to which they feel the need to belong. A nation includes all peoples, irrespective of differences of religion, caste, class, race ethnicity or language, who share a common territory and history.¹²¹

The Christian vision of nation building is rooted in the very theology of creation, where there is no confusion and division regarding the Christian commitment to build up and strengthen the nation. The scope of this commitment is further etched out in Jesus' teaching in the gospel in which the reign of God is proclaimed and promoted as the creation of a society where there are no marginalized since every person finds space to realize himself/herself. In the context of India the Christian vision of a just society is essential for the integrity and the harmony of the nation.¹²²

8. Ecclesial Dimension of Philosophy

We are speaking here about the philosophizing of an Indian Christian. While we emphasize the 'Indianness' in philosophical activities, we should not lose sight of our 'Christianity'. Our call and commitment to Christ are irrevocable. As Christian philosophers we should also be aware of the ecclesial needs of today's Indian Churches, like inculturation, inter-religious dialogue and inter-cultural communication. We need to be the servants and disciples of the Kingdom, and proponents of Kingdom values. We need to creatively interpret the official documents of the Church like *Optatam Totius* (Vat. II), *Sapientia Christiana*, *Fides et Ratio*, *Charter of Priestly Formation for India* (CBCI document), and *General Norms Following the Apostolic Visitation of Ecclesiastical Faculties, Seminaries and Houses of Priestly Formation* in the context of India.

9. Commitment to Community and Collaboration

I presume the fraternity and fellowship among the Indian Christian philosophers should be consciously and purposefully animated and strengthened. We need to mutually support, influence and enrich, and perhaps also rectify, in our philosophical endeavours. Most of us are teachers of philosophy. We need to develop and promote a culture of scholarly and brotherly collaboration and cooperation. One of the primary objectives of the Association of Christian Philosophers of India (ACPI), I presume, is precisely this promotion of collegiality and comradeship, to motivate and enhance a communitarian *sādhana* for doing philosophy.

Of course, we have eminent philosophers among us. However, I often wonder why this eminence has not received any international recognition and acceptance, why we have not so far produced philosophers of international reputation. Our students write doctoral dissertations on Lonergan, Levinas and other contemporary western philosophers. Why no Indian Christian philosopher finds place among these scholars? One thing is certain, we are all caught up in the sticky web of unphilosophical concerns and responsibilities. Though pressed hard on all sides by so many extra-academic duties and responsibilities, some tenacious and resolute professors among are able to produce eminent treatises of philosophy.

¹²¹ Anthoniraj Thumma and Alphonse D. Sahayam (eds.), *Christian Commitment to Nation Building*, Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 2003, p.241.

¹²² Ibid., p.242.

But many have to suffocate their talents of philosophizing in the quagmire of administrative assignments. How many of us find time for serious discussion on philosophical issues and intellectual matters with our colleagues? Our staff meetings revolve around primarily money matters, administrative issues and construction works! Half-hearted part-time philosophizing will not produce eminence. Fraternity of philosophers can to certain extent encourage, invigorate and fortify the philosophizing calibre of the fellow travellers. I think we need to build up local groups of interested philosophers to discuss relevant issues of philosophy.

10. Methodology of Teaching Philosophy

Philosophical education in our seminaries today is not integrated to the actually lived life of the seminarians. Courses of philosophy as they are taught today do not influence and impact on the activities and life situations of the seminarians. Students do not imbibe inspiration and insights from the classes of philosophy and do not assimilate what they learn. I have read numerous articles written by seminarians, and have heard numerous talks by them on various occasions and on various themes. Seldom do they refer to philosophical schools, concepts, or to philosophers in these articulations. These students have spent two or three years of their life to study this discipline. Philosophical ideas and conclusions, reference to relevant philosophers should come to their mind naturally on such occasions of expressing their views on themes related to human life. It never happens, because they have not incorporated these things into their life and thought, made them part of their think-tank.

I firmly believe that philosophical learning should become part of the spiritual formation of the students. These things should become objects of meditation. Many of us may regard Mata Amritanandamayi as a naïve village woman with no formal education, with no philosophical background at all, (and with the queer behaviour of hugging everybody who comes on her way). Of course, we concede that she is endowed with some particular power of communication. But she, as has already been stated earlier, succeeds at least to some extent to integrate science with spirituality. This should happen also in our learning and teaching of philosophy.

The old Indian method of imparting wisdom to worthy disciples was the *gurukula* system. We cannot, of course, adapt this arrangement in its entirety, but positive and relevant elements of this methodology may help us to communicate philosophical and theological education to our students more effectively.

11. Limitations

I know very well that most of things I proposed are not easily practicable. As regards the methodology and content of philosophical education in seminaries, we have sacrosanct traditions, and also clear directives from above. *Sapientia Christiana*, for example, in its Part II, Section III mentions the different subjects that are to be treated in the first cycle of philosophical studies, namely, philosophy of knowledge, natural philosophy, philosophy of man, philosophy of being (including natural theology) and moral philosophy; history of philosophy, especially of modern philosophy, with a careful study of the systems which are exercising a major influence; the auxiliary disciplines, namely, selected natural and human sciences. Though there is still room for new methods of philosophizing, we rarely dare to do that.

12. Conclusion

DECONSTRUCTION – NOT A UNIFIED METHODOLOGY

(Presented at the ACPI Annual Seminar 23-26 October 2003, Bangalore)

Dr. Stanislaus Swamikannu SDB

1. Introduction

The purpose of this study is to present Derrida's discourse on deconstruction. He is extremely cautious when he is asked to respond to the question, 'what is deconstruction?' This is partly due to the fact that for Derrida deconstruction is not a unified method. In his opinion deconstruction is neither an analysis nor a critique: it is not an analysis for the simple reason

that deconstruction does not regress toward a *simple element* or toward an *indissoluble origin* for they are themselves subject to deconstruction; it is neither a critique (neither in a general sense or in the Kantian sense) for *krinein* or *krisis* (decision, choice, judgment, discernment) itself is an object of deconstruction. It is not a method among other competing methodologies, and it cannot be transformed into one. It cannot be used in the activity of interpretation. It cannot be applied to various sciences in research. However, Derrida acknowledges the methodological connotation attached to deconstruction: "I don't consider deconstruction as a method, a general method, that should be applied to many fields. Deconstruction is not a method. *It has some methodological effects. There are some general rules that in certain limited situations you can draw out of deconstruction and apply.*"^{xi[1]}

It is not even an *act* or an *operation*. Not because it is passive or that it has no subject, but because it is an event that does not await the deliberation, consciousness, or organization of a subject, or even of modernity. *It deconstructs it-self. It can be deconstructed.* [ça se déconstruit.] The 'it' [ça] is not here an impersonal thing that is opposed to some egological subjectivity. *It is in deconstruction* (the *L ittré* says, 'to deconstruct it-self [*se déconstruire*]... to lose its construction). And the 'se' of '*se déconstruire*,' which is not the reflexivity of an ego or of a consciousness, bears the whole enigma.

However, he does respond to questions on deconstruction. We group his responses under the following themes: 1. Conceptual filiation; 2. Deconstruction or deconstructions? 3. Deconstruction is not negative; 4. Deconstruction is affirmative; 5. Deconstruction is not a positive concept; 6. Deconstruction as incessant recontextualization; 7. Deconstruction and undecidability; 8. Deconstruction and metaphysics; 9. Deconstruction and presence; 10. Deconstruction and totalization and 11. Deconstruction and identity. When we combine both what he says negatively and positively, we do get a certain picture of deconstruction.

1.1 Conceptual filiation

Derrida has repeatedly admitted, that in using the word *déconstruction*, he wanted to translate and adapt for his own ends the Heideggerian word *Destruktion* or *Abbau*. Each of these words signified for Derrida an operation bearing on the structure or traditional architecture of the fundamental concepts of ontology or of Western metaphysics.

In Heidegger the term *Destruktion* appears already in *Being and Time* in connection with his critique of the history of Western metaphysics. The term did not mean a simple destruction. As Charles R. Bambach points out, as early as 1920, Heidegger indicated that phenomenological de-structuring (*Destruktion*) shows itself not as pure demolition (*Zerstörung*) but rather as a certain directed dismantling (*An-bau*)^{xii[2]}. Neither should it be construed as a simple "overcoming" (*Überwindung*) of Western metaphysics. But rather it refers to a structural analysis of the already existing ontologies. *Destruktion* (de-structuring) is a structural analysis in which one tries "to destroy the traditional content of ancient ontology until we arrive at those primordial experiences in which we achieve our first ways of determining the nature of Being - the ways which have guided us ever since."^{xiii[3]} Such a *Destruktion* is meant to think again what has been left 'unthought' or forgotten: the meaning of Being itself.

To go a step further, according to Gasché, Heidegger's understanding of *Destruktion* is related to Husserl's notion of *Abbau*.^{xiv[4]} Derrida has been constantly interested in Husserl's thought. His main interest in Husserl was aimed at using the strategies of phenomenology itself to criticise and to go beyond it. He declares that in fact, "it was Husserl's method that helped me to suspect the very notion of presence and the fundamental role it has played in all

philosophies.”^{xv[5]} In the same text, a little further he acknowledges his distancing from phenomenology: “My discovery of the genealogical and genetic critique of Nietzsche and Freud also helped me to take the step *beyond phenomenology* towards a more radical, 'non-philosophical' questioning, while *never renouncing the discipline and methodological rigour of phenomenology*.”^{xvi[6]} In this sense, the whole of phenomenological tradition and Husserlian tradition have to be taken into consideration in showing the conceptual filiation of Derrida's deconstruction to Husserl.

We see repeated indications in Derrida's writings that it is not only the whole of phenomenological tradition that should be taken into consideration to show deconstruction's conceptual link, but also those trends in philosophy, like 'structuralism' and 'post-structuralism.' The latter refers to Husserl's phenomenology, Jacques Lacan's reformulation of psychoanalysis, Jean Paul Sartre's insistence on human freedom in his atheistic existentialism, Paul Ricoeur's hermeneutical philosophy securing a renewed place of subjectivity, Merleau-Ponty's existentialist interpretation of phenomenology, Michel Foucault's major contribution to the relations between political, administrative, and epistemological structures, Jean-Francois Lyotard's significant intervention in the current discussion of modernity and postmodernity. These different philosophies were a critical response to structuralism. In short, French post-structuralist thought as a whole has to be in some way associated with Derrida's project of deconstruction, for the latter is Derrida's contribution to the same debate. Derrida also implicitly acknowledges the fact that deconstruction was immediately associated with *structuralism*^{xvii[7]} - as a criticism of the latter - which led to construing deconstruction as a negative procedure. Since in French '*destruction*' implied annihilation (closer to Nietzschean 'demolition'), he says that he examined whether the word *deconstruction* (he says that the word came to him spontaneously) would be a good French word for translating the Heideggerian word. He found the word in *L ittré*. Fortunately he found there that “the grammatical, linguistic, or rhetorical senses [... were found bound up with a mechanical sense [*portée machinique*],”^{xviii} [8] which he naturally adapted to what he wanted to suggest.

Though Heidegger's *Destruktion*, Husserl's *Abbau* and *Phenomenological reduction (epoché)*, and criticism of 'Structuralism' are, as Derrida explicitly acknowledges, the close conceptual filiations of deconstruction, however, he relativises any straight-line conceptual link. The conceptual filiation of deconstruction is far more complex.

1.2 Deconstruction or deconstructions?

There have been temptations to reduce deconstruction to one or the other of these models: linguisticogrammatical, semantic, and mechanical. Derrida would prefer to use the term in its plural form: deconstructions.^{xix[9]} In other words, deconstruction is not univocal. Derrida expresses it as follows: “If I had to risk a single definition of deconstruction, one as brief, elliptical, and economical as a password, I would say simply and without overstatement: “*plus d'une langue*.” It is for the same reason that Derrida hesitated to call deconstruction a clearly defined methodology that can be applied to many fields.

In *Passions:Oblique Offering*^{xx[10]} which is his response or non-response to a collection of essays written on his thought, Derrida takes distance from two irreconcilable assimilations of deconstruction: Those who consider deconstruction to be a modern form of immorality, of amorality or of irresponsibility and those who discern encouraging signs and in increasing numbers which would testify to a permanent, extreme, direct or oblique, in any event, increasingly intense attention, to those things which one could identify under the fine names of 'ethics', 'morality', 'responsibility', 'subject,' etc. Derrida considers both these as opposing

moralisms,^{xxi[11]} and eventually rejects them. One of the reasons given for this rejection is implicitly present in Derrida's passing comment on deconstruction in the following sentence: 'Some minds believing themselves to have found in Deconstruction ('*La Deconstruction*'), as if there were only one, [...].'^{xxii[12]} In other words, Derrida criticises both the above mentioned groups, those who consider deconstruction as immoral and those who hope to find an ethics in deconstruction, for making deconstruction a *univocal, homogeneous, a well defined, totalizing* procedure or method. In deconstruction, the consequence of such a totalizing procedure itself is at stake.^{xxiii[13]}

It would be equally a mistake to reduce deconstruction to either analysis or synthesis, construction or destruction. For it would be tantamount to accepting a univocal meaning of deconstruction which Derrida has painstakingly fought against. The following words of Derrida therefore could serve as a good summary and a conclusion of what we have been trying to explain so far concerning the conceptual filiation of deconstruction: "What deconstruction is not? everything of course! What is deconstruction? nothing of course!"^{xxiv[14]}

1.3 Deconstruction is not negative

Deconstruction has been repeatedly labelled by its critics as something negative. Equally repeatedly Derrida has been categorical in denying this criticism. As we have already observed, deconstruction was associated with structuralism. But it was associated with structuralism in a dual sense: Both as a structuralist and a post-structuralist enterprise. Since the latter aspect of deconstruction was construed as a critique or dismantling of structuralism -as Derrida himself acknowledges - it was interpreted as a negative operation. However, he comments: "[T]he undoing [...] was not a negative operation. Rather than destroying, it was also necessary to understand how an 'ensemble' was constituted and to reconstruct it to this end."^{xxv[15]} Since the word deconstruction has a negative appearance, whatever may be the strategy one follows, it is difficult to erase its negative appearance. This is why he says that this word was not a satisfactory one for what he wanted to do. It is for this reason, he says, that he was forced to "multiply the cautionary indicators and put aside all the traditional philosophical concepts, while reaffirming the necessity of returning to them, at least under erasure."^{xxvi[16]}

1.4 Deconstruction is affirmative

Derrida goes a step further and claims that deconstruction is not only 'not' a procedure but it also entails an affirmative moment:

Deconstruction certainly entails a moment of affirmation. Indeed, I cannot conceive of a radical critique which would not be ultimately motivated by some sort of affirmation, acknowledged or not. Deconstruction always presupposes affirmation, [...] I do not mean that the deconstructing *subject* or *self* affirms. I mean that deconstruction is, in itself, a positive response to an alterity which necessarily calls, summons or motivates it. Deconstruction is therefore a vocation - a response to a call. The other, as the other than self, the other that opposes self-identity, is not something that can be detected and disclosed within a philosophical space and with the aid of a philosophical lamp. The other precedes philosophy and necessarily invokes and provokes the subject before any genuine questioning can begin. It is in this rapport with the other that affirmation expresses itself.^{xxvii[17]}

However, as this above passage clearly notes, the affirmative moment that characterizes deconstruction is not the 'yes' of a subject.^{xxviii[18]} That would imply a sliding back into logocentric tradition of Western metaphysics. The 'yes' is rather the call, the summons, the

appeal, the sending of the 'other,' *that resists on the one hand the totalizing endeavour of logocentrism and that at the same time initiates the deconstructive project itself*. The appeal of the other, the alleged call, is not something somewhere outside of the texts that he reads, but instead, the call of the 'other' is what lies suppressed, mastered, totalized within the logocentric interpretations of those texts. The other that calls or summons is like the 'counter-signature' that is always already at work, disrupting and disseminating the identity or self-sufficiency of any signature.^{xxix[19]} All conscious negations and affirmations that take place in the course of deconstruction are conditioned by this non-originary original 'yes' or affirmation. In a certain sense, Derrida's deconstructive writings - which are, with some exceptions, mostly commentaries on other texts, both philosophical and literary - can be interpreted as his 'response' (involving affirmation) *necessitated* by the call or appeal of the 'other.'

Deconstruction, as a response to the call of the other is also a responsible project. Contrary to the accusations of Derrida's critics that he is 'apolitical' and 'neutral,' his response to the other implies a certain ethico-political responsibility.^{xxx[20]} However, the latter should not be construed as another mode of presence: 'responsibility for someone or something present.' In order to avoid such a misunderstanding, Derrida accumulates cautionary remarks. Deconstruction as a response should be seen as a promise that precedes one's conscious promises to this or that person, to this or that event. Such a promise is a promise made "in spite of"^{xxxi[21]} oneself. He does not have it here over this or that promise but promise as such. In other words, he has it over the promise one makes in spite of oneself. Derrida declares: From the moment I open my mouth, I have already promised; or rather, and sooner, the promise has seized the I which promises to speak to the other, to say something, at the extreme limit to affirm [...] The promise is older than I am.^{xxxii[22]} Such a promise, Derrida warns again, should not to be associated with the philosophy of presence - The promise of which I shall speak will have always escaped this demand of presence. It is older than I am or we are.

1.6 Deconstruction as incessant recontextualization

In response to the questions posed by Gerald Graff following the much publicised controversy with J. Searle, Derrida writes, concerning the relation between deconstruction and context, as follows: "One of the definitions of what is called deconstruction would be the effort to take this limitless context into account, to pay the sharpest and broadest attention possible to context, and thus to an incessant movement of recontextualization"^{xxxiii[23]}. Since there is much at stake in this passage, we shall first explain what Derrida means by context.

Derrida introduces the concept of 'context'^{xxxiv[24]} while discussing the essential predicates of writing (written language) in the classical sense. One of the essential predicates of writing is that it "breaks with its context, that is, with the collectivity of presences organizing the moment of its inscription."^{xxxv[25]} Writing breaks with its context of inscription by virtue of its iterability. The latter refers to the repeatable (iterable) and readable nature of written language in the absolute absence of the receiver or of any empirically determinable collectivity of receivers.^{xxxvi[26]} In other words: "To write is to produce a mark that will constitute a sort of machine which is productive in turn [iterable, repeatable, readable], and which my future disappearance will not, in principle, hinder in its functioning, offering things and itself to be read and to be rewritten."^{xxxvii[27]}

The fact that the written language can be weaned from such a context means that it is by its very structure not limited to its context of production or inscription, and besides, it should be possible to reproduce or repeat it in other contexts. Derrida goes even a step further: "No

context can entirely enclose it.”^{xxxviii[28]} In other words: "Every sign, linguistic or nonlinguistic, spoken or written (in the current sense of this opposition), in a small or large unit, can be *cited*, put between quotation marks; in so doing it can break with every given context, *engendering an infinity of new contexts in a manner which is absolutely illimitable*.”^{xxix[29]} Now we can refer to Derrida's central question in the essay 'Signature Event Context': Are the conditions (*les réquisits*) of a context ever absolutely determinable? From what we have said so far, Derrida's general answer is that the *context is never absolutely determinable* [italics added].”^{xl[30]} When Derrida defines (which is not customary for him) deconstruction as an "effort to take this limitless context into account," he actually refers to *the structural impossibility of absolutely determining any context*.

But this does not mean that there are no contexts at all. Derrida says that "there are only contexts.”^{xli[31]} However, these contexts are "without any centre or absolute anchoring (*ancrage*)”.^{xlii[32]} In other words, no context can absolutely fix the meaning of a written or spoken word. Derrida says: "[A] context is never able to be saturated for the determination and *identification* of a sense.”^{xliii[33]}

1.7 Deconstruction and undecidability

In his written objections to Derrida's works, voicing the mood of many of his critics (American critics, and Searle in particular) after the notorious debate between Derrida and Searle, Gerald Graff says that Derrida's position has been accused of accepting 'a kind of all or nothing' choice between pure realization of self-presence and complete free-play or undecidability.^{xliv[34]} Derrida's response to this accusation has been a clarification of his understanding of undecidability. He distinguishes three different meanings of undecidability two of which belong to the realms of the dialectic and the calculable. In the realm of the dialectic undecidability consists of resisting binarity or even triplicity^{xlvi[35]} which is a characteristic of the dialectic. In the realm of the calculable undecidability refers to the limits of decidability, of calculability or of formalizable completeness. The third meaning of undecidability, according to Derrida, paradoxically "opens the field of decision or of decidability.”^{xlvii[36]} Derrida sees undecidability as a necessary condition for any decision in the order of ethical-political responsibility. In other words, for Derrida, undecidability refers to the very structure of any decision making. He says: "Even if a decision seems to take only a second and not to be preceded by any deliberation, it is structured by this *experience and experiment of the undecidable*.”^{xlviii[37]}

What Derrida says while responding to a question concerning his recent interest in Karl Marx is apposite. Derrida reflects on the process of inheriting a tradition. Every inheriting involves a decision or choice. He says that to inherit is not essentially to *receive* something, a *given* which one then *has*. It is an active affirmation, a response to an injunction, but it also presupposes initiative, the endorsement or countersigning of a critical choice. To inherit is to select, to sift, to harness, to reclaim, to reactivate.^{xlviii[38]}

Thus, there is nothing called 'the' given of a tradition which we appropriate. Instead there are, besides our active interpretation, already a plurality of 'givens' in a tradition. Such a double characteristic, plurality of a tradition and one's own selection in it, involves risks and dangers of interpretation. Without this danger of (mis?)interpretation there is no inheritance. In other words, Derrida avers that inheriting implies decisions and responsibilities. Without a double-bind, there is not responsibility. An inheritance must always include an undecidable reserve.^{xlix[39]} Undecidability does not refer to indecision, indetermination, a strategy of neutrality, postponement, etc. Instead it refers to the possibility of any and every decision making. Without the moment of undecidability every decision making is bound to end up in

totalization. He says: “The effect of [... undecidability] is precisely to render all totalization, fulfilment, plenitude impossible.”^{li[40]}

1.8 Deconstruction and the closure of metaphysics

It is by now common knowledge that Heidegger's critique of metaphysics or the overcoming of metaphysics is not an end or destruction of metaphysics but a re-thinking of the history of western metaphysics by tracing it chronologically back to its pre-Socratic beginnings. A critique of metaphysics, on the basis of historical references gives the impression that Heidegger, too, seems to assume some pure, original beginning of metaphysics. Derrida often points this out. In response to R. Gasché, he says:

When Heidegger, in your [Gasché's] reading of him, assumes that behind the Greek language itself

[...] there is another language, an 'unthought' for the Greeks themselves of their own language, he presupposes something like an archi-originary intactness that has been basically forgotten in advance, immediately covered over with oblivion from the first, for example by the Greeks. [...] Nevertheless, if it is not a question of returning in the direction of the Greek language, it is at least necessary to presuppose something absolutely forgotten and always dissimulated in advance behind the Greek language - an arch-mother tongue, a grandmother tongue, a granny of the Greek language who would be absolutely virginal: an untouchable, virgin granny.^{li[41]}

Besides, Heidegger's concept of fallenness from authenticity to inauthenticity, according to Derrida, is another clue to Heidegger's nostalgia for presence. In other words, Heidegger is still not rid of presence which is a symptom of metaphysics or logocentrism for Derrida.

Derrida also re-thinks the history of Western metaphysics, not in reference to its founding moment in history, but instead in reference to its internal limits. Thus, Derrida's deconstruction could be read as an internal critique of the history of metaphysics, which reveals the limits of the latter. On the one hand, the limits are seen as that which threatens the presumed and projected unity of metaphysics. On the other hand, and this is Derrida's basic contention, the same limits are seen as the conditions of possibility of such a presumed unity.

Derrida painstakingly demonstrates this in most of his writings. His deconstruction of the metaphysics of presence has been aimed at showing that the desire for immediacy (presence) and the suspicion of mediation (absence) are themselves a necessary construction of metaphysics and they lead inevitably, in their turn, to different kinds of totalization. Derrida's grammatology (a science of writing) or “grammatological opening”^{lii[42]} is an attempt to show this through a detour of examining the relation between philosophy (metaphysics) and writing. The latter is a particularly revelatory symptom. For it helps to detect and put into question the major determination of the meaning of Being as *presence*, the determination in which Heidegger recognized the destiny of philosophy [metaphysics]. We should add that this symptom, besides putting into question the major determination of the meaning of Being as presence (immediacy), also shows how the suspicion to mediation or exclusion and repression of everything which thwarts the desire for immediacy, transparency and presence operates, and how it leads to different totalizations. Derrida's characterization of the history of Western metaphysics as logocentric and phonocentric is based on this symptom. By understanding both logocentrism and phonocentrism, we will be able to understand the significance of the symptom itself. For according to Derrida, theocentrism, the privileging of voice, merges with the determination through history of the meaning of being in general as

presence, [Logocentrism would] be bound up in the determination of the being of the existent as presence. Thus, an excursus on logocentrism.

1.8.1 Logocentrism

Derrida often uses logocentrism as a synonym for metaphysics of presence. In this sense, logocentrism can be construed as the identification of truth and its origin - which also implies certainty - with presence or logos. Logocentrism refers to that which is 'centred' or founded on the 'logos' (= speech, logic, reason, the word of God?). Derrida uses this term (logocentrism) to characterize any signifying system governed by the notion of the self-presence of meaning, i.e., any system structured by a valorization of speech over writing, immediacy over distance, identity over difference, and (self)presence over all forms of absence, ambiguity, simulation, substitution, or negativity. Derrida says: "*The concept of [...] metaphysics*, which has, in spite of all differences, not only from Plato to Hegel (even including Leibnitz) but also, beyond these apparent limits, from the pre-Socratics to Heidegger, always assigned the origin of truth in general to the logos: the history of truth, of the truth of truth, has always been the debasement of writing, and its repression outside 'full' speech."^{liii[43]}

Derrida takes his clue for logocentrism or metaphysics of presence from the debasement of writing. It is a reflection on the latter which would help Derrida to question in turn the claims and legitimacy of the Western metaphysics of presence or logocentrism.

As the previous passage from, Derrida's *Of Grammatology* suggests, in the history of Western metaphysics, *speech* has been conferred both temporal and logical priority over writing. In other words, writing suffers suppression or exclusion from full speech. Derrida's choice of Nietzsche's words 'Socrates, he who does not write,'^{liv[44]} as the epigraph to the first chapter "The End of the Book and the Beginning of Writing" in *Of Grammatology*, already shows that the debasement of writing is a constant in the history of Western philosophy. The written signifier is always technical and representative. It has no constitutive meaning. The derivation is the very origin of the notion of the 'signifier'. The written signifier or writing is thus the 'sign of a sign,' that is, the instrument or means by which meaning is communicated. Reflecting on Rousseau's understanding of language, Derrida says that for Rousseau writing is the 'supplement of the spoken word.'^{lv[45]}

According to Derrida, the reduction of writing was part and parcel of a wider phonologism and logocentrism. He is of the opinion that even de Saussure, like Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau, Hegel and Husserl, excludes writing from the field of linguistics - from language and speech - as a phenomenon of exterior representation, both useless and dangerous.

But, writing, though a necessity to preserve and transmit and express speech, is a mediation, distance and non-transparency. In writing, the history of Western metaphysics holds, there is the danger of a distortion of meaning, a loss of certainty, a lack of transparency and an absence of full presence. Derrida calls this privileging of speech or voice phonocentrism. What this presupposes is the conviction that meaning (truth, logos, consciousness, reality) is independent of the linguistic phenomenon. That is why Derrida associates phonocentrism with logocentrism, the belief that logos, truth, the self-presence of full self-consciousness, God, history, man, and other first principles, are foundational, original, transcendental and beyond the contingencies of language and other means of expression. This brings us to one of Derrida's key terms in understanding the logocentric nature of Western metaphysics. The term in question is 'transcendental signified.'

1.8.2 Transcendental signified

It is in conversation with structuralism and semiotics, particularly in reference to de Saussure's *Cours de linguistique générale*, that Derrida arrives at this term: Transcendental signified. To understand the meaning of this term we need to place it within de Saussure's semiotics. The latter construes language as a system of differences. In language, considered as a system of differences, naturally, meaning or significance of any linguistic unit (a sign) is a function of its differences from and relatedness to all other elements in the linguistic system. Which implies that no linguistic unit can be in and of itself meaningful. de Saussure calls this the differential character of the linguistic elements (signs). The following famous conclusion of de Saussure refers to this differential character: In the linguistic system there are only differences, *without positive term*^{lvi[46]}. In this sense, in a linguistic system, signs are arbitrary and conventional without any natural and inherent properties to them. For Derrida says: "There can be arbitrariness only because the system of signs is constituted solely by the differences in terms, and not by their plenitude."^{lvii[47]} Derrida acknowledges that, for de Saussure, these two characteristics of a linguistic system, i.e., "the *arbitrary character of the sign* and the *differential character of the sign* [are] at the very foundation of general semiology, particularly linguistics."^{lviii[48]} He further capitalizes on this by saying: "The play of differences supposes, in effect, syntheses and referrals which forbid at any moment, or in any sense, that a simple element be *present* in and of itself, referring only to itself. Whether in the order of spoken or written discourse, no element can function as a sign without referring to another element which itself is not simply present."^{lix[49]}

If the signifiers are arbitrary for de Saussure, then for Derrida the signifieds are also arbitrary, in that it is their differences as well, that accomplish the work; the signified in turn becomes another differential signifier. One obvious consequence of all this is that nothing can ever escape these differential and arbitrary characteristics of signs. If anything ever claims to escape completely this differential network of linguistic elements, it will be called a 'transcendental signified.' The latter, in other words, is something which is referred to by other signifiers, but itself does not refer to anything else. Thus for Derrida, "transcendental signified, is [... something] absolutely present outside a system of differences."^{lx[50]} To put it differently: "[A] 'transcendental signified,' which in and of itself, in its essence, would refer to no signifier, would exceed the chain of signs, and would no longer itself function as a signifier."^{lxi[51]} In other words, a transcendental signified puts a reassuring end to the freeplay of signs. Often Derrida generalizes this: Neither theology, nor "fundamental ontology" nor even logic is capable of 'freezing' the freeplay of the sign system.

1.9 Deconstruction of presence

The Derridean strategy of deconstruction is aimed at "the disruption of presence."^{lxii[52]} In other words, he discredits the traditional metaphysical understanding of meaning as a presence (*vorhanden*) to be exhumed.

To make enigmatic what one thinks one understands by the words "proximity," "immediacy," "presence" (the proximate [origin], the own [propre], and the pre- of presence) is his final goal. This deconstruction of presence accomplishes itself through the deconstruction of consciousness, and therefore through the irreducible notion of the trace [*Spurs*] as it appears in both Nietzschean and Freudian discourse. And finally, in all scientific fields, notably in biology, this notion seems currently to be dominant and irreducible.^{lxiii[53]}

Derrida acknowledges that he is not the first one to detect and criticize this metaphysics of presence. Instead, he refers to Nietzsche, Freud and Heidegger as philosophers who radically questioned the metaphysics of presence:

[W]e doubtless would have to cite the Nietzschean critique of metaphysics, the critique of the concepts of Being and truth, for which were substituted the concepts of play, interpretation, and sign (sign without present truth): the Freudian critique of self-presence, that is, the critique of consciousness, of the subject, of self-identity and of self-proximity or self-possession; and, more radically, the Heideggerean destruction of metaphysics, of onto-theology, of the determination of Being as presence.^{lxiv[54]}

However, Derrida contends, the criticism of the metaphysics of presence itself is caught up in the history of the metaphysics of presence. “[T]he enterprise of deconstruction always in a certain way falls prey to its own work.”^{lxv[55]} In other words, Derrida says, “We have no language - no syntax and no lexicon - which is foreign to this history; we can pronounce not a single destructive proposition which has not already had to slip into the form, the logic, and the implicit postulations of precisely what it seeks to contest.”^{lxvi[56]}

1.10 Deconstruction and totalization

If there is one concept or procedure against which deconstruction has been constantly engaging itself, it is the concept of or the process of *totalization*.^{lxvii[57]} This term is not univocal in its meaning or procedure. There are numerous ways of totalizing. All that Derrida would like to bring under the blanket terms 'metaphysics of presence' or 'logocentrism' or 'philosophy of presence' or 'phonocentrism,' or 'phallogentrism' (Lacan's term), could be seen as different forms of totalization. Though totalization cannot be defined in a univocal way, it could be described in general as the human desire to look for - in different ways - a centre,' or an 'archè' or a 'telos' around which to gather, organize, master, possess, unify or totalize everything else.

In other words, deconstruction seeks to demonstrate that any attempt to unify earth and heaven by means of the *one* structure - to explain the material in terms of the ideal or *vice versa* - *will* inevitably result in structurally undecidable statements which count against the explanatory force of the theory.

Deconstruction aims at locating, liberating those elements, those differences or those moments that thwart such a procedure of totalization. Deconstruction can be seen then as the (procedure?) that seeks to demonstrate, by locating the irreducible differences or alterities in a text, the conditions of possibility and impossibility of totalizing it. In attempting to demonstrate in individual texts the repression or suppression of 'otherness' or 'alterity,' Derrida's claims have been quite modest. He does not pose himself as a 'new beginning' nor as a 'point of transition' in the history of philosophy. He explicitly acknowledges this in the following passage:

From the very beginnings of Greek philosophy the self-identity of the *Logos* is already fissured and divided. I think one can discern signs of such fissures of 'différance' in every great philosopher: the 'Good beyond Being' (*epekeina tes ousias*) of Plato's *Republic*, for example, or the confrontation with the 'Stranger' in *The Sophist* are already traces of an alterity which refuses to be totally domesticated. Moreover, the rapport of self-identity is itself always a rapport of violence with the other; so that the notions of property, appropriation and self-presence, so central to logocentric metaphysics, are essentially

dependent on an oppositional relation with otherness. In this sense, identity *presupposes* alterity.^{lxviii[58]}

Nevertheless, his uniqueness, his project of deconstruction, his philosophy of difference, his logic of dissemination, consists in *showing how this repression of 'otherness' or 'alterity' operates in different texts in different ways.*

1.11 Deconstruction and Identity

Memory (history) is so much a part and parcel of one's self-understanding and identity that hardly any one would doubt the significance of this thesis. However, when one asks how one forms this memory of the past (to form one's self-understanding or identity), then the issue becomes more complex. Does one remember everything of the past? Or, does one make a selection? Why does one remember and prize some events and neglect some others? Why is one selective? What motivates one's selective reading of history? Is there some constant element that withstands all the vicissitudes of history? When searching for the memory of the past where does one stop? Why does one stop there? Why does one accept something, some event, some person, etc., as the beginning point? These questions enigmatize the concept of identity.

Derrida asks similar questions with regard to the identities of Western philosophy, text, culture, race, sex, tradition, nation, continent, etc. In this context, we shall repeat the response that Derrida gave to Rodolphe Gasché during a 'roundtable discussion on Translation' is pertinent. Gasché's question to Derrida with référence to Heidegger's difficulties with the 'unthought' of the Greek language was formulated as follows: "[T]he Heideggerian return cannot be a return to the Greek mother tongue (and to Greek thought), but to something in it, cracking it apart, and which it renders only imperfectly. [... 1 How do you situate yourself in relation to Heidegger's at least implicit recognition of a fundamental lack in every mother tongue, in this case the Greek language, but also in every language in general?]"^{lxix[59]}

Derrida's response is twofold: First, there is nothing like an uncontaminated archi-mother tongue, some kernel that is intact; second, the conviction that there exists something like an archi-mother tongue and an intact kernel "sets in motion every kind of desire, every kind of tongue, appeal, address."^{lxx[60]} Derrida calls this conviction "a terrible necessity. [...] the desire for the untouchable, for virginity."^{lxxi[61]} The desire for such an intact kernel is nothing but a desire for an absolute origin or presence or archè that is uncontaminated. Derrida has been questioning through his different strategies such an uncontaminated absolute origin or presence. The following words of Derrida in response to Gasché express this in a playful way: "I would oppose desire to necessity, to *ananké*. The *ananké* is that there is no intact kernel and there never has been one. That's what one wants to forget, and to forget that one has forgotten it. It's not that something has been forgotten; rather, one wants to forget that there is nothing to forget, that there has been nothing to forget. But one can only forget that there has never been an intact kernel."^{lxxii[62]}

As we can already guess, Derrida's point is that the desire for an intact kernel is another form of reinstating the hierarchical oppositions original/derivative, primary/secondary, kernel/peripheral. Within a hierarchical oppositional structure, identity of something or some one would be seen as a reproduction of, an imitation of and a copy of an original. This is a static way of understanding identity.

Derrida's replies to questions about identities of the Western philosophical tradition and cultures in general are in the same vein. He says: "Every culture is haunted by its other."^{lxxiii}

[63] With regard to the identity of Judeo-Christianity he makes the following observation: “Judeo-Christianity is an extremely complex entity which, in large part, only constituted itself qua Judeo-Christianity by its assimilation into the schemas of Greek philosophy. Hence what we know as Christian and Jewish theology today is a cultural ensemble which has already been largely ‘Hellenized’ He goes a step further and affirms that not only is Judeo-Christianity ‘a cultural ensemble,’ but so is Greek philosophy a similar hybrid. He expresses it as follows: “From the very beginnings of Greek philosophy the selfidentity of the Logos is already fissured and divided.”^{lxxiv[64]} However, the ‘otherness’ which fissures the allegedly unified and solid Greek philosophy is not necessarily something that comes from outside. Greek philosophy or for that matter any tradition is always already divided in itself. Thus, for Derrida, “identity presupposes alterity.”^{lxxv[65]}

In our view Critchley's interpretation of Derrida's deconstruction of the Western tradition brings out the enigma of identity claims implied in it in a forceful way.

Basically, the complexity of the issues related to identity formation converge on the question of the form ‘what is ... ?’ Was this not already Heidegger's question? Is it not this question that has been the unthought thought of Western tradition? Is it not in the name of this question that Heidegger detected the onto-theological structure of Western metaphysics? Derrida too struggles with this fundamental question. But the style of posing this question and the manner in which he works this out are already characterized by his deconstructive strategy: an appropriation of the Heideggerian legacy which goes hand in hand with an expropriation. Would this then be the identity of deconstruction? Can Heidegger be the only source of the identity of deconstruction. The identity of deconstruction, as Derrida's own understanding of identity shows, has to be sought not only in Heidegger, but also to be seen in those authors he appropriates and expropriates. There is nothing called *the identity of deconstruction*. Just like any identity, it is an irreducible hybrid of ensembles. It cannot be appropriated in a unified and linear fashion. Every appropriation of deconstruction, ours included, is both an appropriation and an expropriation.

PHILOSOPHICAL METHOD IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

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Indian philosophy is as distinct from Western philosophy in its method as it is in its content. Sometimes it appears that even the similarity between these two philosophies in terms of the basic questions asked is probably only superficial and not deep at all. I can foresee some objection to this observation of mine from those who are votaries of perennial philosophy. They might, for example, ask: Is not the question “What is being?” so common that it was asked by ancient Greeks, by Heidegger among modern philosophers and by ancient Indians as well?

But this question does not seem to me to be a very sound one. In philosophy also, no question arises in a vacuum and without a relevant context just as in any other discipline. The meaning of a philosophical question is therefore a function of the peculiar circumstances in which it comes to be asked, of the background and nature of the questioner, of the presuppositions the questioner chooses to make and so on. If these elements change, then the meaning of the question changes too. Therefore the question “What is being?” is verbally the same as asked by the ancient Greeks and by Heidegger, while it is substantially very different in the two cases. There is a whole background and development of thought lasting several centuries that lies behind Heidegger's question which is missing from the one asked by

ancient Greeks. That is why two entirely different kinds of answers have emerged for the same question—one from the Greeks and the other from Heidegger.

Thus it appears that questions of philosophy, even when asked from within the same tradition, are still not quite the same. They are always local in the sense that they carry with them the flavour of their own peculiar times and circumstances. Probably because philosophical questions do not remain quite the same over a period of time, the methods adopted to obtain answers for them have also changed over a period of time. This is especially evident if we look at the evolution of philosophical methods in Western philosophy from the dialectical method of Plato to, say, the dialectical method of Hegel and the subsequent methods of Logical Positivists, Linguistic Analysts and Phenomenologists.

The evolution and proliferation of different methods in Western philosophy seem to have close links with the way science and philosophy began developing in the seventeenth century. We can see that until the seventeenth century there were but few methods in philosophy. When science started developing quite fast due to the impetus received from the work of Galileo, Newton and others, two very powerful and influential methods in philosophy—rationalism and empiricism—also quickly developed.

It is also clear that certain perceived inadequacies in a method have often led to its abandonment and the development of a new method. For example, rationalism focussed exclusively on the most general characteristics of entities to the exclusion of all those features peculiar or specific to them. Descartes thought that the feature of “being extended in space” was the sole important or essential characteristic of “matter.” He also thought that not being so extended in space constituted the essential characteristic of anything mental. Since Descartes was a very competent mathematician of his times, when he started philosophizing, he naturally relied on the mathematical way of treating the things of the world. This led to remarkable successes as well as deep problems which is now standard knowledge among philosophers. The notion of “innate ideas” which Descartes developed was pursued and carried to such great lengths in England that Locke had no hesitation in rejecting that notion altogether. But, then, the methods and contents are usually so closely interwoven in philosophy that the rejection of one naturally leads to the rejection of the other as well. So, Locke discarded the rationalist method and developed his new empiricist method and brought in a whole lot of new content as well.

Sometimes radically changed circumstances also lead to new philosophies with their own specific methodological principles. The World Wars and the vast destruction of life they brought about necessitated raising questions about man and his life in this world and consequently various Existentialist thinkers flourished in the first half of the twentieth century. Philosophy is always closely linked to time, place and circumstances and this is no less so in India.

The term in Sanskrit that comes closest to the Western notion of “philosophy” is, in my opinion, “*tattvajñāna*.” Of course the term “*darśana*” is often used by Indian writers for “philosophy” but this term (which literally means “vision”) is more appropriately applicable to the final vision resulting from the process of “enquiry into the nature of reality” (*tattva jijñāṣā*). The vision is produced by knowledge and knowledge is produced by enquiry. The knowledge resulting from such enquiry (*jijñāṣā*) is *tattvajñāna*. The term *tattvajñāna* clearly has this meaning in both the orthodox (*āstika*) and the heterodox (*nāstika*) traditions of India. For example, Vātsyāyana, the commentator on Gautama’s *Nyāya Sūtras* says: “The ascertainment of a pillar as a man is wrong cognition—the knowledge of something as what it is not. The ascertainment of a pillar as a pillar is the “knowledge of a thing as it is” (*tattvajñāna*). The wrong knowledge [generated by a wrong cognition] is removed by the knowledge of a thing as it is.”^{lxxvi} The term “*tattva*” from the very beginning is clearly used by Vātsyāyana in the sense of “that which is” or “reality.” In the very beginning of his commentary he says: “Being is existence and non-being is non-existence. When being is grasped as being, when it is grasped as it is and not as contrary to what it is, then it is reality

(*tattvam*).^{lxxvii} Grasping the nature of things as they really are, or the correct grasping of reality is most important as it is considered the sole means of attaining “the highest good.” The very first *s'tra* of Gautama gives a list of the categories according to him and declares at the end of the *s'tra* that “the highest good is achieved through philosophy” (*tattvajñāna*).^{lxxviii}

The notion of the relationship between reality and philosophy runs very deep in the Indian tradition. The content of philosophy is not determined by human wishes, whims and purposes but solely by the nature of “what is.” The nature of reality decides the nature of philosophy and not any human desire or purpose. What the nature of reality is, is to be known through rigorous enquiry (*jijñāṣa*). Through free enquiry one can find nothing but “what is there.” This idea is brought forth very clearly and powerfully by *μaḥkara* when he extensively criticizes the *Mīmāṃsā* school. In this process of criticism, he makes use of a certain distinction peculiar to *Vedānta* in the Indian tradition. It is the distinction between what is *puruṣa-tantra* and what is *vastu-tantra*. Since the *Vedāntins* are in general accused of blindly relying on the Vedic scriptures, looking into the above distinction also throws light on the correctness or otherwise of this accusation.

μaḥkara makes the distinction in the specific context of the very sharp demarcation he chooses to make between any kind of *karma* (in this specific context, *dharma* or “duty” as prescribed by the *Veda*) and *jñāna*. He maintains that while *karma* is *puruṣa-tantra*, *jñāna* is *vastu-tantra*. “*Puruṣa-tantra*” means “dependent upon the human person.” *Dharma* (“duty”) is *puruṣa-tantra* because a person may come to know what is *dharma* through the *Vedas* and either decide to do it, or may also decide not to do it, or even choose to act in any other manner.^{lxxix} Therefore, the very existence of *dharma* is completely dependent upon, or is entirely determined by, human action. Since *dharma* is produced by human action alone, it is *puruṣa-tantra*.

In sharp contrast to the above, the nature of human action plays no role in determining the knowledge of *tattva* (reality) which is governed entirely by that which it is the knowledge of, viz. Reality. Philosophical knowledge is, for its production, entirely dependent upon “what is there” (reality) because that is what it is the knowledge of. Even if the *Vedas* extol and exhort *dharma*, if no one in the universe actually desires it and strives for it, there would simply be no *dharma* in the universe and hence the existence of *dharma* is entirely dependent upon men who seek it. But the existence of reality is not similarly dependent upon men who seek it. Reality exists even if no one ever seeks it. Reality is something that *already* exists (*bh'tavastu*) while *dharma* is something that has to be brought into existence by the actions of men. Reality does not depend for its existence upon either human knowledge or human action. Therefore the nature of things completely determines the nature of philosophical knowledge we are capable of attaining, and hence the knowledge of reality (*tattvajñāna*) is entirely governed by what is there (*vastu-tantra*).

Since philosophy (*tattvajñāna*) is “the knowledge of things as they are,” very logically and naturally, the methods of knowing things as they really are become important and central to philosophy. In Indian philosophy, these methods which give us the knowledge of things as they really are, are called “means of correct knowledge” (*pramāṇa*). The various kinds of objects that come to be known through the employment of such correct means of knowing are in general called “*prameya*.” Finally, the correct knowledge itself which results from the employment of the correct means of knowing, is called “*pramā*.” If, for some reason, we fail to know correctly, then we have necessarily failed in employing the correct means of knowing, and in that case the resulting cognition is “wrong knowledge” (*a-pramā* or *bhramā*) as when we mistake a rope for a snake. Thus, every school of Indian philosophy without exception has its own theory of the “epistemic trio”—of *pramāṇa*, *prameya* and *pramā*.

The relation of dependence between epistemology and metaphysics is circular in nature. While a certain kind of epistemology leads to a certain kind of metaphysics, the preference for a certain kind of metaphysics will necessitate the adoption of a certain kind of

epistemology. But, whichever way one goes about, there must be a correct match or fit between the chosen epistemology and the resulting metaphysics. It is not always easy to determine their relative priority in different schools of Indian philosophy at different stages of their development. But at a certain stage, a definite pattern seems to emerge. Almost all the later systematic works of all schools of Indian philosophy first expound their epistemology—the type and number of the means of correct knowledge they prefer to accept—and then expound their metaphysics that logically and naturally follows from the means of correct knowledge they have already accepted.

It is very easy to see that the kind of means of knowledge accepted by a school also determines what sorts of metaphysical entities or categories that school is ready to accept or concede. Therefore the metaphysical differences between different schools of Indian philosophy can be closely correlated with their mutual differences in the means of knowledge accepted by them. While the accepted epistemology sometimes seems to dictate the nature of metaphysical entities to be accepted, there are also cases where the epistemological tools are suitably modified by the school to enable it to stick to a preferred metaphysical stance. There is so much diversity in these matters that it is usually very difficult to make even very broadly applicable generalizations in Indian epistemology or Indian metaphysics.

Even then, I am tempted to coin and use my own catch phrase to picturize the situation prevailing in the Indian philosophical scene: “The method of knowing is the method of philosophy!” If the methods of knowing differ in their ramifications, then the resulting philosophies also differ. Therefore it is first of all necessary to know broadly what are the methods of knowing, before going into the question of how they have contributed to the development of different philosophies. In Indian philosophy, the ways of knowing are six. They are: perception (*pratyakṣa*), inference (*anumāna*), verbal testimony (*śabda*), comparison (*upamāna*), presumption (*arthāpatti*) and non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*).

The first *pramāṇa*, perception is ordinarily sense perception including mental perception. It may be determinate (*savikalpaka*) or indeterminate (*nirvikalpaka*), ordinary (*laukika*) or extraordinary (*alaukika*), or of a special kind possible only for yogis (*yogika*) and so on. This is one means of knowing that is universally accepted by all schools of Indian philosophy, but with their own individually prescribed delimitations of what and what does not come within the purview of perception. We will be shortly seeing as to how specific delimitations (and also extensions) are imposed or invoked to arrive at specific philosophical doctrines.

Inference is a process of reasoning by which we are led to what is *not* given in perception, but always on the basis of something already given in perception. Therefore inference is parasitic upon perception in the sense that if nothing can be perceived, then nothing can also be inferred. This inference may be “for oneself” (*svārthanumāna*) as in the case of a man non-verbally inferring within his mind the presence of fire on the hill upon observing smoke there. Or, it may also be “for another” (*parārthanumāna*) as when someone argues to prove that there must be fire on the hill because smoke is observed. This latter form of inference is necessarily expressed in language. But both types proceed from a sign (*hetu* or *liṅga*)—in this case, smoke—to what that sign signifies—fire—between the two of which there is always a relation of pervasion (*vyāpti*). The validity or invalidity of an inference depends upon whether this relation of pervasion is just right, or too narrow or too wide.

Verbal testimony (*śabda*) is not only the most characteristic way of knowing accepted in the Indian tradition but is also one that enjoys a special kind of centrality in many schools. It is both hotly attacked and stoutly defended by various schools. The logic behind accepting it as a *pramāṇa* is that if a person has seen and known things as they really are, his testimony regarding what things really are should be accepted as a legitimate source of knowledge by us at least until we are ourselves able to attain such direct knowledge of things. In so many fields of knowledge we accept the testimony of those who know about all those dozens of things that we still do not know. For example, we do not question the testimony or

authority of the particle physicist who asserts the existence of electrons although the electrons are totally unperceived by all of us. Therefore, if the procedure we adopt in the case of the particle physicist (of accepting his authority) is not wrong, there is no good reason to believe that it would be essentially wrong when the same procedure is adopted in the case of a person either possessing yogic knowledge or claiming that all is Brahman. If someone were to object that there is no similarity between the two sets of cases because the physicists' claims can be verified by certain experiments while those of the Yogi or the Vedāntin cannot be so verified, it may be argued back that just as we may reject the physicists' claims only when the same experiments conducted by us do not show up electrons, we may reject the Yogi's claims only after following all the steps the Yogi has followed, but fail to find what he claims to have found. Certain meditative techniques have been adopted in arriving at "higher" and even the "highest" level of perception by the saints and seers in India for several centuries, and unless we can conclusively show that these techniques are fundamentally flawed and unreliable, there will always be reasonable ground for accepting their authority in the matter of what ultimate reality is like.

Comparison (*upamāna*) is considered by some schools to be the source of our knowledge of the similarity of an unknown object to a known object. For example, if someone has never seen a wild cow but has been told by knowledgeable persons that it looks somewhat like a domestic cow, when he later on sees a wild cow for the first time in the forest, he will *know* that it is a wild cow. Some schools do not accept this and argue that knowing something to be a wild cow in this way is simply a case of perception, inference and memory operating together and no new kind of *pramāṇa* is involved. Whether or not comparison is a distinct *pramāṇa* that is not reducible to a combination of other *pramāṇas* has been the subject of extensive debate in Indian epistemology.

Presumption (*arthāpatti*) is regarded by some schools as yet another *pramāṇa*. A typical example of the application of this way of knowing is when we know that Devadatta has gone out, when we do not find him in the house. The champions of *arthāpatti pramāṇa* reject any possible objection that this knowledge is just a case of inferring the presence of Devadatta outside his house from his perceived absence in the house. That is because Devadatta might be dead, in which case also he will be equally absent in the house. Even if it is a correct inference, it has no ground at all unless the *presumption* that Devadatta is alive is also granted. It is this presumption that lends correctness to the knowledge-claim and hence this presumption is really the source of our correct knowledge. There is a similar extensive debate on whether *arthāpatti* is a genuine, original source of correct knowledge.

Just as we are aware of the existence of things, we are also aware of the non-existence of things. While schools like Nyāya contend that both the presence as well as the absence of a jar on the floor is known through perception, others vigorously refute this. They argue that the absence of things is not known through perception but through a special way of knowing called non-cognition (*anupalabdhi*). If, for example, I say today, i.e., on the second day of this seminar, that there is no elephant present in the seminar hall, you may look around if you like, but you will find no elephant and agree that my knowledge-claim is correct. But is this knowledge-claim of the absence of an elephant in the seminar hall therefore based on our perception? Do I *perceive* the absence of an elephant? If I get the knowledge that there is no elephant only on the basis of perceiving its absence, it logically follows that any similar knowledge-claim anyone makes must also be based on the perception of the absence of the elephant.

Now, if any one of the Fathers present here were to claim that an elephant was absent in the seminar hall yesterday also, we would not hesitate to concede it to be correct. But, then how did the Father *know* the absence of the elephant? Yesterday, did he at any time *look for* an elephant in the room and not find it? Only if he had done that, his perception of the absence of the elephant yesterday could legitimately serve as the basis of his knowledge-claim made today. Please note: we cannot say that the Father *remembers* that there was no

elephant in the seminar hall yesterday, because remembering of anything he *did not look for and not find*, is not possible at all. All memory depends upon prior cognition or perception. If our memory is sound and if it does not reveal a specific object like “an elephant seen (cognized or perceived) yesterday”, this is simply due to the fact that an elephant was *not cognized* (not perceived) yesterday. Therefore “non-cognition” (*anupalabdhi*) of any elephant yesterday (or today) is the source of our knowledge of the absence of the elephant and not the *perception of its absence*. Many Indian epistemologists sharply distinguish between absence of perception (cognition) and perception (cognition) of absence. Only when absence or non-existence (*abhōva*) is treated as a legitimate metaphysical category and is also distinguished from another category of presence or existence (*bhōva*), as the Nyōya philosopher chooses to do, any linguistic expression like “I *perceived* the *absence* of an elephant” will be meaningful, because “the absence of the elephant” will also be treated as a kind of entity like the elephant itself.

These six ways of knowing have played a very crucial role in the development of a very large segment of Indian philosophy. For example, if certain forms of verbal testimony (*ṡabda*) like the Vedas were not to be allowed as sources of correct knowledge (*pramōōa*), the entire system of Vedōnta would have been impossible to either formulate or defend. To explain in detail how the acceptance of a certain theory of *pramōōa* leads to the development of a certain type of philosophy, one will have to explain the development of virtually the whole of Indian philosophy. Therefore I would like to limit myself to some select examples that illustrate the point I have made above.

Cōrvōka or the Indian materialist school is perhaps a very good example. It is a school which is bent upon shedding all metaphysical baggage by choosing to remain entirely within the confines of everyday experience. No original works of the Cōrvōka school have survived because this school seems to have been in the minority and was also attacked heavily by all other schools of philosophy throughout history. Even among the several thousand original works of Indian philosophy available today, as far as I know, there is no single work which upholds or endorses even a single point or doctrine of the Cōrvōka. It is a matter of great wonder how a school of philosophy could ever be so completely negative in its outlook as the Cōrvōka school is invariably made to appear to be in the works of their rival schools. Even the so-called digests of philosophy usually going by titles like “*sarva-darjāna-saōgraha*” (literally, “collections of all philosophies”) carry summaries of the Cōrvōka school that are by no means complimentary in character. I guess there is a good reason why this kind of a thing seems to have happened, but I cannot go into this matter here as it is beside the point of this paper.

If one wants to radically limit one’s metaphysical baggage as the Cōrvōka seems to be keen on doing, then one must also radically limit one’s epistemological apparatus with the help of which metaphysical structures are built up. All traditional accounts of Cōrvōka philosophy uniformly declare that only perception was accepted as a *pramōōa* by that school. This is certainly incoherent since it is impossible to argue out one’s philosophical position without accepting inference also as supplementing perception. Since no one has argued against the Cōrvōka that he cannot establish his own position since he does not accept inference as a *pramōōa*—which point every critic should have made vociferously—we must guess that the Cōrvōka rejected a good variety of inferences (like analogical inference) that were very popular among the majority of philosophers and for that reason must have been branded as one who does not accept inference as a *pramōōa*. If so, it is somewhat similar to Buddhism being branded as a “no-soul doctrine” (*nairōtmyavōda*).

Accepting the sole validity of ordinary sense perception has its consequences for philosophy. Theism is ruled out as God is not among the perceived entities. Even an eternal, immortal human self is similarly ruled out. Theories of creation of the universe also stand excluded since no one has perceived the universe being created. Even among the elements that go into the constitution of objects, the element ether (*ōkōjya*) has to be excluded since it is

imperceptible. Rebirth cannot be believed in as there is no perceptual evidence in support of it. All metaphysical categories which are constructions of the mind—which cannot be seen, touched or smelt in any kind of an act of sense perception—should be dismissed as flights of fancy. No scriptures—like the Vedas that talk about transcendental entities—are philosophically admissible. There can of course be no heaven or hell which ordinary folk believe in. The kind of knowledge that we get in everyday life is what is possible for anyone and there is no special kind of knowledge like philosophical knowledge for which we should look up to someone. Every standard work in Indian philosophy written in the commentarial tradition begins with expounding the Cōrvōka stand in this way, and also summarily attacking and dismissing it.

It is generally held that the Buddhists accept only two sources of correct knowledge: perception and inference. The interesting exclusion here is of verbal testimony as a source of correct knowledge since the entire school depends so completely upon the teachings of the Buddha. Is it then that the word of the Buddha himself is not authoritative? Yes, it is astonishing but true that nothing is to be accepted in Buddhism just because it is said by the Buddha. After giving out his teaching, the Buddha would invariably say something like: “You have heard all this. Do not accept it just because I have said it. Examine it yourself thoroughly and accept it only if you find it satisfactory.” Thus in Buddhism, who says what is not important; the reasonability or otherwise of what is said alone counts. If we keep in mind that the teaching of the Buddha was primarily to counteract and nullify the effects of a degenerate Vedic culture, and if we also keep in mind that the authority of the Vedas was regarded as absolute and unquestionable in those times, it is easy to understand why the Buddha adopted the above stance and verbal testimony stands excluded as a source of correct knowledge in Buddhism.

I have observed earlier that the epistemological apparatus may be modified to arrive at or support a specific metaphysical stand. This has happened in Nyōya. One of the most long-standing controversies in Indian epistemology is about the ontological status of the “object” of erroneous perception, like the “snake” we mistakenly perceive in the rope when we mistake it for a snake. Is there a “real” snake involved in such misperceptions? The Buddhists gave the most commonsensical answer: No; there is no snake there, there is only a rope, but the Naiyōyika saw great danger in accepting it. He thought that this amounts to admitting the possibility of a non-existent object appearing in our perception. The Nyōya philosopher who is as much of a thoroughgoing realist as he is an anti-Buddhist, is averse to admitting such a possibility. His worry is that if we admit that it is possible for non-existent objects to appear in our perceptions, then how can we at all be sure of the correctness of *any* perception whatever? How at all can we be sure that any given perception is presenting the object “as it is”? We “see” a snake; a moment later we no more see the snake, we see a “rope.” If we accept the Buddhist stand, just as a non-existent snake appeared in my perception a moment ago, an equally non-existent rope might now be appearing in my perception. Thus, my perception of the rope is not any more reliable than my perception of the snake. I cannot at all be sure of the correctness of *any* of my perceptions. I am led into the one-way street of scepticism because I accept that non-existent objects can appear in my perception.

How to get over this scepticism? The Naiyōyika has an ingenious solution. Accept that the snake is existent and real, but maintain that it is a snake existing elsewhere, say, in the zoo or in the forest. What exists elsewhere, appears here. That is perceptual error. If what exists here appears here, it is correct perception. This looks fine, but how can something existing *elsewhere* appear *here*? Perception always reveals the objects that are *here*, that are present before us. Yes, that is of course true, but then it is “ordinary” (*laukika*) perception. There is also another kind of perception, an “extraordinary” (*alaukika*) kind of perception, in which entities that are present *elsewhere* are perceived. For example, when I perceive a cow present before me, I also perceive the universal “cowness” which is present in it. Each cow

does not have its own universal (in which case it would not be a universal at all); all cows have only one universal “cowness” in common, which universal is present in each one of the cows wherever that cow may be. Therefore it logically follows that when I am perceiving the “cowness” of the cow that is before me, I am also perceiving the “cowness” of a cow in Denmark, in Japan, in short the cowness of a cow that is *elsewhere*. The Naiyāyika resorts to a specious argument to show that the snake that is present elsewhere is presented here, when the rope is mistaken for a snake. This is a clear case of modification of the epistemological apparatus of perception to uphold one’s metaphysical belief that no non-existent entity can be perceived, or that whatever is perceived necessarily exists, if not here, then elsewhere.^{lxxx}

In the same way it can be shown that specific epistemologies that each of the schools adopts is tailored to its metaphysical needs and also that different metaphysical needs necessitate and bring about different modifications in the epistemological apparatus. For example, the Mīmāṃsaka insists that something can be accepted as a *pramāṇa* not just when it gives rise to correct knowledge, but only when the knowledge it gives rise to is fresh and new (*anadhigata*). That is, to count as a *pramāṇa*, it must give us knowledge that cannot be obtained from any other source. The Mīmāṃsaka makes this amendment specifically to accommodate the Vedas as a *pramāṇa*. The Vedas give us the knowledge of (supersensuous) *dharma*, which knowledge cannot be obtained through either perception or inference. But someone may suggest that the Yogis who are capable of supersensuous perceptions may be able to obtain knowledge of *dharma* directly without resorting to the Vedas. That would threaten the *pramāṇa*-status of the Vedas as they are now no longer the exclusive source of our knowledge of *dharma*, with yogic perception being offered as an alternative source. But the Mīmāṃsaka is so keen on ruling out any alternative source of our knowledge of *dharma* (other than the Vedas) that he refuses to accept yogic perception (*yogika pratyakṣa*) as a source of correct knowledge (*pramāṇa*)!^{lxxxi}

Similarly there are disputes among schools as to whether memory (*smṛti*) cognition can be accepted as an authentic source of knowledge. We can naturally expect the Mīmāṃsaka, the champion of *śruti*, to refuse *pramāṇa*-status to *smṛti* (memory) since the knowledge it gives us is knowledge we have already previously obtained through perception etc. and is hence not new and fresh (*anadhigata*).^{lxxxii} There are also debates as to whether any perception can be indeterminate (*nirvikalpaka*) at all, and whether dream cognitions point to real objects or false (*mithyā*) ones. All these epistemological debates have their unmistakable metaphysical underpinnings. Likewise, the bitter metaphysical debate among the Vedāntins about the existence of a “quality-less” (*nirguṇa* or *nirviṣeṣa*) entity has led to a lot of sophisticated and subtle modifications in Vedāntic epistemology.

In the light of the above discussion, I venture to propose that the theory of *pramāṇas* constitutes the methodological device of doing philosophy in classical India. Because of this peculiarity, we cannot always classify the Indian schools as exclusively rationalistic or empiricistic, exclusively idealistic or realistic or even as just pragmatic. The diversities in the theory of *pramāṇas* has produced the diversities in philosophical standpoints.

I think that this presentation will be incomplete if I do not briefly discuss the methods peculiar to Advaita Vedānta. The philosophy of Maṇḍana represents a high watermark of philosophical development in classical India. His teacher’s teacher Gauḍapāda had adopted the method of analyzing the states of consciousness like waking, dream and deep sleep—which is famously known as the method of *avasthātraya*—to demonstrate his thesis that consciousness is the only reality and that it is also non-dual.^{lxxxiii} Even today Advaitins think that this is the method of arriving at the ultimate truth in philosophy. What is ultimately true must always prevail without getting affected by anything else at any time. The world of waking experiences gets cancelled out by the dream world and both the waking and dream worlds stand excluded from the experience of deep sleep. We wake up from this deep sleep and come back to the waking state once again. Thus the states of waking, dream and deep sleep go on constantly alternating and changing from one to the other; but what remains

unchanged throughout all these changes is pure consciousness. It is this underlying pure consciousness that serves as the basis of the continuity of the alternating states of waking, dream and deep sleep.

The Advaitin's argument is that if there were to be no such pure consciousness underlying all our experiences, it would not be possible to maintain that it is the *same* "I" that was waking which went into a dream state later on and then left it to enter into a state of deep sleep. If the consciousness present in waking is different from the consciousness present in dream, and if there is no consciousness at all in deep sleep, how do we then account for the sense of personal identity (the sense of continuity of consciousness) that persists through all the three states? This method of *avasthōtraya* involves phenomenological analysis of not only waking and dream states but also of the state of deep sleep which is not at all recognized as a "state" of consciousness in Western phenomenology. The basic point on which Advaitic phenomenology differs from Western phenomenology is that Advaita does not accept "intentionality" as an *essential* characteristic of all conscious states. The Advaitin concedes that only the waking and dream consciousness is intentional. No objects of any kind are experienced in deep sleep and when we wake up from such sleep we are clearly aware that no objects were experienced by us in that state. In deep sleep, the "light" of consciousness persists, but no "objects" of any kind—gross or subtle—are there to be lighted up by consciousness. Therefore the Advaitins argue that objects invariably depend upon consciousness for their disclosure but consciousness is not similarly dependent upon objects for its disclosure. Consciousness is self-disclosing and self-luminous. To become aware of any object we necessarily require consciousness, but to be conscious of the fact of our being conscious, we do not require another "revealing" consciousness.^{lxxxiv} Consciousness is like a lighted lamp which reveals itself as well as all the objects present before it.

There is one big, serious question which Advaita must answer: If pure consciousness is the one and the only reality, why is it that we always and everywhere perceive variety and multiplicity? It is in trying to answer this basic question that *µaøkara* produced his justly famous works. His answer was that though the one and the only pure consciousness always exists and nothing else which is like or unlike it ever exists, we are completely ignorant of this basic truth. In the place of the only reality that exists we ignorantly think that there exist dualities like "you" and "I" and all other multiplicities that make up this perceived world.^{lxxxv} The perceived world does not exist in and by itself. It is superimposed on pure consciousness. Such superimposition (*adhyōsa*) is quite natural, pervasive, beginningless and common to both humans and animals. All human beings who are by nature conscious entities, invariably and naturally identify the conscious self with the physical body when they make statements like "I am fat," "He is tall," "You are sad" etc. Characteristics like obesity and tallness belong only to the physical body and qualities like sadness belong only to the mind and they do not, and also cannot, in any sense belong to the Self or pure consciousness. Thus all our empirical transactions are rooted in the fundamental misconception that the Self is the body, or that it is the mind, or that it is the sense organs (as revealed in "I am blind!") and so on. Therefore all qualities, dualities and multiplicities are mere appearances and are mistakenly attributed to pure consciousness which is by nature one and quality-less (*nirgu%oa*). *µaøkara* argues that we must systematically negate (*apavōda*) all superimpositions (*adhyōropa*) and arrive at the correct understanding of the meaning of the expression "I"—an expression which can correctly designate only consciousness and nothing else. The method by which we accomplish the removal of all ignorance and attain the realization of the true nature of the Self is called by Advaitins "the method of superimposition and negation" or "the method of *adhyōropa-apavōda*."^{lxxxvi}

Another interesting and peculiar feature of Indian philosophy is that whatever be the specific method adopted by any Indian philosopher in arriving at his basic tenets, there is always an absolutely "general method" used by him in doing this. This "general method" becomes obvious when we study the general structure of just any standard classical work in

Indian philosophy, particularly most of the *S'tras* (like the *Brahmas'tra*, *Nyōyas'tra* etc.) and the commentaries written on such basic works. This general or common method is actually called the “*p'rvapak̄a-siddhōnta*” method. “*P'rvapak̄a*” means “all those positions and standpoints” (“*pak̄a*”) that are “prior” (“*p'rvā*”) to “one’s own position” (“*siddhōnta*”). The writer of a major philosophical work (or of a commentary on it) first states one by one all the other philosophical positions that differ from his own. Then he offers his arguments as to why the other positions are unsound and unacceptable. At this stage he also considers all possible ways in which all those positions can be modified, augmented and defended (although this has not actually been done by anyone till then). Then he shows that all these actual and possible defences are unsound. After thus showing that every conceivable rival standpoint is altogether unsound, he proceeds to set forth the soundness of his own position (*siddhōnta*, literally “settled or established conclusion”) in a systematic manner. For example, if a philosopher thinks that comparison is not a correct method of knowing, he will expound the actual arguments of those who accept it and show them to be untenable; then he will also expound all possible ways in which the *pramāṇa*-hood of comparison could be defended, and show that they all are equally untenable. After this he will try to show that the job assigned to comparison by his rival philosophers can be accomplished equally well by a combination of perception and inference, and that the acceptance of comparison as an *independent* source of correct knowledge is therefore unnecessary and superfluous. In the same way, the champion of comparison as a source of correct knowledge will try to show how perception and inference, either individually or in combination, are inadequate to explain certain instances of our knowledge of things. On this ground he will maintain that comparison has to be conceded *pramāṇa*-status.

In the course of this very brief presentation I hope I have been able to convey at least something regarding the extremely complex and inter-twined topic of “method” in Indian philosophy.

ENDNOTES

sthāṇu puruṣo'yaṁiti vyavasāyo mithyopalabdhīḥ—atasmīṣtaditi jñānaḥ. sthāṇu sthāṇuriti vyavasāyaḥ tattvajñānaḥ. tattvajñānena ca mithyopalabdhirnivarttate... *Nyōyas'trabhṛṇya*, 4.2.35, page 808, Benares: Chowkhambh Sanskrit Series Office, 1925.

sataṅga sadbhāvo asataṅga asadbhāvaḥ. sat saditi gṛhyamāṇaṁ yathābhāvaṁ aviparītaṁ tattvaṁ bhavati, *Nyōyas'trabhṛṇya*, 1.1.1, page 10, Benares: Chowkhambh Sanskrit Series Office, 1925.

.... *tattvajñānāt nīḥreyaśādhigamaḥ*, *Nyōyas'trabhṛṇya*, 1.1.1, page 14, Benares: Chowkhambh Sanskrit Series Office, 1925.

Speaking of an action like thinking or meditation, *µaṅkara* observes: “Even though mental, meditation and thinking can be done as prescribed, not done or done differently because they are dependent upon man. But knowledge is born of *pramāṇa*. And the object of a *pramāṇa* concerns the nature of the thing as it is; therefore knowledge cannot deviate from the nature of the object as action can deviate from what is prescribed. Knowledge is just dependent on the very nature of the object, and not on either injunction or the human person” (*dhyānam cintanam yadyapi mānasam tathāpi puruṣeṇa kartum akartum anyathā vā kartum śakyam, puruṣātantratvāt. jñānam tu pramāṇajanyaḥ. pramāṇaṁ yathābhāvaṁ tavastuviṣyam, ato jñānam karutṁ akartum anyathā vā kartum aśakyaḥ. kevalam vastutantrameva tat na codanātantram nōpi puruṣātantraḥ*), *µaṅkara's Brahmas'trabhṛṇya*, 1.1.4, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1964, p. 14.

For a brief treatment of this topic, see Srinivasa Rao, *Perceptual Error: The Indian Theories*, Chapter 5, Honolulu: The University of Hawaii Press, 1998.

6. See Govardhan P. Bhatt, *Epistemology of the Bhāṣya School of P'ṛva Mīmāṃsā*, Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1962, p. 185.

7. See Govardhan P. Bhatt, *Epistemology of the Bhāṣya School of P'ṛva Mīmāṃsā*, Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series Office, 1962, pp. 86-87.

See *The Mōṣy'kyopaniṣad with Gauṣapāda's Kōrikā and māṣkara's Commentary*, Swāmī Ākṣhilānanda (tr.), Mysore: Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, 1968.

The Naiyāyika would hotly contest this, but this is another big story.

māṣkara's original formulation of the doctrine of superimposition at the beginning of his *Brahmas'rabhāṣya* is famous as *adhyāsa-bhāṣya*. The original Sanskrit is quite complex, although quite clear, and there are many translations of it available in English.

11. For an excellent discussion of this method see Swami Satchidanandendra Saraswati, *How to Recognize the Method of Vedānta*, Holenarasipur: The Adhyatma Prakasha Karyalaya, 1964.

A MARXIST METHODOLOGY FOR THE INDIAN CONTEXT.

BY DR. JOSE ELAMPASSERY, S.J

For more than a century Marxism has been a vital current in the political culture and intellectual life, first of Western Europe and then of the entire world. A Marxist presence in the intellectual circles of the colonized and developing worlds was ubiquitous and longstanding, having begun just before and the during the 1920s, when communist parties were formed in India, China, Turkey and other countries. However, for many people today, including many who would have called themselves Marxists not so long ago, this tradition seems largely spent. As a political tendency, Marxism is so deeply in crisis that many erstwhile Marxists nowadays eschew even the label (Wright 179). Today the major part of the left in advanced capitalist countries and in the developing world appears to have largely shed its historical affiliation with the Marxist tradition. Not only have Marxist revolutionary aspirations been marginalized, but programs of social reform inspired by Marxist understanding of the social world and Marxist vision of ideal social arrangements no longer shape left political practice (Wright 1).

However, I believe it is too early to write the obituary of Marxism. One of those who wrote this obituary, Francis Fukuyama argued in *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992) claimed that a remarkable consensus concerning the legitimacy of liberal democracy as a system of government had emerged throughout the world during the past few years, as it conquered rival ideologies like hereditary monarchy, fascism, and most recently communism. He argued that liberal democracy may constitute the 'end point of mankind's ideological evolution' and the 'final form of human government,' and as such constitute the 'end of history.' That is, while earlier forms of government were characterized by grave defects and irrationalities that led to their eventual collapse, liberal democracy was arguably free from such fundamental internal contradictions. For Fukuyama the alliance of liberal democracy and of the 'free market' constitutes the good news of the last quarter of the twentieth century (Derrida 43). Today 'civilization' has become a synonym of capitalist democracy, while anything critical of the current state of affairs is branded as 'radical' and dismissed as irresponsible romanticism (Adamson 135). Even Francis Fukuyama was made to reassess his views after Sept. 11. In an article, "History Restarts Since Sept 11," he quotes the French sociologist Jean Baudrillard who published a long piece in *Le Monde* in which he argued that 'Ultimately, it is they [i.e., the terrorists] who've done the deed, but it is we who have wanted it. . . . Terrorism is immoral, and it responds to a globalization that is itself immoral.' Fukuyama goes on to say that Baudrillard's image is one of France, and more generally,

Europe, as an island of civilization caught in a struggle between two morally equivalent fundamentalisms--that of the United States and the radical Islamists. Fukuyama does not agree with the view of Baudrillard. However, I feel that there is an element of truth in it and many around the world agree with it. Liberal democracy which is at the service of corporate capitalism and imperialism has to rethink its democratic credentials.

After witnessing one of the most irrational wars in history, i.e., the war against the people of Iraq, I find it difficult to believe in Fukuyama's thesis that the existing liberal democracy of the capitalist countries is a rational form of government, governing with the consent of the people to ensure their welfare. The war against Iraq was fought without taking into consideration the wishes of the peoples of the world at large and against the will of the people of the nations that went for the war. People were brainwashed by the so-called free press controlled by vested interests which refused to see the truth and stand for civilized norms of behavior. Consensus was elicited among the invading forces in the most undemocratic manner possible by making use of threats, bribes and blackmails. The real interest of the war was, as many think today, control over Iraqi oil. The lip service to freedom and democracy was a cover for aggression and occupation. In the post World War period there has hardly been a dictator who was not created and protected by the CIA. The justification of the second Gulf war is the doctrine that any means used against anyone who challenges American hegemony is justifiable. Though the war negated every norm of democratic behavior, the votaries of colonialism and imperialism see the victory over the Iraqi people as one more step in the triumphant march of capitalism. This, added to the collapse of the economies of the so-called socialist states, has challenged many of the beliefs and convictions of the socialist left. As a result, the left today finds itself back at its original starting point in the last century. Like then, it now faces a form of capitalism that is in ascendance. There would seem to be greater 'consensus' today, more than at any other time in history, that capitalism is the only valid form of economic organization. The present belief that capitalism is synonymous with social order and progress means that any search for an alternative to capitalism is an irrational and a reactionary project. As the global order extends beyond the West, we find political opponents are labeled "terrorist" and "evil." Thus those opposed the IMF policies are terrorists and those who oppose the US hegemony belong to the axis of evil.

According to Chomsky, what is called "capitalism" today is basically a system of corporate mercantilism, with huge and largely unaccountable private tyrannies exercising vast control over the economy, political systems, and social and cultural life, operating in close cooperation with powerful States that intervene massively in the domestic economy and international society. Even in the US more than 80% of the population regard the economic system as *inherently unfair* and the political system as a fraud, which serves *special interest groups, not the people*.

With respect to the current state of things, Marx's analysis of capital appears nothing short of prophetic. Virtually everything he attributes to capital—from its unceasing expansion to globalization, commodity fetishization and automated production, to the increased rapidity of transport and communication—has become a reality. As Marx foresaw, the wealth and power of those who control the means of production continue to grow disproportionately. However, rather than the "revolutionary consciousness" that Marx believed would result from this, the political climate we currently see is closer to the opposite, despite the widening gap between the rich and the poor. "Class struggle" appears to be in decline. (Adamson 107). Generally speaking, it appears that ignorance rather than enlightenment and apathy often promoted by brainwashing mechanisms like those that led many to endorse the Iraq war rather than activism are growing in tandem with the advance of capital. Although the present social climate questions the validity of some of the concepts of Marx, it does not necessarily undermine the relevance of Marx's thought as a whole.

Today Marxian theory and practice has to confront the critique of postmodernism, too. In providing a critique of positivism and macrotheory, postmodernism has established an intellectual tradition that has challenged a variety of intellectual viewpoints, most notably Marxism. By arguing for subjectivism and microsociological analysis, leading postmodern thinkers have instituted a theoretical and practical shift away from the once dominant Marxist tradition. For the traditional Marxist thinkers, this shift has necessitated a reassessment of thought regarding the fundamental structure of theory, the construction of discourse, the theoretical approach to social phenomena, and the nature of reality (Barnhart).

Though the Marxian dream of a classless society, a society without alienations, looks a distant dream or even an impossibility, this dream is still superior to capitalistic structures which have failed to bring about a more equitable society. What we witness is the helplessness and despair of the ordinary men and women of the world when confronted by large corporate interests and the military might that protect them. We also see the more intolerant among the exploited and marginalized turning to violence and terror. To believe that there is no alternative to the present corporate capitalism and leave the vast majority of people to the marginalized state, deprived of the power to shape their own lives, is to deny their humanity. We need to look for political and economic alternatives that will bring about a better future to the marginalized of society. These alternatives need methodologies to understand reality and get organized.

Marxist methodology can, perhaps, offer us help in this process of critiquing corporate capitalism and developing alternatives. In fact, Marxist methodology and critique still remains the best tool to understand and analyze the present day scenario and its implications. As Oswald Nell-Breuning, S. J. wrote in his commentary of *Quadragesimo Anno*, "This analysis of economic society and—for what it says concerning the industrialized countries—of society as a whole is the imperishable achievement of Marx. All subsequent critiques of capitalism are based, to one degree or another on it" (Miranda xiii). He goes on to say that 'we are all riding on Marx's shoulders' (Miranda xiii). According to Derrida, "We all live in a world, some would say a culture, that still bears, at an incalculable depth, the mark of this [Marxist] inheritance, whether in a directly visible fashion or not"(33). Therefore, in this paper I propose to explain some of the methodologies of Marxism and point out some of the areas in the Indian context where concepts derived from these could be used to understand and critique the existing situations, ideologies and hegemonies with a view to bring about transformations in society.

The way we are using the phrase "Marxist methodology" requires certain clarifications. By "Marxist" we mean the thought patterns and practices that have developed since Marx, thought patterns which have been inspired by Marx and his vision. So we will be looking into the developments that have taken place in different parts of the world since Marx. When we look at these developments, one of the first things we notice is that there is nothing that could be called *the* Marxist methodology, just like there is nothing that could be called *the* Marxism. Opinions vary regarding the number of versions of Marxism present in society today. Some have suggested that there are two Marxisms inherent in the classical tradition—one a science of revolutionary practice, the other a philosophical critique of capitalist modernity. A further breakdown is offered by Therborn, who distinguishes the thinking of the Comintern and Communist Parties affiliated to the Third International, the dissident argumentation of Trotskyism, and the Marxisms of the non-European worlds.(Therborn 1996, 77-79) There is nothing untoward about having several Marxisms, since it belongs to the very spirit of Marxism to assume different manifestations, each answering the unique social situation of the time. Thus, writing in the early 1970s, Jameson remarked that it was "consistent with the spirit of Marxism that there should exist several different Marxisms in the world today, each answering the special needs and problems of its own socio-economic system" (Parry 135). And this shows that the postmodern critique of Marxism as a grand overarching theory is not accurate.

Though Marxism is not monolithic, we can discern certain common themes characterizing all its various manifestations. One such characteristic is that Marxist methodology is not a value-free, disinterested affair, but an attempt to look at history from the underside, from the perspective of the marginalized, the excluded other. It is also an attempt to construct knowledge required for the liberation of the dalits, the minorities, the poor, the unorganized sectors and women.

Another important characteristic of Marxism is said to consist in the fact that Marxism embodies distinctive methodological doctrines that sharply distinguish it from 'bourgeois' social theory. While the substance of such claims has varied considerably, there has been virtual unanimity among Marxists that Marxism and its rivals are separated by a deep, and philosophically irreconcilable, methodological fissure. However, this consensus no longer exists. Analytical Marxists reject claims for Marx's methodological distinctiveness, insisting that what is valuable in Marxism is its substantive claim about the world, not its methodology (Wright 104).

As a historical phenomenon Marxism claims to be both a science and a guide to socialist action i.e., a theory meant to explain the process of history, traditionally known as historical materialism and a revolutionary movement. In other words it is both a theory and a praxis. (Therborn 37-8)

It would immensely enrich our understanding of Marxism and its methodology if we look into the ways in which this theory and praxis have been understood and practiced by different interpretations of Marxism such as the traditional Historical Materialism, Critical Theory and Dialectical Phenomenology

1. Historical Materialism

Orthodox historical materialism advances the following two, very general claims:

- a) The level of development of productive forces in a society explains the set of social relations of production, in other words, the "economic structure," of that society; and
- b) the economic structure of a society, i.e., its "economic base," explains that society's legal and political "superstructure" and forms of consciousness. (Wright 16)

Thus the tasks of a Marxist critique could be formulated as the following: First of all it seeks to insert given systems of values and norms into a historical totality, so that we are able to understand them within the context of the forces and relations of production. It also seeks to demonstrate how the ideologies, groups, organizations, institutions and societies are structured by the class struggle, constituting different examples of unity of opposites, contradictory unities of the values and norms of opposing classes (Therborn 1980: 429). To demonstrate that the forms and values of the society are in the last analysis determined by the economic structure of society means that changes are brought to society by transformations in the economic structures. Traditional Marxist analysis considers historical materialism and class struggle as the underpinnings of Marxist theory. It also considers history a teleological process leading to a classless society.

However, we should keep in mind that dialectical materialism is a method of analysis and not in itself a science. Marxism as a methodology is also in need of "critical reappraisal," because Marxism is often employed not as a method of critique related to actual struggle, but as a theory, which, having assumed an autonomy of its own, is disputed in terms of an inner 'logic' and its reality. This can lead to dogmatism. There are not many takers today for such a science of dialectical materialism and its methodology.

There were three major efforts at elucidation of the scientific basis of historical materialism, which deserve to be noted—two from Western Europe by Galvano Della Volpe and Louis Althusser and one from the Eastern Sector, by Jindrich Zeleny. They located themselves in the Marxist-Leninist tradition. Their common effort has been to defend, clarify and develop the scientificity of Marxism (Therborn 1980 : 41).

Della Volpe and Zeleny both belong to the important and versatile tradition of the method of “historical materialism.” The objective of Della Volpe’s main work *Logic as a Positive Science* is the emancipation of thought from all aprioristic speculation and metaphysics, and the establishment of logic and theory of knowledge as a science. According to them, there is only one method and one logic, namely, that of the modern experimental science. In this perspective, Della Volpe defines Marx’s critique of Hegel as the third major step in the development of nondogmatic, scientific logic, the first being Aristotle’s critique (in the political philosophy, for instance) of Plato’s classification of concrete species and the second being Galileo’s critique of the scholastic conception of the fabric of the world. The common core of these critiques is their attack on a priori reasoning, the philosophical foreclosure of the empirical world. The scientific logic of historical materialism involve “concepts, achieved by means of the methodological circle, concrete-abstract-concrete, the method of induction-deduction.” Della Volpe has described the logic of method of historical materialism as a ‘moral galileism.’ ‘Moral’ refers to the ‘moral’ or human sciences, and ‘galileism’ is employed to distinguish the method historical materialism no merely from the idealist, with its hypostases, but also from the positivist method, with its ‘idolatry of facts,’ and its distrust of hypotheses or ideas (Therborn 1980: 44).

Zeleny was interested in the contribution made by the new science of historical materialism to the existing, already scientific logic of science (Therborn1980: 45). He distinguishes three types of relations: “relationships of surface appearances, especially quantitative relationships,” “inner substantial relations,” and “relationship between essence and surface appearance.” The first type of analysis was used by both Marx and Ricardo. The novelty of Marx’s work hinges on its distinctive treatment of the other two types of relation. Marx’s study of capitalism is not primarily concerned with what happens in a fixed system of market exchange when the values of variables of the system (productivity or the availability of land, for example) change, but rather with the laws of development and change of the system itself. Louis Althusser refers to a “necessity for a theory which defines itself dialectically, not merely as a science of history (historical materialism) but also and simultaneously as a philosophy...therefore capable of accounting for itself,” of taking itself and its scientificity as an object (Althusser 39). In order to emphasise its scientific aspect as strongly and provocatively as possible, Althusser had described Marxism a “theoretical anti-humanism,” humanism being a non-scientific ideology, bourgeois in character (*For Marx*, part 7). Althusser lists three constitutive elements of a science—a materially existing object, a theory and a method.

All three thinkers insisted on the scientific character of Marxist analysis, against an idealistic, romantic mode of thinking. For them Marxist methodology was scientific methodology, and knowledge freed from aprioristic reasoning and ideologies could help in the construction of theory that will lead to revolutionary praxis (Therborn 1980: 45-49).

2. Antonio Gramsci

Antonio Gramsci perceived the need for greater interpretative sensitivity in Marxian analysis. His work simultaneously addressed two lacunae in Marx’s own thinking—the neglect of politics and the neglect of culture. Gramsci’s work is important precisely because it points to the links between politics and culture, and socialist strategy. In his *Prison Notebooks*, he argued that domination was not simply rooted in the economic sphere, but also had a major political and cultural component. He placed culture and intellectuals in the center of analysis and politics and class power. (Therborn 1996,75). Culture comes into the picture when it is realized that a major component of state power was the control of ideas as well as the use of physical force (e.g., by the police). The key concept here is ‘hegemony.’ Hegemony expresses the consent of the subordinate classes to the bourgeois dominance, which comes as the other face of the power: the face of the domain of consciousness and of the reproduction of ideology. The bourgeoisie uses its political, moral and intellectual leadership to impose its vision of the world as something comprehensible and universal,

which in this way molds the interests and needs of the subordinate groups. Gramsci claimed that the activities of organic intellectuals were central to the propagation of hegemonic beliefs and the establishment of a hegemonic bloc. Gramsci argued that breaking down hegemony is a fundamental precondition for mobilizing latent socialist tendencies and initiating a revolutionary consciousness.

3. Jürgen Habermas's Critical Theory

According to *Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* critical theory is;

“ primarily a way of doing philosophy, integrating the normative aspects of philosophical reflection with the explanatory achievements of the social sciences. The ultimate goal of its program is to link theory and practice, to provide insight, and to empower subjects to change their oppressive circumstances and achieve human emancipation, a rational society that satisfies human needs and powers....Habermas' analysis of communication seeks to provide norms for nondominating relations to others and a broader notion of reason. (Audi 278-79)

Habermas sees Critical Theory as a way to recognize the *telos* of society and to normatively evaluate society's current state as it relates to the fulfillment of that *telos*. As Braaten puts it, "For Habermas, this *telos* is the end of coercion and the attainment of autonomy through reason, the end of alienation through a consensual harmony of interests, and the end of injustice and poverty through the rational administration of justice" (Braaten 111). Habermas's reconstruction of Marx can be seen as more humanistic, more philosophical and less positivist in orientation than other strands of neo-Marxism. Habermas wants to introduce into Marxism the importance of knowledge and ideas in the shaping/development of history and a theory of culture that cannot be reduced to economic processes alone.

In *Knowledge and Human Interests* (1968) he identifies three 'quasi-transcendental' or 'anthropologically deep-seated' cognitive interests with reference to which distinct forms of knowledge can be delineated, viz., (1) a technical interest; (2) a practical interest, and (3) an emancipatory interest. Habermas's epistemology then becomes grounded in the discourse that should transpire according to ideal speech situations. Habermas suggests that the Enlightenment project (which saw reason as leading to emancipation) could be saved if reason was redefined in a novel way as communicative reason, consisting of the undistorted activities of people attempting in a genuine way to attain clear mutual understanding. Habermas seeks a way of revitalizing the life world and allowing it to fight back against the colonizing forces of commodification and bureaucratic rationalization. The answer lies in his theory of communicative rationality which consists of open, honest, and informed debate, which is free from the distorting constraints of ideology and power.

4. Dialectical Phenomenology

The usual formulation of Marx's method, dialectical materialism, stresses the anti-idealistic aspect of his work. However, given the developments in the social sciences, a stress on the anti-positivistic, phenomenological aspects of his work makes more sense today. Dialectical phenomenology could be said to be the method used by Marx in *Grundrisse* to analyse and critique the economics and economic theories of his time (Bologh 1). This method of theorizing, i.e., dialectical phenomenology, assumes that an object's meaning or sense can only be known in its relation to a knowing subject. It is not internal to the object, nor is it internal to the subject. This approach is in its nature dialectical. The object takes on its meaning from a 'form of life' (Wittgenstein) within which the knower stands. A method of theorizing may be reformulated as a mode of production. Marx's work on capital inquires into the mode of production of capital and does not simply treat capital as a thing in itself. Marx's text also should be understood in terms of its mode of production. This search into the mode of production and method of theorizing could be considered dialectical phenomenology (Bologh 12).

Roslyn Wallach Bologh distinguishes four rules of dialectical phenomenology:

Rule 1: Treat concepts as grounded in a historically specific form of life (34).

Rule 2: Treat individuals as grounded in an historically specific form of life (46).

Rule 3: Treat a form of life as a totality of internal relations (51)

Rule 4: Treat a concrete form of life as contradictory (61)

Together these four rules constitute a method of theorizing that is a critique of an unself-conscious form of life. As a way of reading Marx, it is a critique of readings that are either purely objective (positivist) or purely subjective (idealist), readings that fail to ground Marx's text in a subject-object unity. Marx's *Grundrisse* gives us insights into the working of Marx's mind and provides us with a model to deal with social phenomena. Contemporary social problems and conflicts could be understood from a dialectical phenomenological perspective by formulating concepts and treating them as grounded in a historically specific form of life, a totality of contradictory internal relations.

MARXISM AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE

Today more than ever we live in a knowledge society. The positions of authority, economic status, political power and influence, etc., depend on the amount and quality of knowledge and access to knowledge that the individuals and society have. However, human beings do not discover knowledge of the social world; they constitute it in their practical everyday activity. There are, in capitalist, elitist, bureaucratic and casteist societies several important obstacles to the knowledge constitutive activities of human beings.

The different stratifications that exist in the society on the basis of class, status, caste, community, sex, language, etc. prohibit, restrict and put constraints on the production of knowledge. The tasks of the Marxian methodologist are:

- 1) learn how human knowledge is constituted, so that social revolution in all oppressive societies, including both capitalist and bureaucratic "socialist" societies could be advanced;
- 2) identify the blocks to the construction of knowledge such as the false consciousness and ideologies of domination;
- 3) destroy the obstacles to collective knowledge-constitutive activity by making visible the structural obstacles to the collective production of knowledge, through concrete field research;
- 4) help establish the procedures by which the knowledge-constitutive process may proceed without distortion, by clarifying the practical ends toward which the human process points;
- 5) oppose the displacement of history by theory. All statements about social life must be qualified and bracketed by the existing historical totality. (Young, T.R)

Clinical versus scientific Marxism

Two stylized analogies of medicine can illuminate the Marxist intellectual tradition and its methodology in the context of India. Medicine functions both as clinical practice and as scientific research. Clinical practitioners use scientific methodology to treat illness. Scientific medicine is committed to advance understanding. By analogy we can distinguish clinical and analytic Marxism as analytically distinct poles of Marxist theoretical practice. Clinical Marxism attempts to diagnose and address the 'pathologies' of social situation using the tools in the Marxist medical kit. While clinical Marxism employs the achievement of scientific Marxism—and is therefore scientific in the way that clinical medicine is—it does not aim to develop or reconstruct Marxist theory, but to understand the (class) forces and (systematic) constraints at work in specific cases, and to prescribe treatments, and, where possible, cures. Scientific Marxism, in contrast, is concerned precisely with the development and reconstruction of Marxist theory. Marxism is espoused to the ideal that these clinical and scientific modes should mutually reinforce and enrich each other. The clinical practice of Marxism, particularly when it is deployed politically in the actual practice of socialist movements, helps to identify anomalies, i.e., failures of the theory to diagnose social situations adequately. These anomalies provoke reconstructions of the theory through scientific practice of Marxism. And the reconstructed theory is then applied more effectively

in future struggles. This 'dialectic of theory and practice' should engender an open and creative dialogue between these two sides of Marxist practice. Only such a dialogue can be an effective instrument of social change (Wright 179-81).

Indian Marxists in the past have failed to diagnose the pathologies of the Indian situation. Even today they have not been able to organize the people or to present an alternative to the governing ideology of reactionary religious fundamentalism and corporate capitalism, and this remains a serious defect of Indian Marxism.

The Indian Context

We can only highlight a few areas in contemporary India to which a Marxist critique could be applied. A recent example, the political abuse of history that is currently on with NCERT textbooks, where, in the words of K.N Panniker in 'Rightist History is Communal History,' "the past is being invented in the pretense of depicting it," is an attempt to deny history to the non-dominant groups.

Romila Thapar's recent work *Early India: From the Origins to AD 1300* is a daring example of how history should be written in contrast to the NCERT attempt. She uses a Marxist approach to the interpretation of history, as did D. D. Kosambi before her. In an essay on the late Dr D. D. Kosambi in her book *Cultural Pasts* she says that when Sartre said "Marxism was the necessary philosophy of our time," what he meant was that though particular conclusions of Marx might not be acceptable, the method of analysis which he worked out is virtually unavoidable in social sciences. What Kosambi did was neither to justify nor to prove anything, but use Marxist methodology creatively to investigate a possible pattern and suggest a new framework. This critical and creative approach is required of our present historians.

I shall sum up by pointing out a few areas where Marxist methodology, i.e., scientific, rational, practical, critical and transformative methodology could be used to unmask the deceptions of ideology, religious fanaticism, capitalist domination, Hindutva and Aryan hegemony.

- 1. The creation of the existing hegemony is something to which we have all contributed a great deal. Most of our Indologists have labored to give respectability to upper-class Hindu practices and beliefs. A glorification of irrationality has been the distinguishing mark of our scholarship. We need to search into the mode of production (e.g., Indology for export) and construction of these knowledge systems. A rational, scientific approach to the problems is the need of the hour.**
- 2. Our educational institutions have been at the service of the hegemonic bloc. They have served the interests of the elite, the upper castes, and the bourgeois for too long. A critique of the hegemony and creation of a solidaric bloc would be one of the tasks of the Marxist critique of society.**
- 3. The creation of knowledge that would liberate the marginalized is another task of the Marxist critique. There are many blocks to this in contemporary society. Traditionally, knowledge has been denied to the lower castes in the country. Now that it seems no more a possibility, the upper castes led by Joshi and others speak about the greatness of Indian systems of knowledge, of astrology, Vedic mathematics, temple rituals and native medicine—all of which are now open to the dalits and the poor. The children of the votaries of Hindutva opt for computers and the knowledge that comes from the materialistic West. Many Indians seem to be taken up by this deceptive game. The unveiling of this hypocrisy and double speak and our part in it, is an urgent task.**
- 4. A critique of the world of media and the myths they propagate (what Chomsky calls "brainwashing under freedom") is a must. The coverage of the recent war against Iraq was a clear example of this sort of brainwashing. We still do not know the number**

of Iraqis who were killed as a result of the aggression. All the leading newspapers and TV channels faithfully adopted the aggressors point of view and reported their versions of the war; hardly any of them dared to criticize the government or the powers that are. The prominence given to SARS in a world, where more than three million people die of malaria every year, is another example of the myth-producing character of the media. In this context, we have to ask anew what the meaning of freedom of the press and free flow of information is.

5. Since our society is class and caste based, we have to ask whether there is a possibility of ever creating an ideal speech situation, a nondominating discourse. If the answer is negative, we have to further ask what the ideological and cultural factors that block the human development of the individuals are.

6. Real socialism means the creation of a society where “the condition for the development of each is the condition for the development of all,” where economic and social development of all irrespective of class and caste is assured, and where people enjoy the right to shape their life free from the restrictions placed by class and caste. Today in the name of globalization, structural adjustment, and efficiency the government and the elite are leaving the marginalized to fend for themselves while extracting labor from them. Commercialization of education, because the government is not able to provide quality education to the people, is blocking large sections of people from empowering themselves. These actions and practices need to be located in the complex relationship that exist in the society and analysed.

7. A critique of the so called spiritual values and culture of India, a spirituality that prohibits cow slaughter but sanctions and encourages human slaughter is another must.

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Gandhian Method: its Prospects in Indian Christian Philosophizing

BY Dr. B. Joseph Francis

I. Is there a Gandhian philosophy or method?

When I pondered over the title suggested by the organizers for my topic, I asked myself: is there a Gandhian method at all? Could I call him a philosopher in the ordinary sense of the term? Or perhaps consider him a practical philosopher and not an academic philosopher? What was Gandhi's own attitude towards intellectual pursuits? Is he a social reformer? Or should I call him an astute politician? His frugal living and attire made him out to be an ascetic. People all over the world in his time tried to figure out how exactly figure him out. Yet his popularity was unprecedented and when he died a violent death the reaction of the world bore witness to the respect he commanded from all peoples of the world. Gandhi was not an anti-intellectual though at times he may appear to be so. Here is what he writes to Purushottam Gandhi his relative from Yerwada prison on 12-5-32 "Logic is a purely intellectual process. We should not care in the least if logic, that is the intellect, cannot understand what is self-evident to the heart. On the contrary, sometimes our intellect is convinced of certain ideas which the heart does not accept. We should then reject them"^{lxxxvii}. This, however, sounds like Blaise Pascal. He did not claim to be a philosopher. Margaret Chatterjee says of him: "He was a man of the people, not a professional philosopher...the man and his thinking are all of a piece. He was canny enough to steer completely clear of the artificial distinctions philosophers make between one concept and another, and still more, the distinction made between the rational and allegedly irrational parts of the psyche"^{lxxxviii}. He considered himself to be a practical, sincere man, honest to his conscience. He never liked to think of himself as the originator of any system. This is amply borne out by what he wrote almost towards the end of his life to one Rameshwari Nehru on 7-6-1946; 'I do not know myself who is a Gandhian. Gandhism is a meaningless word for me.

An 'ism' follows the propounder of a system. I am not one; hence I cannot be the cause for an 'ism'. If an 'ism' is built up it will not endure, and if it does it will not be Gandhism"^{lxxxix}. This, I find, is an appropriate caution, which we would do well to keep in mind as we reflect further. Though it is true that he did not formally think out or institute a method, any researcher pouring avidly over his voluminous writings, sayings and above all his life cannot but discover hidden beneath all these, a practical man, a philosopher with a philosophical method of his own, according to his, perhaps, uncanny perceptions and non-systematized ratings. Its prospects in Indian Christian philosophizing, I leave it to your own judgement. My task will be only to highlight some of the hidden skein of his hectic life of activity and popularity with the masses.

II. His Search for Truth

Practically all the researchers on Mahatma Gandhi have noted that the synthesis of his thinking is "truth" in all its manifestations. It is true, however, that in the popular mind we have connected Gandhi with *ahimsa*, non-violence and his special methodology of *satyagraha* to achieve his righteous goals. I agree with Shivesh C.Thakur when he says: "In the course of his long and extraordinarily active life Gandhi said and wrote a tremendous amount but I think it is still possible to compress his entire philosophy into literally one word. Most people might imagine that word would be 'non-violence' (*ahimsa*), but I believe that it has to be 'truth'. It is this word that imparts meaning and justification to everything else Gandhi stood for"^{xc}.

In his autobiography Gandhi describes his shyness to speak in public and gives instances of his nervousness and inability he experienced while in England. It was to such an extent that he could not even read out the speeches he had written down for special occasions. Later as a lawyer in Mumbai the same thing happened. Was this an inferiority complex of sorts? And how did he get out of it? In a way it could have been an inferiority complex since he says that often in such meetings he felt others were better informed than he. So he kept quiet. Unless something was true, why to speak was his attitude. Ultimately it was the deep down commitment to truth that he had silently cultivated which freed him South Africa. The blatant injustice he met there turned this votary of truth into an eloquent and fearless speaker^{xc1}

All his life he tried to describe himself as a humble seeker after truth. A correspondent had written to him about a discussion among friends about Gandhi, some had said he is a cunning politician in the garb of a saint trying to play politics. Gandhi's answer in 1927 was "To clothe me with sainthood is too early even if it is possible. I myself do not feel a saint in any shape or form. But I do feel I am votary of Truth in spite of all my errors of unconscious omission and commission"^{xcii}. For him it was truth above all. While unveiling a portrait of C.R. Das he had said that he was prepared even to sacrifice India herself on the altar not of freedom but of Truth. This had angered some of his friends but Gandhi held his ground. He says: "...I know it jarred on some friends and it incensed some. But what could I do? I can only speak what I feel; or else I should be really worthless"^{xciii}. Instances can be multiplied from various phases of his life^{xciv}. But these would suffice.

M.K Gandhi was not a stick in the mud person but one who was always prepared to change. It was truth that mattered. Against facts there could be no argument seems to be his attitude^{xcv}. He was therefore prepared to change his ideas. He was not bothered if others considered him to be inconsistent. He says: "I am not at all concerned with appearing to be inconsistent. In my search after Truth I have discovered many ideas and learnt many new things. Old as I am in age, I have no feeling that I have ceased to grow

inwardly or that my growth will stop at the dissolution of the flesh. What I am concerned with is my readiness to obey the call of Truth, my God, from moment to moment, and therefore, when anybody finds any inconsistency between any two writings of mine, if he has still faith in my sanity, he would do well to choose the later of the two on the same subject”^{xcvi}

Truth, therefore, was the over-riding interest of his life. Writing to a certain Mr. Edward Murphy of New York, U.S.A, he asserts categorically: “There is no search greater than Truth”^{xcvii}. He was indeed an earnest seeker of Truth in all his deeds. He confesses: “I am but a humble seeker after Truth and bent upon finding It. I count no sacrifice too great ...The whole of my activity whether it may be called social, political, humanitarian or ethical, is directed to that end”^{xcviii}. He was asked by some Christian student whether one should not be devoted to someone and Gandhi’s reply was: “Yes, to Truth. I am devoted to none but Truth, and I owe no discipline to anybody but Truth”^{xcix}. Now we have reached a stage where we should ask what ultimately was this Truth that Gandhi was seeking in his life?

III. The Ultimate Truth?

The search for Truth and commitment to Truth in his life led this sincere, “deeply paradoxical and often tormented character”^c that God is that Truth that he was seeking. Resuming the editorial control of his papers “Navajivan” and “Young India” after his imprisonment 1922-24, for seditious articles in those papers, he notes his policy of firmness and adherence to Truth: “I want to see God face to face. God I know is Truth”^{ci}. In a hand-written message from Sabarmati ashram dated 13-3-1927 he has jotted: “God is truth. The way to Truth lies through *ahimsa*”^{cii}. In a letter to a student in the same year he writes: “We must become embodiments of Truth and Love, for God is Truth and Love”^{ciii}

But he makes a subtle change in 1930 which becomes stronger and settled by 1932. In writing to Narandas Gandhi from Yeravda prison in 22-7-1930 he wanted the following to be read at the ashram during the usual Tuesday morning prayer: “The word *Satya* is derived from *Sat*, which means that which is. *Satya* means a state of being. Nothing is or exists in reality except Truth. That is why *Sat* or *Satya* is the right name for God. In fact it is more correct to say Truth is God than God is Truth. But as we cannot do without a ruler or general, the name God is and will remain more correct”^{civ}. Further, while speaking at a memorable gathering in Lausanne on 8-12-1931 he was asked why he considered God is Truth. In his reply he gives many reasons. God has many names, no name exhausts him. He has many forms and no form exhausts him. Hence he is nameless and formless. He went on to make an important statement: “I would say for those who say God is love, God is love. But deep down in me I say God may be love, but God is Truth. If it is possible for the human tongue to give the fullest description of God, for myself I have come to the conclusion that God is Truth. But two years ago I went a step further and said Truth is God. You will see the fine distinction between the two statements. God is Truth and Truth is God. And that conclusion I came to after a continuous, relentless search after Truth which began so many years ago. I found that the nearest approach to Truth is through love. But I found also that love has many meanings in the English language at least, and human love in the sense of passion becomes a degrading thing also. I found too that love in the sense of *ahimsa* and non-violence has only limited number of votaries in the world...It is very difficult to understand ‘God is love’ (because of a variety of meanings of love) but I never found a double meaning in the connection with Truth and not even atheists have denied the necessity or power of Truth. Not only so. In their passion for discovering Truth, they have not hesitated even to deny the very existence of God---from their own point of view rightly. And it was because of

their reasoning that I saw that I was not going to say ‘God is Truth’, but ‘Truth is God’^{cv}. He explains the same thing in a simpler manner in a letter from prison on 21-3—1932 to the boys and girls of his ashram: “Do you remember my definition of God? Instead of saying that God is Truth, I say that Truth is God. I did not always think thus. I realized this only from four years ago. But without knowing it I always acted as if it was so. I have always known God as Truth. There was a time when I doubted the existence of God, but even at that time I did not doubt the existence of Truth. This Truth is not a material quality but is pure consciousness. That alone holds the universe together. It is God because it rules the whole universe...For me this is almost a matter of direct experience. I say ‘almost’ because I have only a glimpse of Him. But my faith is unshakeable”^{cvi}

While the statement that ‘Truth is God’ is very blandly put, the question remains about Truth itself. In fact he was confronted with this question by his audience at Lausanne on 8-12-1931: “What is Truth?” to which he answered as follows: “A difficult question, but I have solved it for myself by saying that it is what the voice within tells one. How then, you ask, different people think of different and contrary truths? Seeing that the human mind works through innumerable media and that evolution of the human mind is not the same for all, it follows that what may be truth for one may be untruth for another and hence those who have made these experiments have come to the conclusion that there are certain conditions for making experiments...”^{cvi}. He goes on to say that though different persons may be claiming that their inner voice is saying this or that what is needed is sincerity and discipline. These come from vigorous training in observing a life of vows. Gandhi in his ashrams insisted on a series of vows which he wanted his trainees to follow step by step e.g., the vows of truth-speaking and thinking of truth, brahmacharya, non-violence, poverty and non-possession etc.

Margaret Chatterjee while taking note of how Gandhi changed ‘God is Truth’ to ‘Truth is God’ dismisses the subtle distinction with a broad statement: “The word Truth is not substituted for God, but serves to elucidate what ‘God’ means for Gandhi”^{cvi}. Raghavan Iyer commenting on this change in Gandhi says, in line with Gandhi’s secretary Mahadev Desai’s diary dated 24-7-1932: “God is difficult to define, but the definition of truth is deposited in every human heart”^{cix}. Be that as it may, this brings us to an inevitable question whether truth is relative or absolute? If they are not the same how are they related to one to the other? If they are same, then are we not plumb in the middle of a world of chaos?

IV. Relative or Absolute Truth?

The Truth that Gandhi was seeking all his life he identified with God and hence it is the Absolute Truth that he sought. Even as God cannot be comprehended in totality, Gandhi was convinced that in this life one cannot get hold of Absolute Truth. In replying to a Polish professor who had remarked that Gandhi’s frequent shifting of positions smacked of opportunism he writes: “... Finite human beings shall never know in its fullness Truth and Love which is in itself infinite. But we know enough for guidance. We shall err, and sometimes grievously, in our application. But man is self-governing being, and self-government necessarily includes the power as much to commit errors as to set them right as often as they are made”^{cx}. Writing six years later from Yeravda prison to one Keshav he says even more clearly about his attitude: “Truth that we see is always relative knowledge and therefore it need not have universal application. My prayer therefore for my neighbour is: ‘May they see the Truth as Thou the All-knowing One, would have them see it’”^{cx}. When one has such an attitude one will not take offence because someone else thinks differently and sees things differently. Hence he is able to include *ahimsa* as a means to discover Truth. Writing to a certain Mr. Edward Murphy of New York, U.S.A., he asserts: “There is no

search greater than that of Truth. The only means of finding it out is through non-violence in its extreme form. It is because we have ignored it that we seek to impose by force what we consider is truth upon others”^{cxii}. Similarly in a speech at Warda on 20-12-1926 he says: “For, to me Truth is God and there is no way to find truth except the way of Non-violence”^{cxiii}. This relation between Truth and *ahimsa* he makes clear in his mature thought in 1946. In the course of a discussion with a friend who had said “We feel that we have derived more strength from Truth than from your *Ahimsa*” he went on to explain the connection between the two and expressed his partiality to *ahimsa* to which the friend rejoined “...your emphasis is always on *ahimsa*. You have made propagation of non-violence the mission of your life” to which Gandhi replied even more emphatically: “There again you are wrong. *Ahimsa* is not the goal. Truth is the goal. But we have no means of realizing Truth in human relationships except through the practice of *ahimsa*. A steadfast pursuit of *ahimsa* is inevitably bound to Truth—not so violence. That is why I swear by *ahimsa*. Truth came naturally to me. *Ahimsa* I acquired after a struggle. But *ahimsa* being the means we are naturally more concerned with it in our everyday life. It is *ahimsa*, therefore, that our masses have to be educated in. Education in truth follows from it as a natural end”^{cxiv}

From this kind of thinking followed his view on religions. I give three quotations from three different periods of his life to show that it was consistently the same. Replying to a letter from his cousin Jamnadas Gandhi on 30-1-1913, he answers his question whether it is necessary that there should be only one religion for the whole world? He replies: “Personally I think the world as a whole will never have, and need not have a single religion”^{cxv}. In 1934 during the course of a speech at Allepy he says: “It is my conviction that all the great faiths of the world are true, are God-ordained and that they serve the purpose of God and those who have been brought up in those surroundings and those faiths. I do not believe that the time will ever come when we shall be able to say there is only one religion in the world. In a sense even today there is one fundamental religion in the world. But there is no such thing as a straight line in Nature. Religion is one tree with many branches. As branches you may say religions are many; as true Religion is one”^{cxvi}. Towards the end of his life it remained the same. In a speech at prayer meeting in 1946 he declared: “Just as a tree has many branches but one root, similarly various religions are the leaves and branches of the same tree. Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and Zoroasterianism are the main branches but for varieties of religions, they are as numerous as mankind”^{cxvii}. But does this mean that truth can consort with falsehood? Can truths be partial truths? He held that truth cannot be compromised. Way back in 1926 during Bardoli Satyagraha he had remarked: “...truth is not composed of parts. Truth is only one, whole and indivisible and stays as such for all time, past, present and future. Truth can be compared to an arch. If even one brick of the arch comes off, the whole arch crumbles. Because a counterfeit coin is accepted at ninety-nine shops, it does not acquire the worth to be accepted in the hundredth shop. It was a false coin from the very moment of its making...”^{cxviii}

Truth for him always triumphs in the end. This has been a conviction he had acquired as a result of his South African experience. At the end of his campaign there he declared on 8-2 1908 “We consider this a victory for truth...we do assert that most of the leaders fought with scrupulous regard for truth. That is why there has been such a wonderful result. Truth is god or God is nothing but Truth”^{cxix}. He was convinced that even if there is one person [*Satyagrahi*] who holds on firmly to truth, there will be victory for truth. Writing to his publisher friend G.A. Natesan on 25-6-1919 he notes: “Remember what I have often said, one real *Satyagrahi* is enough for victory. This is becoming clearer to me day by day. Even as a true coin fetches full value, so does a true *Satyagrahi* fetch his full value, i.e., attain the intended result”^{cxx}.

V. *Satyagraha as a Methodology for Social Action and Relief*

To me *Satyagraha* was the special method of Gandhi which flows naturally from his ardent desire for Truth and Justice. I would not consider them separately in disjunction but always together. *Satyagraha* is the natural consequence of his whole system. In brief, it means to hold on to truth with all one's main and might. Success was assured. If there was a failure then what went wrong was something with the individuals who claimed to be following *Satya* but in fact they were not! An analysis of what went wrong would bring to light the lack of *Satya* in that particular case, either with the individuals or with the matter itself. Therefore there can never be anything wrong with *Satyagraha* itself as a method.^{cxxi}

Put briefly the method consists in the following steps. First one has to identify the problem. We have to examine: is there a genuine complaint? Has Justice been thwarted? With a lawyer's meticulousness he would examine everything. He would collect the data, process them in his mind and make sure that there is a genuine cause. The next step would be to appeal to the good sense of the oppressor or the one committing the injustice to vacate it. When the appeal is rejected he would next examine if those suffering from injustice were firm in their mind and not fickle-hearted. He would motivate and train them to undergo any suffering that may come. Above all, they have to see to it that they have no anger against the oppressor but only love for him. The motive is not to defeat him but to convert him to better ways. One holds on to truth, come what may. This does not mean that one is stubborn but rather one is ready to give and take when the oppressor is ready to dialogue. A compromise could be worked out which is acceptable to all concerned. He was always ready to go more than half the way because love has to prevail. If such a mind is there the agitators are not terrorists or violent people who disturb the public peace but are in every respect true *Satyagrahis*. Now Gandhi would be prepared to launch his *Satyagraha*. It is mainly a kind of non-cooperation with evil because he reasoned that evil continues in society only because we tolerate evil and are indifferent. But cutting off co-operation would make the oppressor to reflect and change his ways. No force is applied but pressure is surely exerted, a pressure born out of love (*ahimsa*) for the good of the oppressor. If, however, the oppressor is still unmoved, the *Satyagrahi* undertakes a fast. The aim of such a fast is not to kill oneself but to move the oppressor to realize that the issue is serious enough because here are people ready to suffer for it and perhaps even lose their life in the process. The oppressor's compassionate side (Gandhi believed that all human beings had such compassion, even inveterate murderers) would be manifested and he would peacefully vacate the injustice or come to a compromise.

Notice well that for Gandhi a genuine *Satyagraha* can never fail because it is based on Truth and Truth always triumphs. This was the thesis of Gandhi. There were also instances when he gave up *Satyagraha* in some cases when he found that there was violence or when he found that the motivation was not pure enough.^{cxxii} Once again what stands out in the whole process is his concern for Truth. He also insisted strongly that the *Satyagrahis* should be trained and should even follow a few vows so that their commitment to Truth can be truly tested.^{cxxiii}

VI. *What we can salvage from Gandhian Methodology*

I would not like to prolong this paper further. One could perhaps make a study of his political philosophy; how he considers that one's spirituality can go hand in hand with an active involvement into politics. He was often taunted that he better go to the Himalayas and become a Sanyasi rather than dabble in politics. Politics need not be his field. He however defended himself by saying that he does not like to compartmentalize his life. For him politics could also be part of his search for Truth. One could also study his projects such

as “The constructive programmes” of which he began to speak more insistently in Wardha. These constructive projects show how he wanted his countrymen to be enterprising and be self reliant and never feel helpless. If there was one thing that he disliked it was the surrender to a feeling of helplessness. His own interpretation of what ahimsa demands when one is attacked and one’s neighbours’ honour is threatened is revealing. These would take us long in discussing. I refer the reader to my book on Gandhi where I have referred to these. Here I would only ask myself the question: Gandhi has been discredited by many as being not practical enough. While this could be disputed, I try to find something which could be of universal value in his practical “philosophy of life”. His penchant for truth and fierce loyalty to truth is one that always could be highlighted when one considers Gandhi. Perhaps no Philosopher would like to dispute that. Truth is what all seek and want above everything. There can be no compromise on that. The problem is with the perception of Truth. Here the problem of relativity comes in. Is relativity itself to be looked at with askance by any one of us? After all is not relativity part of our experience? Even in the field of Science relativity has an honoured place and Einstein has given his general and special theory of relativity. It has been practical enough to make space travel possible. Relativity as Gandhi sees is perception of truth. He is particular in saying that we cannot have and hold absolute truth on this side of life. What we are given is to perceive and reach out to partial truths but to that extent it is valuable and not nothing! This also gives him the much needed flexibility in his life. Many of his thoughts along this line could be used in the field of a philosophy of religions, as he himself seems to have used given the context of his activity during the independence struggle. The same situation exists in today’s fundamentalists’ agenda of trying to impose one religion in our country under the guise of loyalty to one’s culture or country. Gandhi’s reflections could be used to good advantage here. At times he appeared to change his opinion. He was not averse to it because truth as we perceive changes given the circumstances and situations but what remains unchanged is the élan towards the fullness of truth.

His ahimsa, love, tolerance all flow from such a perception and they have their lasting value given the current trend of intransigence of fundamentalist programme. We need not break one another’s head on issues be they religious, political, social or economical. Paul Grimley Kuntz has his own understanding of Gandhi. He calls Gandhi’s project as a “welcoming of being”. He says he coined this expression because he wanted to capture Gandhi’s meaning without constantly repeating his own words (unfortunately I have done this repeatedly in this paper). He understands by this expression “welcoming of being” as a fundamental concern of Gandhi for all that “is” i.e., for “being” itself. Whatever “is” is his concern^{cxxiv}

So you notice how Gandhi’s thoughts could be incorporated well into our Ontology, Epistemology and Ethics though Gandhi himself would have smiled at our naivety. He was essentially, as he calls himself in his autobiography: “an Experimentor with Truth”.

ⁱ Karl Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (London: Hutchinson, 1974), p.27.

ⁱⁱ Losee, p. 124.

ⁱⁱⁱ Losee, p. 127.

^{iv} Popper, p. 27.

^v See Job Kozhamthadam, *The Discovery of Kepler's Laws: The Interaction of Science, Philosophy and Religion* (Notre Dame, USA: The University of Notre Dame Press, 1994).

^{vi} See Losee, p.81.

^{vii} See Losee, p.81.

^{viii} Quoted in Kozhamthadam, p.87.

^{ix} Hanson, *Patterns of Discovery* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), p. 86.

^x Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge*, rev. ed. (New York: Harper, 1964), p. 17.

^{xi}[1] Derrida "Some questions and responses," in *The Linguistics of Writing*, with D. Attridge et al., (Manchester University Press, 1987), p. 262. (Italics added).

^{xii}[2] This citation is taken from the as yet unpublished *Nachschrift* by F.J. Brecht of Heidegger's lecture course from SS 1920, "*Phänomenologie der Anschauung und des Ausdrucks: Theorie der philosophischen Begriffsbildung*," p. 15, from May 20, 1920. Cited in Charles R. Bambach, "Phenomenological Research as *Destruktion*: The Early Heidegger's Reading of Dilthey," in *Philosophy Today*, 37\2-4 (Summer 1993), p. 118.

^{xiii}[3] M. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, p. 44.

^{xiv}[4] Gasché also relates elsewhere Derrida's deconstruction to Merleau-Ponty's notion of *hyper-reflection*. See his "Meconstruction as Criticism," pp. 184-185. In this essay he also relates deconstruction to Lyotard's use of this notion. Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 183-183. It can also be argued that the concept (?) of deconstruction is anterior to the word deconstruction.

^{xv}[5] "Jacques Derrida: Deconstruction and the Other," in R. Kearney, *Dialogues with Contemporary Continental Thinkers* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984). p. 109.

^{xvi}[6] *Ibid.* (Italics added).

^{xvii}[7] There are sufficient reasons for associating deconstruction with structuralism. His constant references to the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, one of the founders of structural linguistics, his criticism of Claude Lévi-Strauss (*Of Grammatology*), and his familiarity with Russian formalism in linguistics (Positions) are well known, particularly in his discussions on 'sign.' Cf. WD, p. 3, 13-14.

^{xviii}[8] IJF, p. 2.

^{xix}[9] Cf. p. 262.

^{xx}[10] Derrida, J., *Tassions: 'An Oblique Offering'*, Trans. David Wood, in *Derrida: A Critical Reader*, (Ed.) by David Wood, (Oxford/Cambridge: Blackwell, 1992), pp. 5-35.

^{xxi}[11] *ibid.*

^{xxii}[12] *Ibid.*, p. 13. (Italics added).

^{xxiii}[13] Derrida, *Memoires for Paul de Man*, p. 17.

^{xxiv}[14] IJF, p. 5.

^{xxv}[15] *Ibid.*, p. 3.

^{xxvi}[16] *Ibid.*

^{xxvii}[17] P.118.

xxviii[18] Cf. G. Bennington and J. Derrida, *Jacques Derrida*, Trans. G. Bennington, (Chicago/London: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), pp. 192-204. In these pages, Bennington reflects on the phenomenon of 'yes' and its relation to Derrida.

xxix[19] P.124. Derrida explicitly says: "Deconstruction is not an enclosure in nothingness, but an openness towards the other."

xxx[20] Simon Critchley, *The Ethics of Deconstruction: Derrida & Levinas* (Oxford/Cambridge: Blackwell, 1992).

xxxi[21] "How to Avoid Speaking: Denials," Trans. Ken Frieden, In Sanford Budick and Wolfgang Iser, eds., *Languages of the Unsayable: The play of Negativity in Literature and Literary Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989). p. 13.

xxxiii[23] *Limited Inc.*, Ed. General Graff, Trans. Samuel Weber and Jeffrey Mehlman, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988). p. 136.

xxxiv[24] For a clear exposition on the concept of context in general and Derrida's understanding of the same, cf. S. IJsseling, "Derrida over tekst en kontekst," in *Deconstructie en ethiek* (Eds.) Philippe Van Houte and S. IJsseling, (Van Gorcum Assen/Masstricht: Universitaire pers Leuven, 1992), pp. 9-13.

xxxv[25] *Limited Inc.*, Ed. General Graff, Trans. Samuel Weber and Jeffrey Mehlman, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988).p. 9.

xxxvi[26] *Ibid.*, p. 7.

xxxvii[27] *Ibid.*, p. 8.

xxxviii[28] *ibid.*, P. 9.

xxxix[29] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

xl[30] *Ibid.*, p. 3.

xli[31] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

xliv[32] *Ibid*

xlvi[33] Derrida, "Sending: On representation," in *Social Research*, p. 299.

xlviii[34] *Ibid* ., p. 115.

l[35] *Ibid.*, p. 116.

lii[36] *ibid.*

liiii[37] *Ibid.*

liiii[38] "The Deconstruction of Actuality: An Interview with Jacques Derrida," in *Radical Philosophy* 68 (Autumn 1994) , p. 39.

liiii[39] *Ibid.*

li[40] *Limited Inc.*, Ed. General Graff, Trans. Samuel Weber and Jeffrey Mehlman, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1988). p. 116.

lii[41] Cf: *The Ear of the Other*: Trans. Peggy Kamuf et al., (New York: Schocken, 1985). p. 114.

lii[42] *Positions*. Trans. Alan Bass, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981). p. 4.

liii[43] *Ibid.*, p. 3.

liv[44] “Aus dem Gedankenkreise der Geburt der Tragödie,” 1. 3. *Nietzsche Werke* (Leipzig, 1903), vol. 9, part 2, i, p. 66. Cited in OG, p. 6.

lv[45] *Ibid.*, pp. 7, 244-246.

lvi[46] de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, p. 120.

lvii[47] *Margins of Philosophy*. Trans. Alan Boss, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984). p. 10.

lviii[48] *ibid.*

lix[49] *Positions*. Trans. Alan Boss, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), p. 26. See also MP. *Margins of Philosophy*. Trans. Alan Boss, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984). pp. 10-12.

lx[50] *Writing and Difference*. Trans. Alan Bass, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978) p. 280.

lxi[51] *Positions*. Trans. Alan Boss, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981) p. 19-20.

lxii[52] *Writing and Difference*. Trans. Alan Bass, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978) p. 292.

lxiii[53] *Of Grammatology* Trans. Gayatri Spivak, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976) p. 70.

lxiv[54] *Writing and Difference*. Trans. Alan Bass, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978) p. 280.

lxv[55] *Of Grammatology* Trans. Gayatri Spivak, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976) p. 24.

lxvi[56] *Ibid.*, pp. 280-281.

lxvii[57] Those who interpret Derrida as a rigorous philosopher in the tradition of Nietzsche, Freud, Husserl, Heidegger, Levinas, etc., invariably approach deconstruction as a critique of totalization, particularly the type of totalization proper to Hegel's absolute knowledge.

lxviii[58] “Jacques Derrida: Deconstruction and the Other,” in R. Kearney, *Dialogues with Contemporary Continental Thinkers* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984). p. 117.

lix[59] *The Ear of the Other*: Trans. Peggy Kamuf et al., (New York: Schocken, 1985), p. 113.

lxx[60] *Ibid.*, p. 116.

lxxi[61] *ibid.*

lxxiii[63] “Jacques Derrida: Deconstruction and the Other,” in R. Kearney, *Dialogues with Contemporary Continental Thinkers* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984). p. 116.

lxxiv[64] “Jacques Derrida: Deconstruction and the Other,” in R. Kearney, *Dialogues with Contemporary Continental Thinkers* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984). p. 117.

lxxv[65] *Ibid.*; Cf. also S. Critchley, Black Socrates? Questioning the philosophical tradition, " in *Radical Philosophy* 68 (Jan/Feb 1995), pp. 17-26.

lxxvi *sthō%au puru o'yamiti vyavasāyo mithyopalabdhīp-atasmi^staditi jñōna^*. *sthō%au sthō%auriti vyavasāyāp tattvajñōna^*. *tattvajñōnena ca mithyopalabdhirnivarttate...* *Nyāyas'trabhō ya*, 4.2.35, page 808, Benares: Chowkhambō Sanskrit Series Office, 1925.

lxxvii *satajca sadbhōvo asatajca asadbhōvaḥ*. *sat saditi gḥyamō%am yathōbh'tam avipar'tam tattvam bhavati*, *Nyāyas'trabhō ya*, 1.1.1, page 10, Benares: Chowkhambō Sanskrit Series Office, 1925.

lxxviii *tattvajñōnōt nīpṛeyasōdhigamaḥ*, *Nyāyas'trabhō ya*, 1.1.1, page 14, Benares: Chowkhambō Sanskrit Series Office, 1925.

lxxix Speaking of an action like thinking or meditation, μᾱkara observes: “Even though mental, meditation and thinking can be done as prescribed, not done or done differently because they are dependent upon man. But knowledge is born of *pramō%a*. And the object of a *pramō%a* concerns the nature of the thing as it is; therefore knowledge cannot deviate from the nature of the object as action can deviate from what is prescribed. Knowledge is just dependent on the very nature of the object, and not on either injunction or the human person” (*dhyōnam cintanam yadyapi mōnasam tathōpi puru e%a kartum akartum anyathō vō kartum yakyam*, *puru atantratvōt*. *jñōnam tu pramō%ajanya^*. *pramō%aṇca yathōbh'tavastuvi^ayam*, *ato jñōnam karutṁ akartum anyathō vō kartum aṇkya^*. *kevalam vastutantrameva tat na codanōtantram nōpi puru atantra^*), μᾱkara's *Brahmas'trabhō ya*, 1.1.4, Delhi: Motilal Banarasidass, 1964, p. 14.

5. For a brief treatment of this topic, see Srinivasa Rao, *Perceptual Error: The Indian Theories*, Chapter 5, Honolulu: The University of Hawaii Press, 1998.

6. See Govardhan P. Bhatt, *Epistemology of the BhōYā School of P'rva M'f mōnsō*, Varanasi: Chowkhambā

7. See Govardhan P. Bhatt, *Epistemology of the BhōYā School of P'rva M'f mōnsō*, Varanasi: Chowkhambā

8. See *The Mō%y'kyopani^ad with Gauṇapōda's Kōrikō and μᾱkara's Commentary*, Swōm' %ōikhilōnanda (tr.), Mysore: Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, 1968.

9. The Naiyōyika would hotly contest this, but this is another big story.

10. μᾱkara's original formulation of the doctrine of superimposition at the beginning of his *Brahmas'trabhō ya* is famous as *adhyōsa-bhō ya*. The original Sanskrit is quite complex, although quite clear, and there are many translations of it available in English.

11. For an excellent discussion of this method see Swami Satchidanandendra Saraswati, *How to Recognize th*

lxxxvii The collected works of Mahatma Gandhi, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India from 1965, volumes 1 to 100 have been published. I give the volume number (in Roman numerals), the year to which it points to (within brackets), the number of the entry and the page reference when available. The book itself is abbreviated here as CW.

CW XLIX (1932) nr.523, p. 429.

- lxxxviii Margaret Chatterjee, *Gandhi's Religious Thoughts*, Macmillan, London, 1983, p. 32.
- lxxxix **CW** LXXXIV (1946), nr.382, p.303.
- xc Shivesh C. Thakur, *Gandhi's God*, in IPQ 111 (1971) 485-495, p. 485.
- xci Cf. M.K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments With Truth*, (tr. from Gujarati by Mahadev Desai), Phoenix Press, London, 1949.
- xcii **CW** XXXII (1926-27), nr.267, p. 587.
- xciii **CW** XXXIV (1927), nr.427, p. 501.
- xciv Cf. **CW** XXXVII (1928), nr. 378, 339 where he says: "For I claim to be a humble seeker after truth and am conducting Navajivan not merely to teach but learn" This was in answer to the protest against mercy killing of a calf. Cf. also **CW** XL (1929), nr.327 p. 348 when faced with many leaving his ashram after his public disclosure of some irregularities, Gandhi refused to be perturbed and said he was ready to build up a new ashram if the present broke up. Cf. also **CW** XXXIV (1927), nr. 431, p. 505.
- xcv Cf. Gandhi's answer to a teacher **CW** LVI (1933-34), nr.178, p. 154.
- xcvi **CW** LV (1933), nr.63, p. 61. Cf. also **CW** LXX (1939), nr. 236, p. 203 where he says: "But friends who observe inconsistency will do well to take the meaning that my latest writing may yield unless, of course, they prefer the old. But before making the choice they should try to see if there is not an underlying and abiding consistency between the two seemingly inconsistencies".
- xcvii **CW** XXIII (1922-24), nr.281, p. 367.
- xcviii **CW** XXV (1924-25), nr.84, p. 117.
- xcix **CW** LXI (1935), nr.120, p.81.
- c Ralph Buultjens, *Another Side of Gandhi*, in *America*, April 9, 1983, vol. 148. pp 274-278, p. 274.
- ci **CW** XXIII (1922-24), nr.254, p. 340.
- cii **CW** XXXIII (1927), nr.153, p. 155.
- ciii *ibid.*, nr. 244, p. 234.
- civ **CW** XLIV (1930), nr.62, p. 40.
- cv **CW** XLVIII (1931-32), nr.259, p. 404.
- cvi **CW** XLIX (1932), nr.264, p. 223. Many more references could be adduced on this point e.g., **CW** XXXII (1926-27), nr.162, p.441; **CW** XLV (1930-31), nr.396, pp. 340-341.
- cvi **CW** XLVIII (1931-32), nr.259, pp. 405-406.
- cvi Margaret Chatterjee, *Op. Cit.* p.58.
- cix Raghavan N. Iyer, *The Moral and Political Thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1973, p. 155.
- cx **CW** XXXIII (1927), nr.256, pp. 246-247.
- cx **CW** LIV (1933), nr.360, p. 315.
- cxii **CW** XXIII (1922-24), nr.281, p.367.
- cxiii **CW** XXXII (1926-27), nr.162, p.441.
- cxiv **CW** LXXXIV (1946), nr.289, pp. 228-229.
- cxv **CW** XII (1913-14), nr.69, p.94. Cf. also nr.89, p. 127 where he speaks in the oft repeated Indian argument "...in fact, there are as many paths as there are human beings. So long as they differ, their paths are bound to differ. He who sees the identity of his *atman* with the *atman* of others will also see unity in the religions".
- cxvi **CW** LVII (1934), nr.14, p.17. This is a fine way of solving the one and many in the matter of religions. It is both one and many! See next reference also.
- cxvii **CW** LXXXVI (1946), nr.25, p.31.
- cxviii **CW** XXXVII (1928), nr.74, pp.61-62.
- cxix **CW** VIII (1908), nr.34, p.61.
- cx **CW** XV (1918-19), nr.354, p.389.
- cx *I refer the reader to my book Love in the Life and Works of Mahatma Gandhi by Joseph Francis Backianadan, sterling Publishers & St. Peter's Pontifical Institute, 1991, pp. 23-29; 73-87; 169-196; 235-243. There I have given the origin and development of this methodology according to the different stages of his life.*
- cx *Thus his Satyagraha in Rajkot in 1939 failed because he had been led astray by personal interest (Rajkot was the native place of his wife and the place of his first steps in education), further his followers had yielded to anger. Added to all these the fact was that Gandhi had appealed to the Viceroy to intervene. He should have rather appealed to Virawala the concerned person responsible for the injustice. The result was failure. Gandhi apologized and withdrew his Satyagraha there. Cf. CW LXIX (1939), nr.209, pp. 168-171; also nr.231, pp. 191-194.*
- cx **CW** XII (1913-14), nr.161, p. 238; **CW** XLIV (1930), nr.273, pp. 264-265; **CW** XXXIII (1927), nr.125, p.127; **CW** XLVIII (1931-32), nr.259, pp. 405-406; **CW** XXXVI (1928), nr.478, pp. 398-410.
- cx *Cf. Paul Grimley Kuntz, Gandhi's Truth, in IPQ 22 (1982), pp.141-155.*