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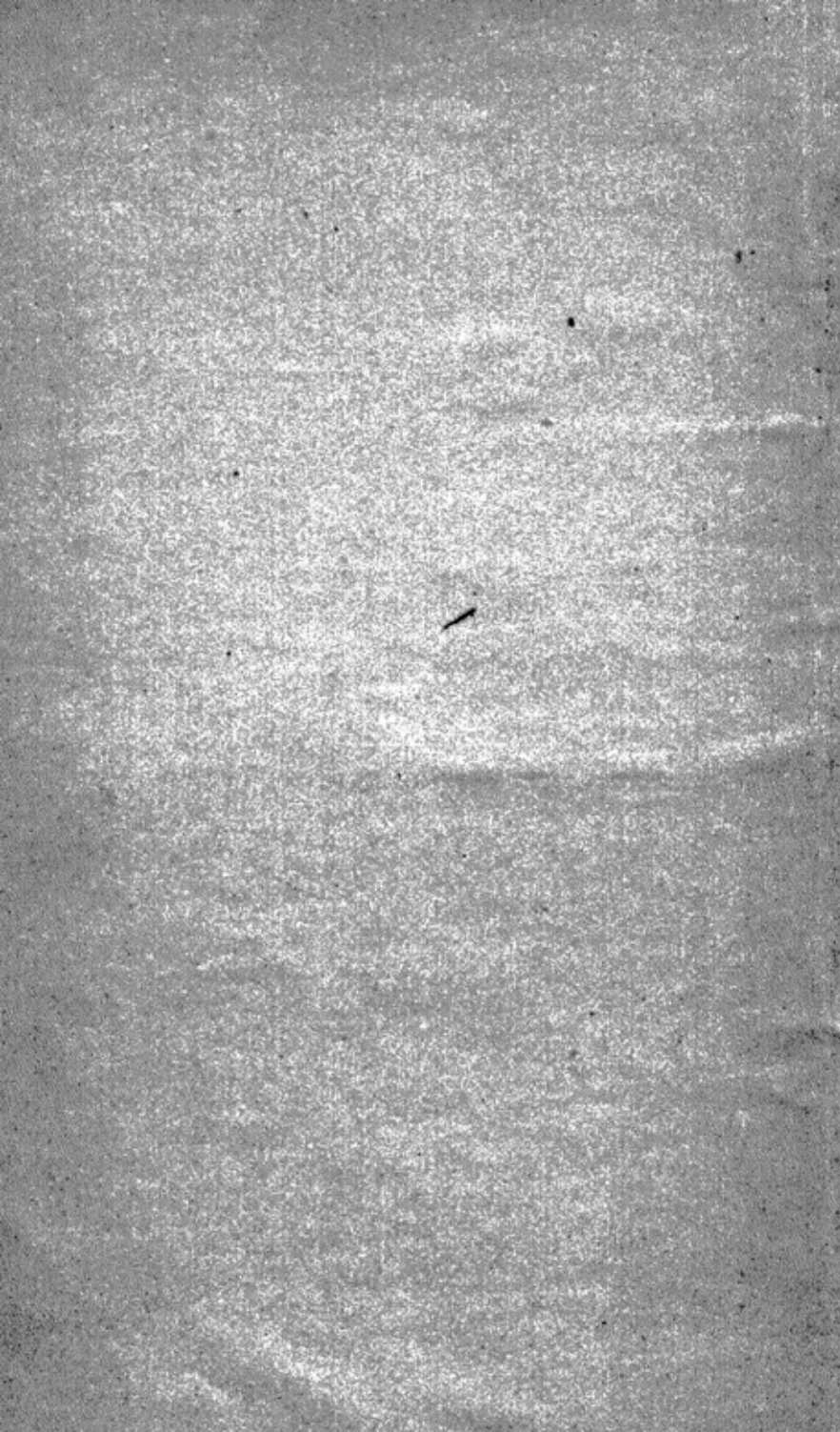
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EDITOR :—PROF. P. V. RAMANUJASWAMI, M.A.

IDEA OF GOD

(THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS CONSCIOUSNESS)

BY

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PREFACE

The duties of the Professor of Philosophy and Comparative Religion in the Sri Venkatesvara Oriental Institute included among other work the delivery of a course of lectures on Religion. The following book comprises the lectures on the subject written during 1940 and 1941.

My duties in the Arts College from 1945 as Professor of Philosophy had not given me much time to revise in any large scale the original draft. I have tried to approach the subject from the standpoint of comparative religion as well as modern research in ancient Hindu thought. That it does not present any new standpoint except the thesis that Hindu Thought must be considered to be a comprehensive integralising activity of Spiritual life may not be considered to be a disqualification. Nor even that a book of this kind is not a necessity. But this much may be claimed for the presentation. It combines the analytic treatment of the topics and the synthetic. Despite the modernist view of the evolution of Hindu Religious thought, it may be pointed out that evolution pertains to the growth of the individuals and their transition from planes of consciousness in which they are to higher or lower planes of consciousness or existence. It is difficult to measure the possibilities or the incidence or the availability of such recognitions on the part of individual seekers or mystics in any age. Further man is a composite individual, not only in respect of the triple 'faculties' or ways of experiencing the same event or object such as the cognitive, volitive and affective, through thought or reason, through act or service, through devotion and feelings of love, but also in respect of the genetically

discernible planes of the unconscious, subconscious, conscious, overconscious and superconscious appreciations of the environment, if not apprehensions and responses to the environment. These different ways of apprehensions of the Objective World mark out several levels of the environment more or less and form different worlds for the same individual. And if we discern also the fact that these apprehensions of the world are still further distinguished by sensory and rational or inferential and mediate, and correspondent and analogical and supra-logical or intuitional, or according to any other classification of the *pramāṇas*, as subjective, objective and transcendental, we shall find that integration of all these varieties and types of knowledge for one single individual not merely exceedingly complex but frightening. This is not religion but a hopeless mixture of science, philosophy and mysticism. But Hindu Thought and Religion were precisely based on this complex integrative possibility for each individual and counselled varying ways or steps of approach which would finally lead him to that most comprehensive integral vision of the Reality and fit him to act and live and move with that assurance which comes out of knowledge alone. The different strata of Mystical and Philosophical Thought in India have to be studied as linked up integrally with each other. The Transcendental or Impersonal and Personal aspects of Reality pertain to the standpoints which cover indeed the totality of the Real and must not be considered to be but partial aspects of a single indivisible Reality or Spirit, or even illusory. Thus all individuals whatever their status and fitness have the individual developments conducive to their perfect apprehension of the Reality but only in the discovery of their own complex *unitas-multiplex* nature. The *Brāhmaṇas* and the *Upaniṣads* yield this picture, faded though due to a variety of reasons which I need not indicate here.

In a recent book entitled *Religion*, Principal Nathaniel Micklem of Mansfield College considers that three questions are important for man, the sense of his finitude or limitation,

the omnipotence and terrifying activities of Nature, and his own death or the phenomena of death in general. These are purely religious problems and the various religions have given differing answers apparently but agree in so far as the first question calls for the belief or the possession of a sense of 'God.'

The second question calls for worship of Nature, worship being the principle of appeasement of the powers behind nature, and the third question has been answered by varying theories of the Departed, their post-mortem journeys and returns and abodes.

Thus belief in God, in some form, conceived either as Impersonal Power or the Creator or Ground, or as Personal God, ideal lover and teacher and Redeemer, or as expressive of a double poise as the Āgamaśāstra principally the Pāñcārātra held, with which Sri Aurobindo agrees, is a primary principle of Religion. The worship of Natural Powers with primitive rites and sacrifices or offerings, or magical practices, which at one and the same time worship and command them, is the second factor. This too has differing gradations and indeed most of the modern investigations of anthropologists and sociologists centre round these practices. Gruesome and revolting indeed, these rites and ceremonies have rightly made sensitive persons condemn these practices without any reservation as not part of religion. But there is no doubt that Nature worship has another form and the deeper form shows that Nature is also created by God and obeys His laws and order, and that there is an utter reckless ruthless impersonality behind Nature. Worship of Nature is a mediate form of worship of the Deity at the back of Nature. Worship of Nature would be meaningless unless one had the justification to view it as at bottom spiritual and appealable and appeasable, at bottom lovable and love. Nature-worship to a scientist is ridiculous: one must subdue and understand nature and its laws, for Nature is essentially inanimate. Materialism is the counter-pole of animism. Out of Nature

worship had developed the whole host of theories of Mother-worship and Earth-worship. God and Nature are the two inseparable counterparts of the same Reality ; the manifest Divinity and the concealed Wisdom of His.

The third problem is mainly the individual's concern and his fear of death, the consciousness of transiency and suffering, precariousness and inevitability, valuelessness of himself to himself, all these make him seek immortality here if possible, but surely immortality in other worlds. But such theories are just speculations and yet without them there is no meaning to the individual. Man feels immortal worth in himself, and this feeling is something that any amount of consciousness of his limitations or dependence, his courageous confronting of death and pain and suffering is incapable of annulling, though such extraordinary abnegation has not been impossible as in the Buddhistic hope of self-annihilation or *nirvāṇa* or by the matter-of-fact consciousness of the stoic materialist. But the inevitable tendency to give content and amplitude to this Nihil-consciousness found its fulfilment in *Mahāyāna* Buddhism, and in the affirmation of a Transcendent Concreteness or *Pūrṇānubhava*.

No philosophy of Religion or Mysticism can escape this triadic problem. Inter-related as they are they may conceivably be discussed in isolation but the truth of each of these is correlated with the others.

It would not do to think that the Impersonal is an answer to the understanding, the Personal to the affective or aesthetic, and the Objective to the volitional dynamic consciousness. Man finds himself as part and parcel of the Process. He is at once a carrier and instrument of the secret occult Spirit within working its manifold unity within him. *Viśiṣṭādvaita* seized upon this concept of the organic as ultimate in so far as it stated that all processes of nature, as well as man, are organic, to the Spirit which is the inward source of their action and realization or fulfilment. The purposes are

not even human or natural but transcendental, spiritual. This is the one identical trend in all manifestation whether subjective or objective, individual or natural. This is the universal signature of all and in all—the Sign of the Divine implanted, engraved, exhibited—this the profound significance of the statement *sarvam khalv idam Brahma: Vāsudevas sarvam iti* of the *Gītā* and *Bhāgavata*-literature.

The problem of what happens after death is indeed important and the ancient religious literatures all over the world have claimed immortality for the soul or transmigrating principle which is necessarily finite or individual, as contrasted with the universal or All whose mansions are infinite and varied in respect of experience and enjoyment. The discussion as to higher or lower is also included and yet the highest status or attainment is the closest intimacy with the All. That is the attainment of the Immortal, and immortality. This is the *paramapuruṣārtha*. The *Kathōpaniṣad* discusses this in a classical manner as the answer to the third boon.

All great mystics feel this to be all important and the real meaning and purpose of life is the realisation of the Godhead, who is the means to all other realisations—knowing whom one knows all, enjoys all and is immortalised or sanctified.

The study of the works of the Ālvārs was undertaken by me and those studies had periodically appeared in the pages of the Journal of the S. V. O. Institute. That forms part of this work in a sense, and it is hoped that the Institute would also undertake the publication of those studies in a volume in the near future as a companion volume to this work.

It is usual to consider the topics of metaphysics and religion in India according to the order prescribed in the Upaniṣads: *bhogyam bhoktā preritā*—Nature, Soul and *Īśvara* or God. But for the reason already advanced the consideration of the Idea of God has been taken up first. The *Tattva* is essentially God, and the other two are modes (*prakāra*) of His.

It is my pleasant duty to thank the Director of the Sri Venkatesvara Oriental Institute, Sri P.V. Rāmānujasvāmī, M.A. for all the help he has rendered me in the publication of this work under the auspices of the Institute, in which I worked.

SRI RAJAGRHA }
TIRUPATI. }

K C. VARADACHARI.

I

Definitions of Religion

Why do we need Religion or God? This question is constantly heard from all thinking persons who would answer in the affirmative if they could, but find that neither God nor Religion is capable of definition but not descriptions. It is because it is so very difficult to convey to the modern mind, built as it is in a purely practical and intellectual manner that it has become necessary to investigate into the nature of God. Before we reply to the question as to the need for God or Religion we have to know exactly the nature of Religion. Religion has been described in many ways. It may be stated at the very start that not all these have been complementary. The modern mind has several interests, biological, social, rational, psychical and materialistic. A few indeed have always felt that religion should be viewed from the standpoint of the spiritual or mystical. These interests have therefore prevailed in the description of the nature of Religion. It is not the purpose of this essay to criticise the definitions so as to arrive at the truth behind all these. Rather it is the other way about. Religion is a mystical fact needing no proof. It is an imperative of the individual consciousness as it evolves towards the apprehension or rather comprehension of the Godhead in a trans-subjective form, indwelling in all creation yet exceeding all, in whom all *can* indwell.

Religion is stated to be "an *emotion* resting on the conviction of harmony between ourselves and the universe at large."¹ Schleirmacher's definition of religion is in terms of feeling. "If man is not one with the eternal in the unity of intuition and feeling which is immediate, he remains in the unity of consciousness which is derived, for ever

1. *Bearings of Psychology on Religion*: S. H. Mellone

apart."¹ Religion is "a *feeling* of dependence on the Divine."² Dr. Warde Fowler defines religion in terms of desire. "Religion is the effective desire to be in right relations with the power manifesting itself in the universe."³ Dr. E. O. James writes that Religion is a belief in the existence of a transcendental reality giving rise to a system of supercausation expressed in rite and myth." This he considers may be taken as a *minimum definition*.⁴

Religion thus has elements of emotion, desire, feeling and belief in transcendental realities or reality. The several definitions given above are all found to insist upon the element of harmony, or unity which is the essential basis of righteous relationships with the transcendental reality. The last definition goes farther than the previous in so far as it adds an element of consciousness or knowledge on the part of the system of supercausation possible to the transcendental Reality. Religion in Hinduism entails belief in Life after death, a life lived in other worlds and performance of actions conducive to man's living happily and peacefully in this and the next world or other worlds. That this involves the concepts of a transcendental Reality and supercausation is clear.

Sigmund Freud, the greatest psycho-analyst of our century, has traced the origin of religion to man's infantile helplessness, which Schleiermacher has called the 'feeling of dependence.' But he considered Religion to be the control of the instinctive wishes of incest, of cannibalism and of murder, innate in the soul or ego.⁴ Religion thus becomes a result of the community, a self-protective activity of an organization to repress the instinctive wishes aforementioned. Thus Freud considers religion to be instinctive in origin though not an instinct as such. It is a consequence of certain instincts achieved by the self-protective groupal instinct of a

1. *Origin of Religion*: Max Muller P. 2

2. Quoted by S. H. Mellone: *ibid.*

3. *Social Function of Religion*: E. O. James P. 2

4. *The Future of illusion*: Sigmund Freud (Eng. ed) P. 16

community. But he considers religion itself to be, because of its restrictive character, an illusion. It is opposed to the freedom of the individual and as such it is a fruitful source of psychic disorders.

While Freud has defined religion as a reactive agency, Prof. Huxley says religion cannot be described as an instinct, as it is but a capacity for feeling emotions termed religious. I shall deal with the kinds of emotion termed religious elsewhere. But if we are prepared to accept the definition of instinct as a 'dependable behaviour,' 'innate' and 'fundamentally purposive,' then religion can well be an instinct. Studies in Comparative Religion have clearly shewn that man has this instinctive reaction to objects which have a glow of holiness, and his ways of adjustment towards such objects are well-defined and dependable and universal.

Mr Lyman defines religion as an experience of kinship with the human group "with its more mysterious inner bond and principle of unity."¹ An equally social definition has been given by Durkheim. "Religion is a social institution, holding certain definite beliefs and entailing certain obligations and duties in the members of the society."² But it may well be seen that a social or humanistic definition of religion cannot explain why such an institution should ever come into being. Religion, though capable of becoming institutionalised and of becoming an effective check on individual instincts that are anti-social, is not exhausted by such a definition.

Indeed we find that the utmost that can be said on behalf of religion is that it is a *weltanschauung* or world-view based upon a transcendental vision. Mr Julius Hecker gives very clearly four aspects of religion: (i) an emotional, unconscious, irrational impulse which expresses itself in awe and subjection to the incomprehensible usually termed God and in its worship which takes the form of a stereotyped cult; (ii) a manner of

1. *The Meaning and Truth of Religion*: E. W. Lyman p. 53

2. Quoted in *Origin and Development of Religion in Vedic Literature*: P. S. Desmukh. p. 18

life and of conduct developing into ethical norms; (iii) an urge rationally to justify emotional and moral experiences developing into theology and a *weltanschauung*; and (iv) an organizational form developing into a Church.¹

The definition and description of the four aspects of religion can be seen to focus the essential ingredients of religious consciousness in so far as it has a tendency to objectify itself in the world of men. Religion tries to occupy the entire life and activities of man through all the four ways of instinctive experience, ethical conduct, philosophical justification termed theology, and Church or Organization for the preservation and dissemination of the *weltanschauung*. This in Indian philosophical terminology is the *ādhibhautika* aspect of Religion.

Religion understood in its objective or *ādhibhautika* aspect can be a great danger to individual freedom. The dependence-feeling, however, which is said to be the element of religious consciousness, is not on the objective world but on the Divine. It is not the society nor the outer world nor the organizational efficiency that constitutes the religious experience of the Transcendent. Religion as commonly understood has the air of a Sunday-institution and bears a distressing meaning to the freedom-aspiring individual. The essence of the mystical consciousness is the struggle for individual liberty from all types of limitation. The consciousness of limitation, ignorance, finitude, even of individuality or personality instead of yielding a 'sense of the Infinite, Absolute, Limitless, Omniscience'² in the individual in respect of God, had on

1. *Religion*: Julius Hecker. P. 7.

2. Kuno Fischer (*History of Modern Philosophy*, p. 103,) wrote "Magic takes its course (to God) through external nature; mysticism through internal; that through the mystery of Nature, this through that of man. Mysticism is the deeper and more abiding form, since it seeks by a sure way which always leads to new discoveries. They agree in that they seek the same goal and strive to reach it immediately through the presageful absorption into life itself." Bruno's doctrine of the all-embracing Unity is naturalistic. God is related to the universe as producing to produced Nature.

the other hand in some mystics led to the apotheosis of the individual himself. They are the ideas to which one must push forward relentlessly. This is the excessive moment which tends to obscure and annihilate all individuality and personality or merge it in an Other, the Absolute Experience, whose degradations they appear to be. Certain moderns like J. Krishnamurti and Nicolai Berdyaev hold that man can never become happy or free through institutions of religion, nor through their techniques of rituals and hierarchies. "Man will be happier never when his life is better organized; his suffering will merely manifest itself in more subtle and more intense forms. Happiness cannot be organized."¹ Delight or *Ānanda* may be realised by every individual in his subjective experience primarily and only there.

Certain writers, mainly theologians, feel this inner meaning of religion, the *ādhyātmika* version, to be a fall. According to Dr. Headlam there are two elements in mysticism, which make it incapable of helping the realisation of religious knowledge. It marks a return from rationalism and dogma to the religious instincts of mankind, and, secondly, it has a fantastic side, unreal and even immoral, namely, its uncontrolled imagination. It mistakes imaginations to be realities. It believes in direct insight into the divine mind, and it is a heresy.² But we may say that though this fantastic side is likely to become exaggerated in some cases, and dreams, visions, and insights may be taken to be realities, we cannot altogether rule them out. Religion may be precisely the rational explanation of these experiences, which may reveal some sound uniformities. Myths, symbols, and dreams are real apprehensions. Religions have a right to these experiences and no religion has an absolute right to invalidate the latter experiences. The principle of growth in each religion insists upon this constant renewal of these experiences directly and

1. *Life in Freedom* : J. Krishnamurthi cf. *Spirit and Reality* : Berdyaev p. 128.

2. *Christian Theology* : Dr. Headlam p. 48.

not merely by sympathetic induction with the past experiences. Mystic consciousness goes to the basis of our religious need and attains direct insight, *sākṣātkāra*. It discovers the Inner Teacher, the Guru: the Divine within, and the Voice of this inner Guru is the Śabda or Śruti, the really heard Word, the revelation. That this revelation may be even of the form of outer experience though not objectified experience, need not be denied as the Divine is ultimately the inner essence of Nature as well as the souls, individuals. But primarily the message of the dream, the vision, is to the individual who has gained this boon of super-perception, though as comparative religious study shows these most private experiences seem to extend their significance to others also. It is also possible that this inner voice may be assisted by other mystics who have had this gift of inner vision and voice. The soul then speaks to the soul and the *āptavacana*, the friendly counsel becomes of great importance. Hindu thought recognised this possibility and made the *āptavacana* equivalent to śruti and śabda and gave the sanction of universality to their deliverances. Freedom is the feeling of oneness with the Transcendent Being, for freedom means the consciousness of transcendence over all limitation. The religious consciousness is in this sense mystical. Mystical consciousness is suffused with the sense of freedom, and is available as the instinct towards liberty which is to be distinguished from mere escape-instinct.¹

The *ādhyātmika* or psychological definitions of religion constantly harp upon this mystical seeking after liberation, freedom. It is essentially an attempt to cross over the ocean of *samsāra*, to abolish or arrest the chain of causal succession or *karma*, an endeavour to triumph over all obstacles to immortal being including death. Nicolas Berdyaev writes about mystical experience as a confrontation and an experience of the

1. *Mystic and Religious Types*: K. C. Varadachari, Annals of the Sri Venkatesvara Oriental Institute Vol. I, & *A Clue to the nature of the Relationship between the Mystical and Religious consciousness*: Proceedings of the All-India Oriental Conference, X Session, Tirupati p. 278-284.

transcendental. Mysticism is a spiritual path leading to the highest achievements. It is opposed to social and objectifying processes, and it, therefore, contradicts historically manifest religion. Indeed it is a transcendence of the created world.¹ Mysticism is the path of the pioneers who break through the 'closed' society into the open spaces of the spiritual expanse.² In organized religion we have democratisation of life, for religion organizes the many for its own social ends, and in doing so it loses itself in its own organizations. It becomes a 'closed society'! Thus objectified religious consciousness is in constant need of the mystic-martyr to give it back the life of freedom it tends to lose in its preoccupation with details of preservation and conservation. *Adhyātmic* consciousness demands this freedom for the individual, and true religion seeks this freedom. For Self is Freedom. Indian Philosophic thought and Religion have always had this, one aim, the realisation of freedom—*Mokṣa*. This is the fundamental transcendental goal of man.

Dr Alfred North Whitehead defined religion psychologically when he said that it "is what an individual does with his solitariness".³ At another place he says that it is "the reaction of human nature to its search for God".⁴

The *ādhidaivika*-definition of religion or the theological definition of religion will involve reference to the Object of the religious consciousness. This object will be naturally transcendental and divine such as Absolute Truth, Absolute Good, Absolute Beauty, Absolute Delight, and Absolute Power. The response of the human or divine mind even to such absolute perfections will be important. Dr Nathan Soderblöm writes "Holiness is the great word in religion. It is even more essential than the notion of God".⁵ We cannot help remarking that in trying to be scientific, Dr Soderblöm,

1. *Spirit and Reality* : N. Berdyaev pp. 129, 130, 131, 128,

2. *Two Sources of Morality and Religion* : Henri Bergson (Eng. Tr.)

3. *Religion in the Making* ; A. N. Whitehead, p. 31 & 48.

4. *Science and the Modern World* : p. 221 (Pelican ed.)

5. *Living God* : N. Soderblöm and cf. Artc. on 'Holiness' E.R.E.

Dr Otto and others, exalt the process over the Object that evokes or instigates the process called holiness or profanity. Awe, Holiness, Reverence, Dependence-feeling and others are all an individual's responses. The sense of mystery and wonder are the intuitions into the transcendent nature of the deity. As Dr Whitehead remarks "Religion is the vision of something which stands beyond, behind, and within, the passing flux of immediate things; something which is real and yet waiting to be realised; something which is a remote possibility and yet the greatest of present facts; something that gives meaning to all that passes and yet eludes apprehension; something whose possession is the final good and beyond all reach; something which is the ultimate and yet the hopeless quest."

Religion is the culmination of knowledge of God in Vision of God. Religion, said Plato, is the culmination or consummation of wisdom in knowledge. But it is dynamic experience of the Divine Being everywhere and at all times. It is a living experience of unity not merely with one's fellows, not merely with the entire world of our intellectual and perceptual knowledge, but also of unity with the spheres and planes of consciousness that we cannot become aware of through our physical and intellectual organs. Religion which can call itself most universal must possess this integrating and integral character, for such is the Nature of the Divine, the Object of its aspiration and realization. Because it is dynamic and seeking individual realization in all awakened minds, it is profoundly personal. Personal communion with the transcendent spirit is the essential aim of religious aspiration. Our longing for God, which Pearl Buck considers to be the 'most powerful force on Earth' is a manifestation of our integral unity with God. It is the paradox of spiritual life, of mysticism as well as religion, to pass from the subjective to the objective by turns till we realize the Unique Synthesis of these in the Divine Transcendent, who is personal and trans-subjective.

"Mystic experience is profoundly personal while at the same time appearing to discard and dissolve personal existence in the impersonal and superpersonal existence."¹ Indeed the Person is above personality and impersonality.

So far we have sketched the nature of Religion from the standpoints of the *ādhibhautika* (pragmatic social), *ādhyātmika* (psychological and personal), and the *ādhidāivika* (Divine and trans-subjective) aspects. It is this nature of Religion as triple that must be considered to be important. Sri Aurobindo has most luminously expressed the nature of Religion to be: "A divination of Godhead, the impulse towards perfection, the search after pure truth and unmixed bliss, the sense of secret immortality."²

This definition embraces all the three aspects and the transcendent possibility. Religion is or has all these aspirations. And the realization of all these is the purpose of Divine Life.³

Do we need Religion then? We can now answer that it is indispensable, because it is a need that is almost an imperative of our existence. Our sense of misery, our finitude, our fragmentariness, our colossal ignorance, and falsehood and mortality impel us to escape from these.⁴ It is possible to transcend these because we feel, and hope that this world, this misery and imperfection, mortality and finitude are not the essence of ourselves. They are transitory. God is the Object of our quest because He is other than these, and He can grant us all those attributes and excellences that help transcendence. We need Religion because we cannot for ever get satisfaction from the world, because we cannot subscribe to the values of the world, and are intuitively aware of the deeper and universal or spiritual values which sustain

1. *Spirit and Reality*: N. Berdyaev, p. 142 of. *Life Divine* II, p. 99

2. *Life Divine*: Sri Aurobindo Vol. I, p. 1:

3. Benjamin Whichcote, a Cambridge Platonist of the 17th century rightly said "Religion is the introduction of the divine life into the soul of man.

4. Escape, however, can never help us unless we can face them and transcend or annul them.

these terrestrial values, and make them objects of our limited consciousness. We wish to transform ourselves into free beings, perfect, and omniscient, efficient and joyful, and it is religion that promises to lead us to that fulfilment. Science, Ethics, and Art lead us to just certain aspects of reality and arrive at partial truths. It is Religion that grants us the *integral* apprehension of Reality as Truth, Beauty, Goodness, Harmony, Unity, Perfection, Omniscience, Omnipotence and Universality or rather supra-universality. Such is the transformation that is effected by the integral or organic view of Religion conceived of as teaching the Integral Divine in all these truths received through our humanistic sciences and arts.

At this point, it may be asked whether it is necessary to have religion if we could get science or philosophy or humanism to do that job. Our whole contention is that science, philosophy and humanism together even cannot do what the spiritual consciousness understood in its *ādhyātmika* and *ādhidaivika* aspects could do. Spiritual life is the realization of the immanence of the Divine in the human. It is the vision, suprasensory vision, of the abiding unity in the Divine of all creatures. Neither science nor philosophy can go beyond and behind the sensory. Materialism is the solace of science and of philosophy understood as systematic and coherent knowledge of the perceived world. Of the ultimate knowledge that demands on our part purified and transformed instruments or organs of sensing these can have not even the slightest idea beyond a feeling of helplessness, frustration and others which are the causes of the return into the self, or mysticism. This is not the entire truth about mysticism: its heat has to be distinguished from its nature or content.¹ Spiritual truth is apprehended as something transcending the processes of the phenomenal universe. It intimates itself through a direct infiltration of the consciousness of its own transcendence which promises to relate it to all individuals from their depths, and realise the unity of the

1. My article: *Mysticism and Reason: Āryan Path*: Sept, 1939.

entire reality in and through the deep and super-personal Spirit that has within It the mystery of Manifestation and the perfection of the Eternal Nature.

Philosophies of Science or even Religions of Science and Reason (intellect) usually arrive at the theory of Monism or bare identity.¹ Philosophies of Society arrive at theories of pluralism. They could not go beyond to the postulation of an organic unity which could effectively reconcile monistic identity and pluralistic differences; they find the problems of manyness or identity rather inconvenient. They have been forced to treat the inconvenient as fiction or illusion. Spiritual life, on the contrary, does not infer undifferentiated identity. Nor does it affirm unmitigated pluralism. The nature of the Divine is such as to involve in an organic manner the self-identity of His eternal nature with the self-projection or extension of His Infinite Being into manyness. Integral synthesis of Reality is the aim of all world-philosophies, and this certainly is not arrived at by monistic philosophies or Absolutisms either of the materialistic or intellectual or spiritualistic kinds, which deny utterly plurality. They either affirm a supra-existential Being void of all differences, or a non-existential Being, void of every kind of manifestation except the illusory. An integral or Organic Synthesis recognizes the reality of manifestations and the reality of the Suprapersonal or trans-subjective Reality but their realities are inextricably and inalienably intertwined. It is not reason but supra-reason that helps the realization of this unique synthesis between the Absolute and the phenomenal, One and the Many where the stress is on the Absolute and the Oneness.² It is

1. cf. Modern Philosophies live and swear by the scientific developments whether these developments belong to the region of Physics, Chemistry, or Biology. cf. *Religion of Science*: Wood: *Religion of the Artist*: Hon. John Collier; and works of Hon. B. Russell, Joad, Huxley and others, and *Identity and Reality*: Emile Meyerson: and also cf. my article "*Modern Philosophy and Religion*" "Aryan Path" Nov. 1934.

2. R̥ṣi Yājñavalkya's view that all beings are lovable for the sake of the Divine in them is an affective or *samīdāna*-version of the view propounded by Sri Aurobindo that our knowledge is by modified identity, *vijñāna*, supermind. *Life Divine* Vol II.

clearly true that real or absolute knowledge can only be had through the identity of the One in all manifestations, the Brahman who is the Self of all things and beings, whereas we must only be content with differences when we try to understand the manifestations through differences, or outer similarities or surface-identities.¹

Thus it follows that we need religion. The apprehension of our nature or life as extending beyond the frontiers of the perceptible and inferable worlds, and beyond the regions of mortality and ignorance, and beyond the finitude of our actual space-time nexus, is the reason for this need. We have a consciousness that receives impressions, however confused or impregnated with the defects of our temporal habitation and evolution, from beyond itself, namely, the most perfect being that alone is the reason for its own participation in the scheme of Reality. Man's aim is to achieve his unity or participation with this transcendent Reality that is the foundation of his existence and aspiration. The fact remains that, for whatever occult reason,² there has happened disruption or outer separation from that unity which it is the business of the conscious being to restore or recognize or re-member.

The problems of Religion are not less of the individual self than those of the Divine Nature. As we have shown earlier, God is the inward unity of the many, and man's problem is to know this inward Being, for through That alone could he restore himself to the status of a free being even amidst the most complicated environment. Thus it will be necessary not only to know the nature of the Ultimate Being but also to know the nature of the seeker of that Ultimate Being.

1. *Spirit and Reality*: N. Berdyaev p. 136 "Authentic mysticism is not affected by the opposition of transcendental dualism and immanent monism." "Monism postulates rationalisation, a mental process rather than experience" *ibid* 139 p.

2. It is the explanation of this disruption and restoring that is problem of Metaphysics. Sri Aurobindo's *Life Divine* is a big contribution in this direction.

The means to realise or recognize the ever-present Ultimate Being in one's consciousness are also to be known and understood and defined. These are stated to be *Tattva*, *Hita* and *Puruṣārtha*. The *Hita* or the means are twofold, negative and positive, *vināśa* and *sambhūti* to use the language of the *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad*, or the mystical and the religious methods, to use the language of Religion.

In our sketch of these we may be aided to some extent by the results of Comparative Religion. The problems of Comparative Religion have on the whole so far been anthropological, historical and to a certain extent only philosophical.¹ We find that we have to deal with traditional heritages, myths, revelations belonging to several strata and mythologies, practices that induce states of consciousness that simulate higher states of consciousness called spiritual or occult, and rituals like sacrifices, prayers and other ways of feeling communion² with the transcendent reality or realities, God or gods; we have to deal with general theories of relationship between the Divine and the human; we have also to reckon with theories of Creation and Nature. These theories have received scholarly treatment at the hands of modern investigators. But their general tendency has been to dub these exhibitions of common sentiments of religions as 'primitive' or the least complex tissue of human life, which are derogatory to the advanced and enlightened states of the modern man. But this is not stated in any carping spirit by evolutionary thinkers who feel that the more complex and heterogeneous always presupposes a condition of homogeneity. From a study of the primitive peoples and their customs and manners, we are indeed enabled to trace the history of ascent to complex forms as also the regression of higher and complex to homogeneous or undifferentiated forms. Climatic and geographic conditions isolate groups of people for whom the ancient and inherited habits and manners remain as fundamental assets but

1. cf. *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*: S. Radhakrishnan

2. *Golden Bough*: J. H. Frazer

which due to a variety of causes have lost their symbolic power. We have also to take note of another aspect in the life of ancient and primitive peoples. Imagination, which is the instrument symbolism and which has been proved to be an effective weapon of self-fulfilment, has helped the modification of mythologies; and the natural tendency of narrative and heroic stories to move from one country to another, from one civilization to another, have modified and even localized these stories. The place-names of many countries will bear witness to the ever-recurring myth and story of some mother-country which might have been its source.¹

Lest we should lose ourselves in the morass of details and similarities in symbolisms and practices of totems and taboos which form such a large part of social unifications or unities in advanced as well as in primitive cultures, we should keep before us, in any true account of religious or spiritual life, the essentials and the meaning of the spiral-curves of ascent to true manifestation of the spiritual life. And whether we like it or not the true source and impetus of spiritual search after God is the consciousness of misery and helplessness on the part of the individual *along with* a consciousness of an ever-present transcendent power, universal yet personally responsive, which it may recognize clearly as God or Person or merely as magical power or law or *dharma* which it cannot apprehend at all through its sensory or mental instruments.²

1. *Psychology of Primitive Culture*: Bartlett. The voyage of the *Pañcatantra* and its modifications in other countries is a classic example. Even so the Indian civilizing mission of Indo-polonesia through the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyana* and the *Bhāgāvata* is an excellent instance of the spreading of place-names of India to those islands. American towns have mostly European place-names.

2. The primitive peoples are said to think of the supernatural element as all-pervasive and magically effective. It is a power-concept. Mana, Orenda, Grace, Apūrva and Adṛṣṭa, are all magical powers in things. Naiyāyika description of *adrṣṭa*, the Mīmāṃsā definition of *apūrva* and Moffat's description of Grace "as an impersonal power in all beings and their qualities." cf. *Grace in the New Testament* p. 29. This is not however the meaning of *Dhātu-prasāda* or the choice of God in *Kaṭha Up.* I. 2. 20 and 23.

as the Upaniṣads have once for all clearly and unmistakably laid down.

All philosophical and mystical and religious efforts start with this experience of misery (*duḥkha*),¹ and aim at arriving at *sukha* or delight or pleasure that is eternal and undeteriorating. Misery makes enquiry into reality of existence possible. This enquiry aims at arriving at the free and unconditioned and flawless existence of the soul, and the means are devised to struggle against evil and the powers of darkness and restriction in order to arrive at goodness and beauty and immortality with the help of the powers of light. The religious attitude focusses the attention of man on the nature of the Divine One Supreme Deity beyond all these powers of light even, for He is their fountain and being.

Philosophy is only vaguely conscious of the truths of religious consciousness which it seeks to rationalise or rather make amenable to the fragmentary mentality of man; though it is all the while distrustful of the sensory universe of change and limitation, even as the mystical consciousness is. That is the precise reason why all philosophy is bound to make a transcendental application of its categories of thought.² Mystical consciousness seeks other instruments or ways of apprehending

1. *Duḥkha* is also terror-consciousness or dread. Distrust of reality is the cause of *vairāgya*, fear of a reality is *ghora*-experience. God is also stated to have *ghora*-form in addition to a *sukha*-form. Salvation is the only purpose of religious and mystical experience. Knowledge is the only means to that realisation. Knowledge is thus strictly knowledge that leads to the realization of salvation or freedom from all misery and dread and ignorance and limitation. cf. My article "*Psychology of Freedom and Religious Consciousness*." *New Indian Antiquary*. 1942 p. 210.

2. Kant's exploit in his *Critiques* is a classical example in modern times to effect a complete picture of the limits of Reason. So early as the Upaniṣadic times Hindu seers realized the fact that inferential knowledge which is knowledge that is limited to and circumscribed by perceptual experience can never help in the understanding of the nature of the salvation-granting Reality, Brahman. The real difference between philosophy and the Philosophy consists in this primary purposiveness of knowledge to discover the Ultimate Fact, namely, the spirit that alone can realise and exalt the soul.

the transcendental reality and is held suspect by philosophy. But we know that elemental truths are never balked by sneers; they struggle to affirm themselves on the plane of reason itself more fiercely than ever. The dialectic between religious and mystical instincts will go on till they realise the double fruits of liberation and perfect subordination to the Universal Deity, the fullest and Ultimate Lord, dependence on whom is freedom itself for the devotee. Unity is realised utterly in and through multiplicity and it becomes the truth of the multiplicity which each one of the multiplicity has struggled to display or manifest or liberate.

There are several theories of Godhead and these theories are usually classified under three categories, namely, Pantheism, Deism and Theism. Pantheism holds that all is God; Deism considers that God is a causal agent external to the process and ordering the created world. If we consider that 'all religion resolves itself into a conscious relation on our part to a higher than we, and on the part of the rational universe at large to a higher than all, that is, to a Mind supreme above the whole family of mind,'¹ then God is considered to be not utterly transcendent to us or even the highest among us, because a conscious relationship could be established between that and ourselves.² It is no doubt true that the mere consciousness of such a Being as exalted over everything that we know of, may make It appear to be different in kind. Between ourselves and That, then, it would be almost impossible to establish any type of relationship. It is impossible to reduce the difference between the human and the Divine, though a type of relationship could well be established; and this relationship would naturally conform to the master-servant, creator-creatures, and Lord-slave types. An essential dualism exists between the Infinite and the finite and to recognize religion to be essentially this would entail Service as the ambition of the soul.

1. *Study of Religion*: J. Martineau. Vol. I. Pp. 126

2. *Realm of Ends*: James Ward. p. 192 (3rd ed.)

While then the human cannot exalt himself to the Divine Infinity, it may yet be possible for the Divine to delimit Himself in such ways as to appear amenable to the human consciousness as its '*superior partner*,' if we may so coin a new phrase to express the relationship between two human beings, one of whom is superiorly endowed and is a genius. This would be achieved by means of His self-power. The nature of divine transcendence is frankly superficial in the deistic system which makes it rather an externality or otherness or superiority in aloofness. It however must be said that real efficient causality is provided only by Deism,

Theism, on the contrary, gives a more significant meaning to the quality of 'transcendence.' Any real transcendence is not merely a keeping aloof from the created process but is a constant involvement and management of it with omniscience and delight. The deistic conception keeps God out of the Universe because it cannot imperil God's nature, and thus stultifies itself, in so far as it is impossible for that godhead to incarnate in the process in some manner except at the peril of losing His eminent transcendence. That is why the theory of Occasionalism,¹ for which there is no parallel in Indian Philosophy, came into existence to explain the constant occurrences of miracles which are but incidence of the supreme spiritual on the material plane. It is thus the miracle that provides the transcendence of God in an abstract manner. Concrete transcendence means Immanent transcendence, a transcendence over the process which involves guidance of it, evolution of values in the content of the created, and a constant outpouring of the higher energies of Divine Nature into it and into the lives and cultures of men.

Theism affirms immanence of God in the created world. But immanence should not be narrowly interpreted locationally, that is, as confinement in matter and Nature. That is what Western Pantheism tends to do when it identifies God with

1. A theory put forward by Malebranche and Guilenex. cf. section on the Yoga Idea of God.

Nature. Immanence does not mean identity. "A bare and meaningless identity of God and World simply leaves us with God only, as in the acosmism of Spinoza or with the world only us in the 'polite atheism' of Schopenhuer."¹ God must be both the immanent ground of the world and its transcendent ground, and this is what theism holds.² Immanence through pervasive power that includes control and direction and purpose and possibility of 'superior presence' when required, will be something that wills a comprehensive relation between God and the world and man. This last view is a departure from technical theism too, and it is the view of Rāmānuja.³

1. *Realm of Ends*: J. Ward. p. 287

2. *Ibid*, p. 234

3. See Chapter on Sṛī Rāmānuja's View of God. Sri Aurobindo says theism holds that God creates the souls and remains as their creator, whereas in his own system God *is* the many souls in the very depths. Thus the finitude of the many is annulled in the very depths of the many and appears as a self delimitation on the surface for the purpose of *līlā*: cf. *Life Divine* II. Ch. II

II

God

God is the Object of the religio-mystical consciousness or attitude. The manner of knowing, or apprehending God is specially the province of the intuitive or gnostic consciousness, that is to say, subjective revelation of the truth that is immanent in it as also transcendent to it. Natural objects are the objects of sensory or objective knowing. Truths of Nature such as uniformity of Nature and theories of evolution and others are derived from the sensory experience by reason that is inferential, that is, both inductive and deductive. Truths or laws of science are inductive laws and are strictly limited to the region of experience of the sensory level. Even the dialectical method is limited to the region of the senses or objective nature. These truths have varying degrees of probability. But the region of religion is the region of subjective knowing of that which is trans-subjective. God's mystery may be admired and felt by gazing at the 'starry skies above and the moral law within', but it can be known only through the divine gnostic revelation. All religions thus have a special way of describing the unique gnostic approach to God. That is the revelation of God by God; *śruti* is the result of divine seeing: *divya cakṣus* and *divya śrotas* lead to the knowledge of the Divine. Islam too speaks of the *rasools* who are granted the vision of the truths of the Divine even as the Vedic Rṣis have been granted the vision of the supreme texts and heard them in their purified being through the Divine Word. God is the Eye of the eye, Ear of the ear, Life of the life, Mind of the mind: from Him everything, gods, men and senses recede baffled.¹ These sensory and mental organs can only reveal the manifested but can never reveal the Cause of

1. *Kenopaniṣad*, I. 1: cf. *Kenopaniṣad-bhāṣya*: ed and trans. S.V.O. Series B.

these manifestations. Thus the Causal or Root-knowledge is to be had only by a consciousness that is causal or original. That is the reason why we are asked constantly to know God, for by knowing Him we can know all the manifested. God thus could only be 'known' truly as Subject or Self.

Further, we know from the History of Philosophy that all theological speculations ungoverned by the revelations stop at the conception of the finite God, a power for Good but ineffectual and ever anxious. It is a conception that serves no purpose at all, and cannot be the Object of the religious consciousness. But we should guard ourselves against identifying intuitive apprehensions with revelational experience. These are unique and belong to a class of experiences that are instigated or granted by the Divine, whereas intuitions are but openings out of the individual consciousness towards the higher vistas and planes and presences of the all-comprehensive reality. There are several levels which have to be passed before the Divine form is opened up to the human aspirant.¹ The intuitive consciousness has to denude itself of its thralldom to objective existence, to objective perceptions and dependence on mere inferences based on perceptions, and must depend and lean more and more on the experience of all in the Spirit that is first experienced as subjective or immanent in oneself, and later experienced as trans-subjective and transcendent to oneself and all, including Nature, that previously were gathered into the subjective, for the limit of this capacity towards solipsism is reached rather quickly even when the soul aims at extreme openness and receptivity. The soul is finite and its receptacle is limited. In the Divine it gains the continuity that it tended to lose in the course of experiencing subjectivity. That is the reason why subjective experiencing is the easiest

1. *Kāthopaniṣad*, I. 2. 20. Some modern thinkers, following Sankara, deny the doctrine of Grace but substitute the peaceful or tranquil mental state as the meaning *prasāda*. They forget the verse 2 where is found the root-*Vṛn* and the whole range of spiritual literature of Grace, of Maitra (S.K.): *On the Kāthopaniṣad* (Vedanta Kesari 1943) and A. K. Coomaraswami *Notes on Kāthopaniṣad*. (New Indian Antiquary I): God is the "sum of our supersensible needs" said Ernest Renan.

way towards the realization of oneness with the Infinite; whether we are finite or infinite does not matter at all in that context for there is the feeling of fullness, *pūrṇatva* of God alone.

Thus it is clear that revelational knowledge can only be reached by man through the grace of the Divine who permits this opening out of the consciousness of the individual so as to be continuous with His infinite consciousness. But the intuitive consciousness is a beginning, an opening into wider and wider planes of Being, even as the inferential knowledge is permitted to arrive at universal laws. That is the reason why the highest truths of mystic experience could only be communicated through the intuitive and the subliminal, and occasionally through the intellectual level. That is also the reason why the higher truths are normally communicated through symbols, and analogies. That is also the reason why certain philosophical schools hold *upamāna* to be a means of right knowledge (*pramāṇa*). The fullest transmission of divine truths is impossible in terms of our human understanding. But they have been transmitted always in three distinct ways corresponding to the *ādhyātma*, *ādhibhautika* and *ādhidivika*.¹ An integral knowledge involves a fundamental understanding of the three ways which are capable of yielding an integral synthesis.

The symbolisms are all-important in religious understanding. Their unique truths have to be grasped. A dictionary of these symbols is not available. Therefore many theologians

1. cf. Kaballah, literature: *Heaven and Hell*: E. Swedenborg. 87-115, sections (Trans. Rev. Samuel Nobel. ed. 1851.) Dr Mohan Singh in his two books *Mysticism of Time in the Rg Veda* and *New Light in Krishna and the Gita* has attempted this method of correspondence. But it is Sir Aurobindo who has excellently shown it to be used in the Rg Veda from the *ādhyātmika* or psychological standpoint in his masterly essays on the *Secret of the Veda* ('Arya.' 1915-16). See also. "There is not a verse of the Quran but has a literal sense, and an allegorical sense, and its allegorical sense includes another allegorical meaning up to seven allegorical meanings.", *Kitāb al-Arba in Al-Risālat Al-Ladunyya*, Margaret Smith J. R. A. S. 1938 p 354, cf *Asuri India*: Banerjee.

do not wish to trouble themselves with the symbolisms of the revelations and the Veda and other such apocryphal literature. But without a knowledge of the symbols and what they symbolise or correspond to, we may only extract principles and leave out the essence of those teachings or instructions.¹

The symbols denote power, omniscience, omnibenevolence, love and others. Even the functions would find personifications, and myths may be made to reveal the coherency of the spiritual activity of symbolisation. We meet with these in the Mythologies of every nation. And we ought to treat them with care and respect. It is difficult to trace these symbolisms to one source, for the revelations have passed through several types of selves even as the mythologies have passed, and we are left with apparently conflicting but perhaps reconcilable revelations. An integral understanding of the nature of the Object of religious consciousness will demand from us a fair and foundational understanding of the fundamental demands of the individual consciousness on the one hand and on the other an equally elemental responsiveness in manifold ways to these demands on the part of One Divine God.

The Veda, the Bhāgavata, the Hymns of St. Śaṭhakopa and others are most important in this connection, for they reveal the omni-planal Nature of the Divine, and His infinite ways of responsiveness to the infinite demands of the individual soul, which itself forms the wonderful history of the Līlā of the Divine Being, the archetypal Mystery of Divine Being.

Prof. J. MacTaggart wrote "If there is a God, He is a person and not an abstract quality. Still less is God to be resolved into a couple of abstract qualities which can be treated as opposing one another." In writing the above he was perhaps referring to the Spinozistic treatment of God as possessing two attributes, Thought and Extension which were

1. *Life Divine* : Sri Anurobindo Vol. II.

2. *Some Dogmas of Religion* : p. 232 ; *Life Divine* : II. "Spirit is Person who has many Personalities."

opposed in one sense, though corresponding to each other in another sense. We know from the history of monistic philosophy that it tends to treat God as subordinate to the Absolute because He is a person, qualified, and subject to the categories of Thought.¹ The importance of the Absolute Godhead is realized by the religious persons and for them the concept of person is more important than the Impersonal principle that is abstract, mere law and order, and nothing more. It is true that monism seeks to make the concept of power or causality nugatory and makes it appear self-contradictory for no other reason than to deny that the concept of power involves the positing of an intelligence that is a Person; ultimately all the infinite regress that is affirmed of the causal *prius* is referred to the Person. In the name of anthropomorphism this is denied by certain thinkers, but it must be admitted that all thought-processes are anthropomorphic. The impersonal, is no less anthropomorphic than the personal and it cannot be maintained with any show of justice that the impersonal as ground is not surreptitiously introducing the concept of causality. The fact is that there happens a confusion of the terms belonging to one plane of experience with those belonging to another plane of experience, and incidentally the lower plane is denied by the higher or made relatively unreal. But the godhead-concept is something that transcends the private-personality of the sensory experience and the universal-impersonality of the rational experience. The concept of Infinite Person that is a Person having infinite personalities emerges at the highest point of revelational experience, though to be sure it has some semblances with the sensory-level which alone makes confusion possible. God is more

1. Advaita Vedānta considers God to be less than the Absolute, even as Bradley thought God to be less than the Absolute. Certain thinkers made God an evolute, the purest form available to manifestation of the Absolute through devotion as an object of Devotion. The Absolute is an object of *jñāna* whereas the *Īvara* is an object of devotion. Vidyāranya said that *Īvara* was *Suddha-sattvōvacchinna* Brahman whereas Yādava Prakāsa made *Īvara* the first evolute of Brahman.

than human just as much as He is more than reason. God as Transcendent is Absolute Person.

The qualities of the transcendent Person or God which are primary and exclusively belonging to Him alone are Omniscience, Omnipotence, Omnipresence and Omnibeneficence. The fundamental nature of Deity has always been considered to be supernatural Wisdom. Power was added on to this omniscience as a consequence of Knowledge. For mere cognizance without an ability to help or thwart, to impel or to govern would be ineffectuality in the extreme. Knowledge was and always is a sense of possession of the object of knowledge. *Brahmavid āpnoti param*. Knowledge is power. One who knows all could in one sense claim to possess all. It is in this sense that certain yogis or mystics who had become omniscient speak of being identical with the Divine. But then the Deity is eternally and supremely omnipotent and omniscient because He is also omnipervasive. Religions of love shudder to think of power but they too unequivocally consider Love to be a power-transcendental.¹

Magical religions, whether they are conscious of their purposes or not, are conscious of the element of power in the universe,² and they are also conscious that this elementary universal power could be tapped by means of some psycho-physical practices even as the natural scientist taps the hydro-electric power. The only difference between the magical scientist or supernatural scientist and the physical natural scientist consists in the definite and accurate knowledge that the physicist has of laws that govern natural causation. By this determination of the principles of causation, in respect of each process the supernatural field is more and more brought into the natural field. Supernatural causation even like natural

1. Christianity revolted against Judaism or Hebraism because of the latter's conception of God as Omnipotent power of Justice, ruthless and violent. It upheld the God of Love and pure beneficence who did not strike even when struck. Gandhiji's doctrine of Love is an extension of the same concept of Love - cf. my *Analgesis of Love* (*Vedānta Kesari*, May 1944).

2. This is called Mana, Orenda, Adiripā, Grace, Sakti, etc.,

causation starts with the concept of determinability or controllability of all phenomena. Causation is conscious of the ground of all causations, namely the reality, which it seeks to exploit for its own purposes, whether good or evil. Science and Magical Science are impersonal and could be used or misused. A god discovers the laws of reality and invents instruments for the good of all, but it is most often a devil that uses them for the destruction of all that is good and great. That is why there are two branches of Magic, the White and the Black.

But Religion need not wholly be a magical science, where the concept of power is more important. Biological evolution made it imperative that man should strive to discover the laws of Nature and even super-nature. It made for survival of the human species against animals and brutes. The ego-impulse and the consciousness of power have been important for survival and exaltation of spirit. Religion therefore as supernatural science of magic was, and even now is, incapable of being divested from the concept of power, even when this power came to be known as sacrifice (in its widest and psychological sense).¹ It is not necessary to go to the primitive religions except to show that there always has been this conscious or unconscious, groupal or tribal or individual and personal, urge within each person to worship and to acquire, to sacrifice or meditate and to possess the right relationship with that supernatural Power called God. But this power is unique, and it is sometimes considered to be the fundamental source of all kinds of power such as sovereignty and shamanism, natural law, common law and others.

The concept of Reality as Power is such that no law of Reality could be violated except at the peril of oneself. There

1. cf. *Power*: Bertrand Russell: *Tapas* or mystic heat produced through self-meditation is also sacrifice. Yoga is a typical manner of approach to the Supernatural worlds, *Siddhis* are fruits of such knowledge through Yoga. Sri Aurobinbo shows *tapas* to be concentration of Consciousness in its most general usage including total or partial, fundamental or superficial or of the surface and even here of the whole surface or part of the surface.

can be no transgression of the law. The rules of worship and ritual and sacrifice of oneself or of animals or dear ones to the powers that are addressed, even the process of meditations and *tapas* (askesis), have to be strictly and scrupulously followed to the last detail. In this sense, power exacts absolute obedience and conformity to the laboratory methods. If modern science, the child of Magic, has brought man to the sense of the law, even so has the mystic and psycho-physical Yoga of previous ages insisted upon rigid conformity to the path chosen. This is the natural imperative, the experimental imperative.¹ Conquest of Nature does not mean that Nature gives up its nature or quality but that the man who has known how to adapt himself to it through knowing the laws of Nature, is capable of achieving his own desires in respect of it.

There is a deeper sense of making Nature docile, that is through knowledge that comes through reason. Magic most often is intuitive and irrational and dependent upon one solitary instance and is essentially anthropomorphic in its approach to Nature and the reality behind Nature. It believes in the condescension of Nature-gods and powers, whereas Science shews that it is inevitable for Nature to obey man once he knows the principles of its constitution and organization and structure and their modifiability. In doing so indeed Nature is made to obey itself by the scientist.

Thus we proceed to the concept of law which rationalises power. Law is the truth about Nature. Knowing the law we can use powers of Nature. For knowledge of law is not merely knowing it in and for its powers but also definitely to which utilities Nature could be put. Nature is full of contingencies. And utilities are the first and foremost facts about man's life in the universe. Knowledge of the Laws of Nature enable him to plan his life intelligently. Nature is, in the language of Indian Philosophy, the field of *Artha*, *Kāma* and *Dharma*. *Dharma* it is that makes realization of utilities and desires good and efficient and happy. That is the reason

1. This is *Sraddhā*.

why in Indian Philosophy *dharma* is equated with *Rta* and *Satya*. *Dharma* is purposive or practical karma. *Rta* is cosmic law, order, which is the abstract law also in the sense that it is in conformity with that *Rta* that Nature itself subserves the utilities. *Satya* is ultimate and integral Truth, which embraces both the *Rta* and the *Dharma*.¹

The conception of *Rta* which is the root of *Dharma* reveals the first concept of unity of knowledge of the Universe. It is true that *Dharma* became a synonym for sacrificial rites in the Vedakarma, with *Yāga* and *Yoga*, because the inner meanings of the two word-roots *dhar* and *yuj* are to support and to connect or form or perform. The concept of *Rta* is traceable to the Veda. It means Cosmic Order, a primary regularity in the movements of the Sun, Moon and Stars and the Seasons. It was a very great discovery. Prajāpati, the Creator of the Creatures and their Lord, was called the upholder of *Rta*, year (*samvatsara*), *varṣa*, *ṛtu*, *māsa*, *yajña*. One thing is certain that *Rta* was the primary concept and had its origin in the Divine, and all the various powers or personalities of the Divine such as Varuṇa, Sūrya, Yama, Indra, Bṛhaspati or Brahmaṇaspati or Prajāpati, Rudra, Maruts, Aśvins and the Goddesses were upholders of the *Rta*. *Dharma* is a means towards becoming conscious of the *Rta* and the *Satya*. This has made possible the equation between *dharma* as function of uniting or knowing the Divine and Natural laws and later as conformity. Indeed it is clear from the Brāhmaṇas that the sacrifices were deemed to be indeed the building up of the ectypes on the pattern of the archetypal *Rta*.

1. cf. *Rta and the Law of Karma* : V. A. Gadgil (Pro. Xth A. L. Oriental Conference p. 16 ff.)

He holds that *Rta* means Sacrifice even as Śāyana held, not only in its singular but in its plural usage which has been interpreted as Laws by western savants. Even in the plural we may say that *Rta* means the laws of the several planes and worlds and need not be sacrifices at all. *Rta* is rendered by Śāyana as water occasionally. (*Nāra*?) the Cosmic form of *Dharma* which means sacrifice in the Jaimini's *Pūrva Mimāṃsā*. : *Athāto Dharma jīhṃsā*.

We pass beyond the *Rta* or the Order of created or manifest movement to the Creator, for the impersonal cannot be its own explanation. Further it was very clear from the way things moved that selfish powers (called *dasyus*, *asuras*, *diatyas* *vṛtra*, *valas* and others) began to misuse or confine the truths for purposes that were neither evolutionary nor beneficial. These 'thiefs of truth' have been made possible because impersonal knowledge science or magic, can become a tool of any owner, good or bad. The concept of the Good was made necessary because the impersonal cannot become as such Good. The Good most often is made into goods and that means that misuse is possible. That is why the Veda and the Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads always harp back to the *Śreyas* and the *Īsvara* and the Brahman, the Person, the One who is the life and soul of the many, who is the Ordainer and Ruler.

The exact name of the deity is not an important factor when we bear in mind the need to rescue the most essential principles involved in the nature of the Object of Religious Consciousness. The Law or Order of Nature or Super-nature is upheld by the power and wisdom and knowledge of the Supreme Personality ; and obedience seems to be demanded in respect of the establishment of right relations¹ with that Personality. It is true that for all practical and even cosmic purposes this is so very mechanical that it works with the perfect regularity of cause and effect.

Thus God is the master or owner or power that is regulated by Order. And this cosmic order it is that permits and enhances the possibilities of knowledge. Knowledge is always and essentially a knowledge of causes and effects, and of the uniformity of law. Any knowledge that claims to transcend the laws of causality is indeed no knowledge, whatever else that may be. Inter-relationships between different orders of experience even are governed by the *knowledge* of their mutual dependences. The magical view of reality proclaims this

1. The term 'right. relations' itself means Dharma. Religion is in this sense Dharma, even as Buddha has stated it to be.

interdependence and interaction. The rationalistic view of reality cannot dismiss this dependence or affirm interaction between two avowedly different planes of reality such as matter and mind, terrestrial and the superterrestrial, phenomenal and the Noumenal, Appearance and Reality. It finds them to be autonomous. But this is also discovered by it to be not absolute, for man is truly creative like the Spirit that he is; and he is also receptive like the appearance of Spirit and as an active instrument of Reality. Thus there arises the urgency, even the logical necessity to transcend two forms Matter and Spirit. This is what the concept of God does to Philosophy and to Science, when we understand by the word 'God' something that is much more than what theologies describe Him to be.

The God of Science would be abstract or impersonal Intelligence, and even magical religion cannot go beyond this when it is rationalised. But powers are personalities and intelligence is power plus direction. These personalities belong to, and arise from, the Person.

The evolutions of realization and religion are interrelated. There is a psychological aspect to every physiological and physical transformation or growth. Possible we may even say that the psychological precedes the physiological and the physical. Man first becomes conscious of his instincts and becomes almost immediately conscious of his limitations and dangers to his freedom in the exercise of his instincts. Thus he is confronted with the task of assessing his strength, capacity, ability and possibility. Objective power, that is natural power, is against him; but it is precisely the objective nature that presents him also with the knowledge of a super-objective power. Thus we find that so far from being unimportant, at one stage in the Rg Vedic scheme, power-gods had dominated the situation, even as the Law-Gods dominated the situation earlier (*sic*). It is but right. For we have the consciousness of law, order, that makes possible the divination of the force behind the law or which make the law actual. This makes

it possible for us to apprehend our so-called priority or superiority. Varuṇa-consciousness precedes and is superceded (technically) by Indra-consciousness and Agni-consciousness. Gods belong to three regions and act in unison with one another. Earth or terrestrial gods lead up to the mid-air gods and with them proceed to the superterrestrial or heaven gods. Beyond all these manifestations of god-powers is the One supreme Intelligence which is the truth of these many gods, the Person behind these many personalities.

That is the reason why Religion will always be the divination of the One Godhead behind and beyond all these manifestations of that Divine. That is why Sri Aurobindo speaks of Religion as an exoteric presentation behind which is an esoteric Yoga. Not until one possesses that esoteric universal and integral Yoga, will one ever understand the symbology and dogmas of the religions.¹ "Behind every great religion, behind, that is to say, its exoteric side of faith, hope, symbols, scattered truths and limiting dogmas, there is an esoteric side of inner spiritual training and illumination by which the hidden truths may be known, worked out, possessed. Behind every exoteric religion there is an esoteric Yoga, an intuitive knowledge of which its faith is the first step, inexpressible realities of which its symbols are the figured expression, a deeper sense for its scattered truths, mysteries of the higher planes of existence of which even its dogmas and superstitions are crude hints and indications."¹

1. *Synthesis of Yoga*: "Arya" Vol. III. p. 731. (1916-7)

III

Oneness of God¹

It is said that there is One power. There is One God. But it is seen that there are many laws, many powers and many gods. We can even say that there are many Powers of light and many Powers of darkness. That is why we find that most religions speak of the One Evil-power which is opposed to the One Good God. The question about evil will be deferred for the present, though it is integrally related with the notion of God.

Rg Veda speaks about all gods as One only: *Mahat devatānām asuratvam ekam.*² The concept of Viśvedevāḥ is a unique presentation of the collective godhead. But it was fully realised too that the gods are all powers of the One God, the transcendent, the supreme, whom even the gods cannot apprehend. Indeed we are told in one of the hymns that all the gods are in reality females though called males.³ Thus we find that the One Supreme Transcendent, transcending, even the knowledges and powers of the gods, is the Truth, and all prayers and hymns sung to the many gods ultimately refer to Him alone. Every power of the Divine may reveal itself and indeed does reveal itself as a personality of the Divine.

1. Readers will find the excellent compilation of Dr. Bhagvan Das "The Essential Unity of Religions" interesting and useful. Theosophy seeks to reconcile all religions and Faiths from the Standpoint of Comparative Religion.

2. *RgV.* III. 55; "They call Him Indra, Mitra, Varuṇa, and Agni: and He is the heavenly noble-winged Garutmān. That which exists is One; Sages call it variously as Agni, Yama, Mātariśvan. " *RgV.* I. 104.44. Echoing this passage *Svetāśvatāra Up.* "That Self is indeed Agni, It is Sūrya and It is Candramas" (VI. 6): cf *Iśa Up.* 16. and *RgV.* I. 167.4, 5, 6. I. 164. 6 and 164; III. 54. 8; X. 82. 6; X. 1.1. X. 129. 1. etc.

3. *Rg V.* I. 164. 14.

Prof. Max Muller finds in the *R̥g Veda* a theory of Godhead, which is called by him Henotheism. Henotheism holds that each of the Gods of the Veda, terrestrial or super terrestrial or other, is considered to be Supreme for a particular occasion by the hymning *R̥ṣi*, and worshipped as such. This theory is designated by some as "opportunistic Monotheism."¹ But Henotheism must presuppose also that the powers so apotheosized on different occasions and different functions are not competing Godheads or gods like the Gods of Mythology. The harmony of the universe will preclude any such conflicts between the powers of light. We may perceive two truths emerging from the study of the nature of the lauds made by the *R̥ṣis*. They are (i) that the power or God they worshipped was a perfect manifestation or perfection of the One Divine on the plane and purpose for which He is invoked, and (ii) that these powers of light derived their puissance and power and perfection, from the One Divine who contains them all and is their Source and the Supreme Unity of the World and all souls.² Writes Rudolf Otto "The idea of a personal world-god containing within Himself simultaneously every other god and also other existents, subsists in just the same form in regions beyond India itself—in Tangaroa (Polynesia) for example."³ That thought in all parts of the globe will inevitably resolve the multiplicity by tying them up in unity is a significant fact. Henotheism is this tying up of all powers and perfections of the Divine in a unique practical manner for the purpose of fruits and gains, successes and achievements of different kinds. The religious intuition is two-wayed. It is integral and practical. As integral it perceives Unity; and as practical it

1. For example Prof. M. Hiriyanna : *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*.

2. The evolutionary interpretation of most western thinkers appears to be firstly, unsustainable, and secondly, seems to conform to the modern tendency to see man's development as the development of Reality and Truth and God!

3. *Original Gita* : Rudolf Otto. p.151. Arjuna's *Viśvarūpa-darsana* of Kṛṣṇa is even like the vision of Prahlāda, and is fundamental to all religious-mystical experience of God as *Sarva*, and *Sarva dehīn* *Sar arpaṭarirīn* as Rāmānuja described Him. This Vision is a simultaneous time-Vision.

perceives the function and utility of each one of that many in that which is integrally One. Whilst a superficial observance of the activities of the primitives and even of their concepts might lead to the conclusion that their's is a polytheism that leads to monotheism, from multiplicity to unity, that the worship of the many has finally led to the worship of the One which contains all the many, which is, by the way, the sanest development, it is to be considered that the higher religions are not, because of these facts of modern ethnological and comparative religious science, to be considered to be evolutions from such beginning. Rather it may be otherwise; that is, these primitive beliefs in an universal Mana, orenda, adrišta, grace and others, which are diversified in almost all types of objects of the world as totem and taboo, as their mystic or magical power, to injure or to increase, may be considered to be unconscious intuitions into the real nature of Spirit. As it has been soundly laid down by Prof. MacDougall, "We must read development backward and not forward; we must find the key to the meanings of the first stage in the last." Mystics have always placed the last stage at the very first, for, from the psychological standpoint, the last stage it is that makes the first overt stage possible, the first overt stage being, in most cases, unconscious of the true purpose and power that initiated its manifestation. The subtle precedes the gross, manifesting itself subliminally to the consciousness. And this is the reason why the primitives are only subliminally aware of the true nature of Spirit which is the One that contains the Many. Likewise are we conscious of the Spirit transcendental which our minds cannot reach or define as existent or nonexistent even, but by which power alone our minds are capable of knowing anything at all. Thus it is a sound psychological sense that makes religion accept the Unity which is the significance and purpose of the many powers. It is with that central unity that man has to establish right relationships and not with the many powers as such, for that is their source, strength, support and sustenance.

"Henotheism is an appearance rather than a reality, an appearance produced by the indefiniteness due to undeveloped anthropomorphism" said¹ Prof. MacDonell and we must say that it may not be due to any lack of development but due to the subliminal character of the presented unity. For constantly at every level this subliminal vagueness persists, even when men have arrived at a full vision of the final reality. The nature of the Deity transcends all formulations and presentations; and the Ultimate Mystery of the One-Many relationship continues with unabated strength.

Thus it would not be proper to interpret the *Rg Veda* as progressing from Polytheism through Henotheism to Monotheism as Comparative Religion would like to do. Evolution in our knowledge of God may not involve evolution in the Nature of God. God displays manifold activities, which are increased according to the types of activities or creativities that man is permitted to execute. Natural, Moral and Spiritual activities are the three fundamental activities. Corresponding to these the religious Object or God displays infinite Wisdom, Justice and Power. God is also the leader since man is blind to so many things. And He leads through knowledge and vision and He is the Teacher, inspirer and revealer of the Path to the manifold souls. Reality or the Universe is a multidimensional existence, of space and time and beyond space and time, natural, mechanical, biological, moral, mental, celestial and mystical. All these, informed by One Divinity are to be known as One Brahman.²

1. *Vedic Mythology* : p. 17 ; cf *Origins of Religion and Language* : Cook p. 38 who does not subscribe to the view of Max Muller. Prof Keigi accepts the Henotheistic view (*Rg Veda* : p. 26). Prof. S. N. Dasgupta considers it to be of no importance. (*History of Indian Philosophy*, Vol. I. p. 17). Professor M. Hiriyana points out "Opportunist Monotheism is not the idea behind them (the Vedic R̥ṣi)." (*Outlines of Indian Philosophy*.)

2. The *Vaiśvānara Vidyā* in *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* X. v. (otherwise known as *Agni-rahasyopaniṣad*), and *Ch. Uf.* indeed explains this truth even as the Story of Eight blind men and the Elephant does.

A full and integral knowledge however will arrive at the comprehensive understanding of the Divine Nature and may not refuse reality to the manyness, eternity and infinity of the Divine Nature or even the manifestation of these infinities of the Divine Nature, though it will be more inclined to the experience of the many in the One. This is but right, for all true knowledge can have significance and wholeness and unity and structure or the experience of fullness only in and by the One, or the identity-factor in all the infinite and eternal and multiple manifestations. This is the cardinal truth of Advaita but fully articulated only in an Organic theory or Integral Synthesis.

The doctrine of relativity between the gods is possible only when we exalt certain functions or perfections, expressions or manifestations, planes or dimensions of Spirit over others. Such exaltations will be tied down to utilities. We cannot escape from that fact. But, foundationally speaking, it would be wrong to exalt certain powers over the rest. Only the One Supreme Transcendent, who pervades ever these gods and is their Identity or Unity or Self has the right to be called Supreme and Absolute in relation to these. Evolutionarily speaking, we find the One Infinite pervading all, enveloping all, leading all through His earthy, mid-atmospheric and celestial powers, uniquely and well.

Thus on the whole, we find that speaking about the nature of the Deity as emerging from the Vedic practice and praise, the Ṛsis were fully and integrally conscious of the power, wisdom and law of the One Divine, and these were typified by three powers Agni, Indra and Varuṇa (or Vāyu). No doubt already we find a host of abstract deities, so-called by the western savants who found personification of the functions of the Deity, such as *Dhātā*, *Nidhātā*, *Trātā*, *Netā* *Tvaṣṭā*, *Bhartā* and others. Thus we see that a full understanding was presented to the theological hymnist about the integral nature of the Deity he was experiencing. There is One Universe; One Power governs that universe, even as

there is but One maker and creator and sustainer and destroyer. The *Nāsad āsid* Hymn (Rg V. X. 129.)¹ summarises in one sense the fullest purposes of the Deity as Prajāpati. Later the *Vedānta Sūtras* (I. i. 2). also proclaims the first nature of God as the Cause of Creation and other processes.

1. Rg V. X. 121. "Beyond the sky, beyond the earth, beyond the Devas and the Asuras, what was the first germ in which all the gods came together? That one thing in which all creatures rested was placed in the lap of the unborn. You will never know Him who created these things; something else stands between you and Him." cf. *Kena Uṣ.* I. and *Sat. Brāh.* II. 2. 4. 1; VI. 8. 1. 14; X. 1. 3. 1.

God's nature as Omniscience is applied to Varuṇa (Rg V. I. 25. 7ff) and to Sūrya. Later on it is applied to Viṣṇu. Rg. I. 125. Varuṇa is said to possess an observant eye. Indeed Viṣṇu is stated to appear as the Eye. From the root-meaning of the word Varuṇa, One who surrounds all things, there is seen to be the essential nature of the Deity as having *bahir-vyāpti*; whereas as Viṣṇu He is also the pervader in all ways, having external and internal and transcendental pervasiveness. The three steps of Viṣṇu thus focus our attention on the triple nature of the Deity. Cf. Articles on Viṣṇu, Varuṇa etc. by Dr R. Dandekar (A.B.O.R.I. Vol. XXI and X All-India Oriental Conference; Fest Schrift Kane.) cf. *God Varuṇa in the Rig Veda*: H.D. Griswold who compares Varuṇa with Uranus (Ouranos, an ancestor of Zeus).

IV

The Vedic conception of the Godhead

In the previous lectures a brief idea of the religious Object as an integral existence was given. God was shown to have multiplicity of qualities such as omnipervasiveness and creatorship and beneficence and others. It was also shown that all religions, in one manner or other, subscribe to the view that God has the above mentioned qualities or has one or more of these above mentioned attributes. The emphasis on power or wisdom or beneficence or Oneness or Transcendence is due in all cases to partial visions and practical considerations. God is Nature in so far as He is its inward truth and self and creator. But God is Soul in so far as soul is also another truth of God which he seeks to attain in terms of Nature. Nature is mother of man in so far as it is in and through her he had come into being as a creature who has to recognize the inward Lord and Intelligence, which means so much to Nature and to man. Nature is finite and the phenomenal appearance of a deep reality that it seeks to exhibit or to attain to through the creatures who are children of finitude (*Diti*). But the Infinite (*Aditi*) too is the mother (the other mother) and she too creates children of light and of both, the truth is the Infinite Godhead. Thus man's voyage is from the mother of finitude, from *Diti*, to *Aditi* as it may be said, though it must be confessed that the meaning of *Diti* and *Aditi* may be much deeper than what we have given above. Anyway the struggle is clearly envisaged¹ and an exaltation from finitude to infinitude is also planned, since it is seen to be possible. But it entails a gradual orientation of the consciousness of man from its limited vision to the unlimited multi-dimensional vision, which is possible only when man is reborn in and of the Infinite Mother.

1. Daityas or Asuras, Dasyus, etc. typified by Vṛtra, Vala, Paṇis etc. were the Lords or powers of finitude which opposed the Ādityas. Varuna, Viṣṇu, Indra, etc. who were deities of Light or Ascent and of Infinity.

There is always a danger of interpreting highly advanced religious literature which is revelational and symbolic (because integral) in terms of our studies of primitive civilizations and cultures and symbols. Attention has already been drawn to this fact. The Veda occupies a unique place in the history of Spiritual realization and revelation. Undoubtedly naturalistic interpretations, biological and geological interpretations, sacrificial interpretations, pragmatic and psychological interpretations are possible in respect of a literature that refers simultaneously to all the levels of experience and leads man from the lowest natural to the highest spiritual, whilst yet keeping up its integral spiritual supremacy. Thus there can be said to be, as Indian Psychologists have from the very beginning maintained, at least three fundamental ways of interpreting, namely, the natural (*ādhibhautika*), supernatural (*ādhidaivika*) and psychological (*ādhyātmika*). Swami Dayananda Sarasvati has refuted all ways of interpretation except the Nirukta or etymological. Modern savants belonging both to the West and the East have been trying to interpret the Vedic figures and processes and struggles in a naturalistic or pastoralist manner. The gods of the Veda are stated to be of the natural order, namely, of the earth, atmosphere and sky. Thus Varuṇa, Indra, Agni, Sūrya, Rudra, Mitra, Aryaman, Maruts, Aśvins, and the goddesses, Uṣā, Sarasvatī and others are all said to typify certain natural and geographical events and occurrences. Prof. Max Muller writes "All Vedic gods, nay all Aryan gods, were in the beginning physical. I say in the beginning, for there came no doubt a time when the concept of deity being once formed and having become familiar, invisible and purely abstract objects were also raised to a divine status."¹

2. *Science of Mythology*: p. 817. "It is true that the conception of all ancient Aryan gods was suggested by what we call real objects, by the great phenomena of nature, but they were fashioned as divine personalities by the mind of man..." The truth is that man is imaginative and perceives more dimensions of reality than the eye perceives. And investigators into primitive culture find it to be more complex than simple for more reasons than one.

In modern times there are certain writers who are not satisfied with the simple natural phenomena of elemental deities,¹ and abstract deities, as expounded with conspicuous success by Max Muller, Roth and others. They saw in these mythological presentations of astronomical phenomena, only planetary conjunctions, eclipses, occultations and others. Thus a whole science of mythological astronomy was started. It was begun in one sense by Mr. Nārāyaṇa Aiyangār¹ and was continued with unabated vigour by Mahamahopādhyāya Dr. Shama Sastri² till the time of his death. The value of this approach consists in showing that the Vedic seers were well acquainted with celestial phenomena and were not merely observers of the terrestrial phenomena. Their interest in steller phenomena was due to their belief in the rites of the Brāhmaṇas which exacted precise time-determinations. In fact, creation was construed by them to be an act of Sacrifice, as an act of a Year which comprises seasons that are determined by the movements of the Sun, Moon and nodes and elliptical shifts that make changes in the seasons. The Sacrifice instead of being merely propitiatory became a science of celestial phenomena. A knowledge of the celestial helped the agricultural and pastoral vocations. Interdependence between planes began to be accepted as a fundamental truth.

A geological explanation of the Vedic Gods and their universe was undertaken by the late Mr T. Parameśvara Aiyer³ who tried to show that the Vedic Ṛṣis were conversant with subterranean phenomena and the subterranean products such as patroleum, and other volcanic products. Interesting though this interpretation is, that too appears to be rather novel and ingenious than correct. It is just possible that there always occurred phenomena of the volcanic kind, and the story of the flood found in all the ancient literatures of the

1. *Essays on Indo-Aryan Mythology* 2 Vols.

2. *Pañcajanya's*: Poona Orientalist; 1942; *Agni in the Vedas*. New Indian Antiquary. 1942 etc.

3. *Rg Veda*: cf. for a physiological account: *Vedic Gods*: Dr. V. Rele For Geographico-Geological account: see *Rig Vedic India*: A. C. Das. (2 Vols)

world is a standing testimony to the knowledge of the geological formations. But that the Gods of the Veda were just powers in the purely geological sense it is not possible to accept.

While therefore all efforts to discover in these hymns other than naturalistic meanings and prayers to nature-gods are welcome, the naturalistic tendency is very strong in man and man knows about God only through his knowledge of the World of Nature. Pantheism is the first step in religion, but pantheism is essentially perceptive in character. But it is by the psychological that man transcends the naturalistic pantheistic statement.

Before we proceed we can remark that the Veda is more than a mere naturalistic document. Not without justice was it described as a document that intimates the three qualities or *guṇas*, namely, the natural (*tamas*), sacrificial (*rajas*) and divine and moral (*satva*), which are represented by the three ways of approach, the *ādhibhautika*, *ādhidaiivika* and *ādhyātmika*.¹ The *ādhidaiivika* rendering is a deistic rendering, or else it is merely an interpretation of the fruits that accrue to man when he sacrifices to the Gods or powers of Nature or super-nature (in so far as most results are said to accrue after death). If we can think of two kinds of worship or Sacrifice, one would be for immediate fruits and the other would be for fruits after death. Man believes more in life after death than in immortal life, death or no death.

The great Sāyanācārya following the footsteps of earlier writers on the *Karma-Kāṇḍa* of the Vedas and the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā Sūtras of Jaimini, commented upon the Vedas. This gigantic task was performed with such ability that he is even today held as the authority on Vedic interpretation. His

1 As I will have occasion to state later, the meanings of the two terms *ādhibhautika* and *ādhidaiivika* have not been clearly established. I suggest that the *ādhibhautika* means that which refers to nature, whereas *ādhidaiivika* refers to the powers behind the natural phenomena, the elements and senses and others. These powers are cosmic and get their strength and dynamism from the One Supreme or Source i.e., Brahman. Cf. my article *Ādhidaiivatam and Ādhyātmam in the R̥gopaniṣad* JSVOL Vol. 1948

reading of the Veda was strictly limited to the sacrificial meanings. The reasons for this procedure were obvious; firstly succeeding generations usually lose touch with the significance of rites and the details of performance of the several rites. Once this traditional knowledge is lost even as in many practical and sculptural sciences have been, then there arises great difficulty. The details are all important in this science of sacrifice even as is the case with laboratory work. Especial is the difficulty when symbolic references are involved. We owe it to Sāyanācārya that he preserved for us the great treasures of Vedic technique of sacrifices. It is not for moderners to belittle the great work of that master. The limitations of his commentaries were definitely set by himself. The ādhyātmika rendering was not to his purpose. The established usage of the practical performance of rites and the places of the several hymns in the respective places and times at the sacrifices were fixed by him as they had been handed down. He knew perfectly well that the ādhyātmika interpretation was always available to any Yogi who was granted the vision of the Mantras. Secondly, Karma, when it is done without desire for terrestrial gain would *ipso facto* lead to jñāna, the transcendent truth of the Veda, the Brahman.

The unorthodox schools,¹ were many even during the times of the Vedas: but this so-called unorthodoxy was mainly due to differences in the standpoints between the ādhibhautika-ādhidāivika schools and the ādhyātmika schools. These denied the need for outer sacrifices to so-called gods of Nature and Sacrifice especially of the great wealth in cows and children and others; and secondly the sacrifice of living beings was very repellent to them. Whatever the reasons, we

1. Sāṅkhyas, Buddhists, Cārvākas, Jains, Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva and Sātvatas, Pāñcarātra Āgama followers all refused to subscribe to the doctrine and practice of actual killing of animals etc. Śunasēpa Hymns and Aitareya Brāhmaṇa story have to be read symbolically. Equally important is it to distinguish between the materialistic reaction of the Cārvākas and the yogic or ādhyātmic reaction of the Sāṅkhya, Buddhist, Jaina, and Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva and other Āgamas.

can see that these schools began to think of sacrifice as an offering of the very best and the very loved things to God. And speculating in this manner, the best that has to be sacrificed is our selves. But this too meant a gross version of the sacrifice. *Sati* or self-sacrifice may be quite all right in love but the true sacrifice that is sought after is firstly of the desires and greeds, the movements of the outward-turned motor organs and of the sensory organs; then of the egoism, and then of everything that means to stand between the fullest self-offering to the Universal Consciousness, Brahman.¹ Sacrifice itself became not a ritual in the outward sense of sacrificing others but of one's organs of action and knowing, of one's mind, one's knowledge and intellection and will, finally of oneself to the Divine through *tapasya*-fire. Thus sacrifice became an act of transmutation through directing everything towards God. Thus the law of growth was evolved on right lines of *dharma*, discrimination, *sāṅkhya*, in close conjunction with yoga. *Ādhyātma Yajña* became Yoga.

Any serious Yogi or occult student can discover the symbolic meanings of the terms *paśu*, *gau*, *aśva*, in their lower character to mean the lower motor organs and sense-organs, but those swift steeds verily lead men godward when offered to the Divine Godhead. Thus *Paśu-Medha* or *Yajña*, *Aśva-medha*, *Rājasūya* and others are deep spiritual *sādhana*s whose culmination is the *Puruṣa-medha* and *Brahma-medha*.²

The clear meanings of the rituals and sacrifices got lost due to a variety of causes. And the symbolisms enshrined in them got sequestered and esoteric, being communicated only

1. Cf. *Tirumāṅgai*, the *Īṣvār*, has shewn the method of *Maḍal* or self-offering in Love (*Kāma*) to God: My article entitled "*Eros*" *JSVOI* Vol. IV.

2. *Puruṣa-medha* and *Brahma-medha saṁhakāras* are performed after death to very eminent scholars or knowers of Brahman. *Medha* means both sacrifice and intelligence. To sacrifice means to recognize and to offer to the Divine the powers of the several portions of our psycho-physical being and thus grow into the consciousness of transcendence. *Puruṣamedha* is *Īśa-sāṁskāra*-consciousness, even as *Brahma-medha* means *Brahma-sūrya* consciousness. Cf. *Puruṣa-Sūtra* Conception of the Divine's Sacrifice and *Sri's* Sacrifice in *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*.

to those who had by their training and experience become fitted to get admission into such secrets. But we know that not all the efforts even of esoteric sections have been able to keep the symbolisms alive, for any symbolism lives and becomes a creative instrument only when the consciousness of the seeker is able to grasp and utilise its meanings for his own ascent into many worlds. For the one thing that is more than anything clear to any deep student of mysticism is that the mystic or adept or arhat, or yogi or siddha is capable of dwelling in more planes of consciousness than the one the ordinary human being is aware of. And it is precisely the business of the symbol to interpret one world to the others and *vice versa*. Those who only conceive of symbols in the manner of mathematical formula are stating the very fringe of the truth of symbolism as it is used in Yogic consciousness. Thus no student of Veda can do justice to the figures and personalities of the many worlds¹ unless he is aware of their correspondences between themselves. This obviously is beyond him, for no yogi has so far undertaken the task of rendering the truths of such a multi-dimensional consciousness amenable to the modern mind, barring Sri Aurobindo.¹ Indeed even the rites and sacrifices would gain unique recognition only when the details of the outer representations are seen to be symbolic correspondences in the inward consciousness as it ascends the many planes of universal experience, that more and more begins to appear to be integral. The hidden side of Yoga will get strengthened when it is compared with the sacrificial rites prescribed by the ancients in the Brāhmaṇas, and comprehended esoterically by the Upaniṣads and annotated by the Purāṇic half-mythological and half-imaginative accounts of historical tradition.²

1. cf. *Secret of the Veda* and *Hymns of the Aṅgis*: Sri Aurobindo. For a recent attempt, diffuse and not yet systematic, see the *Secrets of Spiritual Life*: Dr Mohan Singh and by the same author: *New Light on Krishna and Gita* and *Mysticism of Time in the Rg Veda*.

2. History has to be understood psychologically if it has to appear as an ectype of the archetypal truth which seeks to have that solid character of freedom in the manifestation. cf. *Meaning of History*: Nicolas Berdyaev,

Thus it is that we find the Upaniṣadic view gained ground. Rational presentation of the intuitive truths and figures was attempted. Instruction was granted by teachers of wisdom, whether from the sacrificial or the *ādhyātmika* or psychological angle did not matter very much at the beginning. Later on the principles of growth of psychological awareness of the Supreme Consciousness and Delight, transcendent to all processes were taught to the discerning. Even the Sāṅkhyan and Buddhist schools found substantial source-texts from this most significant literature. Thus if we can call the Hymns the *ādhidaivikam*, the Brāhmaṇas form the *ādhibhautikam*, and the Upaniṣads form the *ādhyātmikam*. It is true, however, that the *ādhyātmika* holds the key to the entire literature. It is therefore that ācāryas have called the Upaniṣads, Vedaśiras or Vedānta, and have given it the primal place. But it must also be clear that even the esoterics of the Upaniṣads can never be penetrated by any one who has not the equipment and training in Yoga nor can rituals and sacrifices get clarified and promote the integral knowing of the Divine as Self and Being of all.¹

Swāmi Dayānanda Sarasvatī held that the Vedas taught Viññāna, knowledge, Karma and Upāsana. Swāmi Dayānanda Sarasvatī was the first among the moderns to challenge the interpretations of Śrī Sāyanācārya and the naturalistically-minded Western savants who for want of better guides, followed the foot-steps of Sāyanācārya. Indeed there was a tradition which Sāyanācārya followed as ancient as the other method undertaken by Swāmi Dayānanda Sarasvatī. It was the ritualistic method of interpretation made rich by the Mīmāṃsā tradition. There was the recognition on his part of

for the view that History is phenomenal manifestation of the supreme truth of the Subjective Divine, eternal and archetypal. Symbolisms correspond with these manifold concrete phases of the essential tragedy of Christ-Love.

1. The importance of the study of the *Karma-Kāṇḍa* and practice has been emphasized by Śrī Rāmānuja in the *Śrī Bhāṣya*, I. i. 1 which upholds the teaching that *karma* and *jñāna kāṇḍa* form one integral instruction,

the ādhyātma interpretation. But that was not emphasized by him nor did he have recourse to it except when the ritual interpretation failed to be meaningful. The *laukika* method of interpretation or the ordinary sense of the Vedic words could not be of any help. Nor could naturalistic interpretations of them help. We have to understand words in their *yaugika* sense, philological or root-sense. This the Nirukta supplied. As Yāska stated¹ "Without the aid of Nirukta the Vedas cannot be understood." Grammar or Vyākaraṇa must be fully understood for that protects the meaning of the Veda. Even here the Vyākaraṇa that has to be mastered is not the *laukika* but the philological (*yaugika*). The great Yāska again stated that all the words in the Veda have only *yaugika* meanings. That is precisely the reason why the Vedic mantras resound with varied meanings and simultaneously refer to several planes of experience. Swāmi Dayānanda Sarasvati on the strength of the statements of the Nirukta and Mahābhāṣya of Patanjali undertook to expound the Vedas in the *yaugika* sense. The second factor about his methodology consisted in the acceptance of the Mantra portion alone as the Veda. The Brāhminas or the ritual and liturgical portions, the Upaniṣads, the Itihāsas, Purāṇas, all were, according to him, of the Smṛti-order not the śruti order. These have accordingly secondary value as testimony. Of the Bhāṣya of Dayānanda, Sri Aurobindo writes "It is a remarkable attempt to re-establish the Veda as a living religious scripture. Dayānand took as his basis a free use of the old Indian philology which he found in the Nirukta. Himself a great Sanskrit scholar, he handled his material with remarkable power and independence. Especially creative was the use of that peculiar feature of the old Sanskrit tongue which is best expressed by a phrase of Sāyana's 'the multi-significance of roots.' We shall see that the right following of his clue is of capital

1. For *Laugika* interpretation see Yāska's Nirukta I.15, I.2; Mahābhāṣya of Patanjali III.3.1.

importance in understanding the peculiar method of the Vedic Rishis."¹

It is therefore clear that provided we are prepared to concede to the Vedas a real and complete revelation of the phenomenal, provided we are not biassed in our native sense or corrupted by the 'sceptical modes' of modern thought that grant to their own insignificant consciousness a science that they are incapable of, we shall see that Swāmi Dayānanda had laid the world under the deepest debt of obligation for giving to mankind the treasure that was lost or buried under the debris of confusing ideologies and interpretations. But as Sri Aurobindo remarks such a complete philological attempt is very difficult to establish.

Sri Aurobindo, the greatest among the modern psychological interpreters of the Vedic hymns, is a Yogi. He differs from Sāyana, not indeed about the interpretations made in the sacrificial manner, for that may indeed be the truth in that direction, but about the interpretations he makes in respect of hymns and passages that are definitely psychological states of Supramental Consciousness. So thoroughly are the keys to interpretation from the psychological angle imbedded in the very literature of the Hymns that it is surprising that no psychological attempt was ever made by those who swear by the Veda. Sri Aurobindo differs indeed from the methods of Roth and his followers who abjured the lead of Sāyana for

1. *Bankim, Tilak, Dayānanda*; Sri Aurobindo and *Ārya* I. 218. The method of interpretation of Dayānanda has the sanction of the ancient grammarians. But the fact remains that whilst the contributions of Swāmi Dayānanda Sarasvati are invaluable, the general theory of reality extracted by him does not reveal the document to be a powerful spiritual literature that leads up man to the summit of his consciousness. The realism of Swāmi Dayānanda Sarasvati establishes the existence of the Personal Creator God, the reality of phenomenal creation in space-time-causal scheme of strictest determinism saturated with the moral principle of freedom and deserts. The acceptance of the triple eternals, the Godhead, the souls and Nature or matter is all in keeping with the Monotheism of the Vedas. The godheads were all one alone even as the Veda states. But for him there were no Avatāras, no manifestations of the Godhead in icons idols and temples. cf. *Life of Dayānanda Sarasvati*: Har Bilas Sarda 1946.

naturalistic interpretations. Sri Aurobindo's thesis has not been entertained by modern scholars, whether Eastern or Western, for obvious reasons.¹ But it may not be long before it will gain the recognition it deserves.

According to Sri Aurobindo "Vedic deities are names, powers, personalities of the Universal Godhead and they represent each some essential puissance of the Divine being. They manifest the cosmos and are manifest in it. Children of light, sons of the Infinite, they recognize in the soul of man, their brother and ally and desire to help and increase him by themselves increasing in him so as to possess his world with their light, strength and beauty. The gods call man to divine companionship and alliance; they attract and uplift him to their luminous fraternity, invite his aid and offer theirs against the Sons of darkness and division. Man in return calls the gods to his sacrifice, offers to them his swiftnesses, and strengths, his clarities and his sweetnesses, milk and butter of the shining Cow, distilled juices of the plant of Joy, the Horse of the sacrifice, the cake and wine, the grain for the God-mind's radiant coursers. He receives them in his being and their gifts into his life, increases them by the hymn and the wine and forms perfectly as a smith forges iron;...All this Vedic imagery is easy to understand when once we have the key, but it must not be mistaken for mere imagery. The gods are not simply poetical personifications of abstract ideas or of psychological and physical functions of Nature. To the Vedic seers they are living realities; the vicissitudes of the human soul represent a cosmic struggle not merely of principles and tendencies but of the cosmic powers which support and embody them. These are the Gods and the demons. On the world-stage and in the individual soul the same real drama with the same personages is enacted."²

1. The obvious reason for the neglect is surely the materialistic and naturalistic bias of the modern scholars, who have lost themselves in naturalistic and philological speculation.

2. *Hymns of the Atrix*: "Ārya" II. pp. 106 Sri Aurobindo has translated and annotated the Hymns addressed to Agni in the Ṛg V. V. These are

Such a key of course had been provided by many mystics through the ages, but the truth seems to be that while some of these imageries could be favourably interpreted by the mystics, gnostics, Ālvārs, Nāyanmārs, Sufis, Neo-platonists and others, the major part of them has been beyond them too, impervious and impregnable. A systematic understanding of the whole Veda with the help of any one single key seems to be beyond most mystics. But we can see that they do reveal certain segments of the Supramental Consciousness that belonged to the Ṛṣis, those denizens of Absolute Reality.

The ādhyātmika interpretation is not merely of the processes, internal or intrinsic to the embodied self, as some writers assume but is more truly the mystical view which is also cosmically the intuition into the divine nature, integral and organic, super-personal and characterised by unity-multiplicity in respect of powers, principles, energies and perfections. Thus the ādhyātmika view is not purely psychological or psycho-physical or psycho-analytical but integral, total intuition of the nature of the divine reality in manifestation and beyond manifestation, in time-eternity and in timeless eternity. It is capable of explaining the ādhibhautika-activities as well as the ādhidaivika powers and perfections, rites and sacrifices, yajñas and yāgas, and with all that, it alone can offer an abiding solution by clearing partial views and emphases. The adhyātma-interpretation reveals that there

contributions which no student of the Veda should miss. See also his *Hymns to the Mystic Fire*: (which has his new introduction.) A psychoanalytical treatment of the Veda was undertaken in part by Dr C.G. Jung in his *Psychological Types*. Brahman, according to him, "is a reconciliation of the opposition standing beyond them as an irrational factor; it is also a definite psychological state characterised by detachment from emotional fluctuations. Release from the fluctuations of affects which means from the tension of opposites is synonymous with the way of redemption that leads to the state of Brahman. Brahman is not only a state but also a process, *a durée créatrice*. It is therefore not surprising that the symbolical expressions of this Brahman concept in the Upaniṣads make use of all those symbols which I have called 'libido symbols'" (p. 246) The entire chapter must be read to have clear view of the psychoanalytical treatment of the Brāhmaṇa-Upaniṣadic concepts.

are several planes of existence corresponding to several levels of consciousness which are known by the individual in his evolutionary or yogic progress with the help of appropriate organs which come into being, or else directly by means of awakened consciousness which is called the supermind or *vijñāna*. Thus true subjectivity of the spirit is attained. When attained it tends to reveal the *unitas-multiplex* nature of reality and the Divine in every sense of the term, and its infinity, eternity, ubiquity and inexhaustible fecundity are apprehended in the manifestations of that in space-time nexus called creation or *Līlā*. All these are real planes but their unique or organic being is synthesised in the vision of the all integral Brahman or Spirit, the vision which is called rightly the *viśva-rūpa-darśana* in the *Gītā*, *Bhāgavata* and other *Purāṇic* literature, the vision of *Nārāyaṇa* who is the *Sarva*, *sarvam khalvidam Brahma*.

The above is not a pantheistic statement as such. God, the Supreme Person, is more than Nature which is supported by Him. Inasmuch as He is transcendent to it as self and ground, He is not capable of being fully comprehended by it or even the human mind. The deistic view that the Divine is absolutely apart from Nature and outside it, is also replaced by a higher theism, which counsels the doctrine of the immanent deity who is not exhausted by those in whom He is immanent, and who continues to be transcendent as ruler, ordainer, and ground of all processes of Nature. But this theism has to arrive at the concepts of Organic or integral being not merely in the whole but in every part of the Reality, that is to say, it has to arrive at an immanence that shall truly be immanence in the sense of Self or Brahman of whom the entire Nature, in its totality and in its manifold division, is but a body (*śarīra*). Thus the *ādhyātmika* view will culminate in the view that God is the Self of all, of myself too and is my Self. This is the Self-doctrine, the *Ātman* doctrine of the *Upaniṣads*, which reveals that all the Gods, men and nature have Brahman as their Self, which enables them

to state that their self and the self of all is One only, or identical.

A comprehensive understanding of the mythology behind the Veda is unfortunately not to be had. Recent interest in comparative religion and mythology has largely helped in this respect to illuminate the dark secrets of Vedic mythology. The creation theories instead by being just speculative stories are seen to have a rationale. The evolution of the gods who are stated to belong to several spheres such as the earth, atmosphere and sky and the beyond, and the constant fights between the powers of darkness (asuras) and the powers of light (devas) are seen to have a different significance and an eternal significance. Both are indeed seen to be the powers of the One Divine.

The most outstanding presentation of the Myth of the Veda in recent times is undoubtedly that given by Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy which is so fully documented and so closely written that it is almost impossible to give a summary of it. Those who are interested should read his '*Hinduism and Buddhism*'. But the general idea is clearly that there is only Supreme Identity at the beginning without differentiation of being from non-being, light from darkness or separation of sky from earth. "The all is for the present impounded in the first principle which may be spoken of as the Person, Progenitor, Mountain, Tree, Dragon, or Endless serpent." The second principle, which indeed is its *alter ego* is the dragon-slayer, born to supplant the Dragon, in one sense its Father, in order to take possession of its kingdom, and to distribute the riches. Though this appears to be represented by a dismembering of the Dragon which makes it cease to be, either in accordance with the Father's will or against His will. Thus this act is an act of sacrifice which releases the potencies or potentialities of the Father, the Cause. This is the passion that is both an exhaustion and a dismemberment. But this does not mean that the Dragon

can ever be destroyed. It now seeks to restore itself in and through its slayers or its children; it "in whom we were imprisoned is now our prisoner; as our Inner Man he is submerged in and hidden by our Outer Man. It is now his turn to become the Dragonslayer." This process of building up, or discovery of the Self is thus a continuous or 'incessant multiplication of the inexhaustible One and unification of the indefinitely Many." Thus Dr. Coomaraswamy shews that the myth is an act of self-division of the One into the Many contained within it and an act of restoring the many to the Oneness in and through the surrender of each of the many to the One that is central and Inner. This process is easily perceived of course from the outer or objective side as a war between the One and its supporters the Titans or Asuras, the binders or hold-fasts, and the supporters of the releasers of the bonds. Later it can be seen that these releasers are those who construct the One out of its members, who build the fire-altar and the mansions of the One, and their opponents are those who prevent this building up. Thus a constant war goes on the surface whilst deep down there is no essential dualism.¹

The Myth narrated by Dr. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy is essentially a narration of the creation and evolution of the

1. The point to note is that the word '*Asura*' is used in two different senses. *Asuras* appear to be in every case the opponents of dismemberment as well as remembering and seem to take the side of reaction or possession or inertia unwilling to release their hold on what they have. The *Devas* again are always the forces of change, release. But we may also note another possibility, thanks to the knowledge we have of comparative religion. *Devas* seem to have become the forces of reaction in the Avesta of Zoroaster. The forces that dismembered refused to remember and have thus continued to function in the old way and thus became forces of the *Asura* type, whereas the *Asuras* who opposed the dismemberment having been defeated at first in due course accepted and achieved the task of remembering.

But from an historical account of the *Asuras* who were the earlier warriors we find that they were as highly advanced as any and were quite conversant with the same mythology as is exhibited in the Veda. cf. *Asura India*: Anantaprasad Banerji Sastri Patna. 1928 which discusses fully the Assyrian and Chaldean ancestry of *Asuras* and points out how Mohenjo Daro civilization is Asuric. cf. *Rāmāyana*: Sundara and Yuddha Khāndas.

individual, an evolution which indeed is a process by which the individual identifies himself with the central Being whose *amsa*, ray, emanation, diversification or the many, he is. The eternal archetype of this story is of the Sacrifice of the Puruṣa, to whom the individuals in their turn have to sacrifice in order to become united in a deeper manner. Vṛtrahan, is not only Indra but also Bṛhaspati and other Gods also. The stories of Paṇis and their dispersal and defeat, of Vāla and his defeats are all representative of the self-same figure of conquest, of victory, of sacrifice of the forces of obstruction to upwardness and realization of the Oneness of all planes and existences. This fact is intimated by the most pregnant of utterances of the Upaniṣads such as "He who perceives all creatures in the Self and Self in all creatures," "He who perceives nowhere difference" and others; such then is the Myth. But then it is not quite enough to find this grand identification of all the exploits of Agni-Rudra, Viṣṇu, Indra, Varuṇa and Bṛhaspati and others in the One Figure of the Transcendent who has become the many. We have also to consider the fundamental natures or qualities of the *Sacerdotium* and *Regnum*² (the phrases are Ananda K. Coomaraswamy's) in each of the associate personalities just in each of these figures as Agnindrau, Rudramarutau, Viṣṇusūryau, Aśvinau; and it is necessary to bear in mind that this polarisation in twin-personalities of the *Sacerdotium* and *Regnum*, Priest and King, is very clearly intimated in the Pāncarātra Āgama where the six qualities of the Supreme Godhead are paired in the fulgurations which are three, namely Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradhymna and Aniruddha, a fact which is of capital importance though little noticed by Modern Scholars.³

1. *Iśa Up.* 6

2. *Hinduism and Buddhism* : Ananda K. Coomaraswamy p. 12-3

3. Dr Coomaraswami does not refer to this unique significance of Pāncarātra theory of bipolar fulguration characterised by the *Sacerdotium* and *Regnum* characteristics. cf. My Chapter on Vyūha theory. *Jñāna-bala, Aśvarya-sakti, Tejas virya*, the three triads, are in fact the *Sacerdotium* and *Regnum* couples. Further even as in his Chapter on Buddhism it has been shewn the Avatara doctrine or the Myth of Solar Deity descent and the

Let us begin with the God Agni, who is stated to belong to the Earth though an arrival from heaven. "Born from the floods of Heaven (clouds) He came to earth as lightning, and when he disappeared and hidden, Mātariśvan a demi-god, another Prometheus, brought him back and gave him to the tribe of Bhṛgu."¹ He is a form of the Supreme being, a lowest or most material 'form' or pattern of the supreme, who has hidden himself in the waters, (the gross) matter from which the other Gods drag him out.² Eight³ are the names given to him, he born of Brahmā-Prajāpati of Uṣas; these names are Rudra, Sarva, Paśupati, Ugra, Aśanai, Bhava, Mahān Devaḥ, Īśāna, and Kumārā is the ninth name. Agni is the most auspicious name⁴ and Agni resides everywhere. He is spoken of as having six forms⁵ as Jātavedas, Vaiśvānara, Samiddha, Narasamśa, Svāhā, and as being in the doorways and the Sacrificial post. He as auspicious is the bringer of the Śrī or wealth goddess,⁶ the granter of supreme felicity. Agni is the leader on the path of Realization.⁷ He it is who as sacrifice

Agni Sūrya equation are not stated but understood from the context. Viṣṇu, Sūrya and Agni are indeed the basis of the philosophy of the Trinity. cf. NI Antiquary. August-Sept. 1943.

1. *Rig Veda*: Keigi: (trans. Arrowsmith). However that it is stated that Angirasa Atharvaṇ is said to have brought down Agni to the earth. *Kena Up.* states that Brahman appears to us even as *Vidyut* as lightning. Thus we have to take it that the Supreme Brahman is what is really meant by Agni and not the gross material fire or even the fire godhead defeated by Brahman in *Kena* cf. *Bhāgavata* III. 12. 10 12. cf. A. *Āraṇyaka*: which speaks of lightning as *adhidaiva* and the heart as *adhyātma* aspects of one Reality.

2. *Ait. Brāh.* I. *Agnir va devānām avamaḥ Viṣṇuḥ prathamā...* *Sat. Brāh.* I. 2. 3 Agni is stated to be fourfold and when the gods took possession of the three he entered into the waters and hid himself there. But he was forced out by the gods, the waters having betrayed him so to speak. Then he spat out on it thrice and *Ekata*, *Dvita* and *Trita* *Āptya* gods were born as a result.

3. *Sat. Brāh.* VI. 1. 3. 9-18 *Sat. Brāh.* I. 7. 3. 8. The Yogic significance is very important.

4. *Sat. Brāh.* I. 7. 3. 8. "Agni is the gentle name of Rudra" cf. *RgV.* X. 136.

5. cf. *Vedic Metre*; E. Vernon Arnold. p. 260 ff. He considers that Agni may well mean a clan as there are six different Agnis mentioned!

6. *Śrī Sūkta*

7. *RgV.* I. 193. 1; *YS.* I. 1. 1. 14; cf. *Vaj. Sam.* IV 28; *Sat. Brāhm.* III. 3. 3. 12.

carves the offering to the several Gods. He is the most important figure in the Vedic Rite.¹ Agni is a *Vasu*.²

It may be pointed out also that being an issue of Prajāpati, as stated in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, Agni yet is in essence the Son, Kumāra of the Trinity in one sense, and is identified with Rudra-Śiva in the self-same Brāhmaṇa. Mr. Narayana Aiyangar in his work on Mythology has tried to show that all the myths in one form or other in the Vedas, Brāhmaṇas, Purāṇas and Itihāsas represent varying emphases on the Viṣṇu (Nārāyaṇa), Brahma-Prajāpati and Agni-Rudra-Śiva as representative of God, Son and Holy Ghost trinity of the later Christianity. The Pāñcarātraic version of the Philosophy of Avatāras or descents for the purpose of Ascent is capable of being described in the language of Hinduism as *kriḍā* or *Līlā*. It is clear from a careful reading of the myth of Agni that Agni is the Sacerdotium, the one Religious-Mystic Object throughout all types of worship whether it is ādhibhautika or ādhyātmika or ādhidaivika, the foremost of the powers of light brought to the Earth by the Atharvaṇa-Bhṛgu. He has, as it were, hidden himself in the earth, waters and self as the indwelling secret of their life, light and knowledge, and as the Sacrifice is the representative vehicle of the Cosmic powers of the Supracosmic Being who is eternally a multiple-unity. The understanding therefore of Agni Jāta-Vedah reveals that in Him, in the terrestrial as in the celestial, there are knowledge, power, mercy, lordship, creation, destruction and preservation, law-giving and law-maintaining, and all other

1. RgV I. 1. 1. Agni as the absolute principle of Sacrifice is so well known that along with Viṣṇu the *Kratu* all the other gods are indeed between them. Viṣṇu is stated to be the Lord of Sacrifice, and so much so, Agni is stated to be his body.

2. Ch. Up. III. vi. 1. *Tad yat prathamam ṛtam tad vasava ūpaśivan-tyagninā mukhena...* Agni thus belongs both to the group of Vasus of whom Sūrya is one as also is Rudra. we will find that Indra is a Rudra whilst Varuṇa is an Āditya. cf. Ch. Up. III. vii. 1; III. viii. 1. cf. *Rudra in Krishna Yajur Veda*; K. Srinivasapatracharya (Gopalakrishnamacharya Com. Vol. 1942

attributes that really pertain to the True Religious Object. Indeed it is true to say that Agni, considered in the fullest sense as having the import of the truth of the Ultimate not as the grandson or Son or creature so to speak, may well represent the Ultimate Being itself since Brahman is the *sarva-vācaka-śabda*.

Śrī Venkaṭanātha describes the essence of Godhood to consist in the following introductory verse to his *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad-Bhāṣya*.

*Sarveśānas sahajamahimā sarvabhūtāntarātmā
Sarvān doṣān svayam atipātan sarvavidyaikavedyaḥ |
Karmādhyakṣaḥ kaluṣaśāmanaḥ kōpi muktōpabhogyāḥ
Siddhōpāyas sphurati Puruṣo vājinām samhitānte ||*

And in one sense the last mantra of *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad* is addressed to Agni. It is a mantra that is common to all the Vedas, and appropriately it can be shewn that Agni, whether as the descent, *vyūha* or emanation of the Supreme Being, is as complete a manifestation as ever there can be.

I shall show later that technically Agni and other Gods as cosmic powers cannot but be creatures and not emanations or descents. Even though the Introductory Mantra of the *Vājasaneyā Samhitā* or *Sukla Yajur Veda* may lend colour to Agni being an emanate and thus a perfect manifestation of the Supreme yet it does not shew anything beyond the fact that Agni when understood will lead one onward and upward to the synthetic understanding simultaneously of all the other higher planal representations of Himself and thus finally to the Original Source or Supreme Godhead denoted by the words Brahman, Nārāyaṇa, etc.

*Pūrṇam adaḥ pūrṇam idam
pūrṇāt pūrṇam ulācyate |
Pūrṇasya pūrṇam ādāya
Pūrṇam evāvaśiṣyate ||*

So if the *Sacerdotium* is Agni, we shall see that Indra is the *Regnum* the King. If the latter is the King of the Gods

the former is the Priest, Purohita of the Gods. The exploits of Indra are his ascendancy over Vṛtra, his knowing of Brahman first as seen from the (*Kena Up.*) his supplanting Varuṇa in the supremacy of the Rulership, a fact that has been rather strangely explained by one writer as shewing that the moral governor had to yield ground before a superman-concept, the real Deva; and by another writer as due to the fact that Varuṇa was in fact a moral Vṛtra, an *asurā*, and therefore surpassible.¹ Whatever may be the idea behind the concept of Indra we find that the pure Regnum, however much of light, had to seek another figure who could combine both the attributes of Agni and Indra. It is true that Indra's exploits in releasing the forces of good and the destruction of evil forces of constriction are too important to be passed unnoticed. Indeed the majority of Hymns seem to be addressed to Indra, the power-principle of Divine Action, the executive head of the functions of the Avatārhood, which are classically expressed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the 'Saving of the Good and the destruction of the Evil and the establishment of Dharma.'

The creative process has always attracted the speculation of all thinkers and poets. Creation-Myths abound in plenty. The geological Myth of the flood is an accepted fact in all mythologies.² The origination of the world at any one time has been given the go-bye except by the fundamentalists of Christian Faith. When all is said, it remains a fact that logically we shall have to speak of the prime Cause as revealing a creative process or constructive activity in the world which obviously is in the making. The latter theory of building up of the universe out of bricks or atoms or wood

1. An ingenious explanation of the resonance of the Vṛtra, Varuṇa etc was made by Prof Thadani on the lines of his letter meaning of significance theory of correspondence or identity. See his *Mystery of the Mahabharata* Vol. I. but it appears to be far fetched and much too strained. So too is the vrātya-Vṛtra identification. Cf. Sri Aurobindo: *Secret of the Veda* and *Hymns of the Atris*.

2. Cf. *Mahābhārata Vana Parva* for the Story of Mārkaṇḍeya.

even as is so extensively spoken of as the piling of the Fire Altar or Puruṣa of Sacrifice, has been rejected by many moderners as too mechanical a representation.¹

The Vedic seers indeed spoke of the world as a building process since they speak about the measuring of the ground and the six regions by Varuṇa (Rg V. V. 85. 5); by Indra (Rg V. VI. 47. 3-4) and by Viṣṇu (Rg V. I. 154. 1). The material cause of the World is stated to be Brahman, he being compared with Wood (Rg V. X. 31. 7) and *Tait. Brāh.* (II. 8. 9. 5) says "Brahma was the forest, Brahma was that tree from which they fashioned heaven and earth." The *Kena Up.* calls Brahman *Tad-Vanam*. The world is spoken of as having been forged by Brahmanaspati even like a smith (Rg V. X. 72). Thus the efficient and material causality are stated to be identical since Brahmanaspati is indeed Brahman alone.²

It is true also that later the Cause is stated to be something undefinable as *Sat* or *Asat*, though the meanings of these two words are stated to be the Conscients and the Inconscients rather than mere Being and Non-being; in which case we shall find that the Cause is that which is other than the Souls and the Matter, namely Brahman, the Puruṣottama. Varuṇa, Indra and Viṣṇu thus form a significant formation or triad of the Regnum, who perform the functions of Prajāpati, Brahmanaspati or Brahman; in addition to the former two, the last figure has a unique exploit that reveals His perfect sovereignty over the Process.

References to Viṣṇu in the Rg Veda and other Vedic literature form an interesting development in the notion of the Nature of the Religious Object.³ His tremendous strides are the most characteristic feature of Viṣṇu, which makes many

1. *Religion in Vedic Literature*: P. S. Deshmukh p. 326.

2. *Vedic Mythology*: A. A. Macdonell. pp. 11. ff. "Before Brahman became a potent formula it was perhaps force." Foreword by Henri Burr to Masson Oursel's *Ancient India and Indian Civilization*

3. Cf *Viṣṇu in the Veda*: R. N. Dandekar Festschrift Prof. F. V. Kane pp. 98-9

thinkers identify Him with the Sun. Of all the Vedic Gods Viṣṇu is the only God whose name is predominantly preserved in the later Hindu Trinity.¹ It is mentioned that He assisted Indra in the destruction of Vṛtra, a fact which made several scholars attribute a secondary place to Viṣṇu, but which must be considered to be otherwise in the light of the Kena-gloss. But these facts indeed by themselves only show that he was associated with Indra, the Regnum, in a way different from that of Agni, for Viṣṇu is greater than Indra in so far as the Trivikrama-nature is unique to Viṣṇu alone. Already in the Rg Vedic Brāhmaṇas Viṣṇu is recognized as the Highest Form of Divinity. The Rg Vedic Hymns themselves, though fewer in number than those addressed to Indra or Varuṇa, are of the most exalted kind. Viṣṇu is related by many to Varuṇa, to Pūṣan, the herdsman's God, to Savitar etc., and as *Gopa* he is later identified with the Kṛṣṇa of the Epic and the *Bhāgavata*.

His identity with the Sūrya-nature is expressed in the Rg Veda by such epithets as the following. "The common epithets of Viṣṇu in the Rg Veda are *urugāya* (wide-stepping), *eṣa* or *evayāvan* (full of motion), *dharmāni dhārayan ṛtasya garbha*, *Vedah* (upholding the ordinances) and *pūrvya* and *navya* (ancient and new). The Sun God is observed to be traversing the whole atmosphere from horizon to horizon through his wide strides; he completes the whole extensive course just during one day; he never swerves away from the path and never misses the time; he is ancient because he has been since times immemorial and at the same time, he is young because he appears newly every morning."² Thus the four prominent characteristics suggested by the above epithets of Viṣṇu, namely, wide-steppingness of motion, regularity of Course and new and ancient forms of the same day are found together only in the Sun God."³

1. Brhama and Rudra as Siva are not yet of great importance though Rudra is.

2. cf. *Viṣṇu in the Vedas* :

3. *ibid.*

These characteristics, it may be pointed out at once, do not refer primarily to Sūrya but rather to the Being who is spoken of as the Self of the Sun, since Viṣṇu's *trivikrama*-nature is something much more important than the movement from horizon to horizon; for it means something supremely transcendent. The Paurāṇic version of the *Trivikarma avatār* is a clearer representation of the inner meaning of the transcendence. Further it is also seen that Sūrya and Candramas are spoken of as the two eyes of the Divine,¹ the Day and the Night, Further it is also clear that Sūrya and Agni² are nearer to one another than any other deity since they share the same qualities of heat and light, and both of them are the objects of the Religious Seers in the sense of Purohitas or Priests, who in a significant sense form the Eyes of the Divine, even as the Purohitas are the eyes of Kings.

The nature of Viṣṇu further embraces in itself, as shewn already, the dynamism of Indra, the wide-rulership of the moral universe of Varuṇa who is only the wide-seer *urucakṣus*, and the might and power of transcendence revealed by his going beyond the three spheres of the terrestrial, atmospheric and Heavenly, a fact which reveals Him to be the *turya*-Lord, the *Paramapadam*. It is this power of being omnipresent, and capable of enfolding everything by His actual touch and presence and light, that grants Him the status of being the preserver of Dharma, of Creation, of sustaining the righteousness and as the granter of freedom of the highest mansions of His supra-cosmic Existence. That He did descend

1. See *Bh. Gītā*. XV. 12.

Yad ādityagotam tejo jagad bhāṣayate akhilam

Yacchandramasi yacāgnau tat tejo viddhi māmakam

2. The Sandhyāvandana of the Brāhmaṇas and other castes contains an invocation to Sūrya in the morning and Viṣṇu in the afternoon and Agni in the evening.

Idam viṣṇur vicakrame tredhā nidadhe padam

Samūdhamasya pāmsure

"Yad idam kim ca tad vikramate viṣṇus tridhā nidhhathe padam tredhā bhāvāya pṛthivyām antarikṣe diviti Śakāṅgih. Samārohaṇe viṣṇupade gayāśirasītyaurṇavābhaḥ

with Agni and ascend in and through Cosmos shews His supreme powers of being unaffected by the bonds of the microcosmic and the limited. I have already pointed out that no Godhead who has not the perfect Consciousness and perfect power of omnipotence and omnipresence can descend at all into the cosmic scheme of History.

That the nature of Viṣṇu is sufficiently solar is clear also from the consistent application of the Solar characteristics in the *sandhyāvandana* practices of the Hindus is also shewn by Dr. Dandekar. He further shews that the description of Viṣṇu as the wearer of the *Sudarśana* (Discus or flaming wheel or the Good Eye-piece), as wearer of the Yellow robe (*piṭāmbara*), as having *Padmā* (*Lotus*), even the imagery of His having plenteous hair, *Keśava*, *Hṛṣīkeśa*, which represent the rays of the Sun issuing from Him, also the terms *Ravilocana* and *Sahasrārcaḥ*,¹ clearly show that He is the indwelling Lord of the *Sūrya*, through whom alone all can enter into the *Svar* and the Higher Viṣṇu's Abode, a fact made clear or revealed by the *Mahābhārata*. It appears clear that any attempt to reduce Viṣṇu to an extra-Vedic God will be futile,² since His nature is obviously beyond the comprehension of the Gods of the other regions, whom He assists and upholds and indwells as their Self. The Purāṇic view that Viṣṇu is seated on the Waters of the Ocean beyond the six Oceans, that he is beyond the three spheres, that He indeed incarnates in a superior manner for the upward movement of Creation whenever necessitated by His Plan of Cosmic Love and Play, cannot be overlooked, though these may be considerably later additions to Hindu Theology.

Rightly too, the avatārhood of the Divine is especially the province of the Divinity who has the Sun as His Eye. Viṣṇu it is who incarnates, uplifts and gives meaning and value to the terrestrial scheme of regeneration of Man. All this He does out of supreme love for all the creatures. So have the

1. *Viṣṇu in the Veda*; pp. 99,

2. *ibid*

South Indian Ālvārs¹ constantly referred to the *trivikrama*-nature of the Divine as the one fact of supremest value which determines which God we shall adore. This wide understanding of the fundamental nature of the Divine can be more appropriately an understanding by the mass of men. The lordship of all planes and worlds belongs not to a restricted circle of the classes but to the masses. The Godhead Viṣṇu reveals this total democratic acceptance of the people of His supreme nature. Thus it is that the future development of Viṣṇu in the general life of the people lies mostly in the universality of outlook, the realization that in his worlds and grace there is not a whit of difference between class and class, men and women; all alike share the possibility of intimacy of the Divine Viṣṇu's grace. All participate in the life of Viṣṇu as Kṛṣṇa, the Dark Protector of the Cows, the Gopa.² Ālvārs, who have belonged to all castes and to the mass, have shown that Viṣṇu in His transcendence as well as in His descents as avatār, belonged to all as the indweller of all and as the Host of the supreme Abode. It is by Him and with Him that we rise into His highest seats, where we find waiting for us "the Friend, the Beloved, the Beatific Godhead."³ It is this supremacy that has been the cause for Viṣṇu's supremest place in the Pantheon. We find that the other Gods, Savitar, Pūṣan, Prajāpati, Sūrya and Varuṇa finally being united in the single Personality of Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa, of whom they are but the subordinate powers or personalities. Viṣṇu more than Agni-Rudra reveals the beneficent grace and uplifting sustainership, for Rudra is the destroyer and powerful vengeful Godhead,⁴ who is by no means void of features of love and beneficence being a God

1. *Mudal, Irandām, Mūnram and Nāngām Tiruvandādis* and the *Tiruvāṣariyam* are devoted to the exposition of the greatness of Trivikrama in the following verses, 3, 8, 13-14; 5; 4, 5, 9, 18, 47; and the entire seven of the last respectively. Cf. My article in the jour: S. V: O. I. Vol. III.

2. Rg.V. I. 22. 18;

3. *Hymns of the Atris*: Sri Anubindo. Arya. Vol. II. p. 111.

4. No doubt attempts have been made to make Rudra-Siva a Dravidian Godhead, just as some thinkers have sought to make Viṣṇu an extra-Vedic

All Gods can reveal all other attributes to their devout worshippers because of the internal unity subsisting in the functional planal differences of the personalities of the Divine. Indeed it is one of the most important facts to be borne in mind that the Veda as knowledge of Reality that is integral, multiplanal, multi-dimensional, multi-functional, reveals the Seers, the Devas, the metres, and the three significant associations or correspondences. The powers and personalities of one plane in a descending projection or ingression to a lower plane may provoke strife and conflict or play of forces, allegedly called āsuric or daivic (the descending materialistic and the ascending transforming spiritualistic). This is a fact of capital importance, since the principle of transformation or conversion involves the ascent to the higher through the grace and power of the higher planal force descending downwards to lift up the soul which has surrendered itself to it or has given its sole and entire allegiance to it. This is achieved, metaphorically speaking, through a rebellion against the powers and stable personalities of the lower plane albeit divine personalities, and may, metaphorically again, be spoken of as a fight between the gods of the higher and the

Being. The inner implications of the Agni Rudra equation clearly reveal that. The fact that the Śaiva Āgamas of the South and the Śaiva Mystics of the South have seen and enjoyed the Śiva aspect of Rudra-Agni will not justify the referring of Śiva cult or Rudra cult to the South Indian Dravidianism. The Agni-Rudra equation clearly points out the beneficent nature of Rudra as well as the terrible wrathful aspect of Him when disobeyed. Yet the fact remains that Rudra-aspect belongs to the Mid-air whereas the gentle nature of him as Agni proceeds from the terrestrial to the spaces of the celestial Godhead. In the Epic Trinity we have the Rudra and Viṣṇu powers of Godhead cooperating through force and guidance, so as to achieve the Victory of Cosmic Evolution. Like Viṣṇu, Śiva Rudra too goes to the succour of all his devotees, and grants them their desires; but the highest Seat and all cosmic descent into veriest matter is of Viṣṇu, Śivaśila is not comparable to the Avatārs of Viṣṇu, for the latter have supracosmic evolutionary import to the life of Man and Manifested Reality. Cf. *Rudra Śiva*: Dr N. Venkata Ramanayya, Madras University. As already pointed out Agni is a Vasu not a Rudra whilst Indra is more a Rudra than a Vasu or Āditya. Varuṇa is an Āditya whilst Indra, the dionysic warrior goes with Rudra. That Rudra drank poison for the sake of Humanity is according to O. C. Gangoly referred to in R. & V. X. 136. 7

lower, the individual being their playground or battle-ground (*kṣetra*). Even the geographical place-names signify the *ādhibhautic* correspondences to the *ādhyātmic* figures and the *ādhidaivic* personalities of the Divine One, who is All, indwelling all, enveloping all.

The apparent confusion in the mixing up of appellations that specifically refer to one deity or god to another planal deity or god means nothing other than the existence of all the personalities of the Divine in each and every one of the personalities of the Divine. As has been pointed out there is an integral completeness in each manifestation of the Divine, whether it is noticed and praised and sung as such or not. The Ṛṣis sing the glory of that aspect of the Deity they perceive whether it be *Sacerdotium* or *Regnum* or both; it is always the Seers that sing. If the Brahman is One Ṛṣi (*Ekā Ṛṣi*) as the *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad* says in the 16th Mantra, the Deity is One indeed as the *Ṛg Veda* says, though men speak of many gods, and many Ṛṣis sing of many Gods, and Goddesses, their benevolent powers or functional dynamos.

There is only one God and He has many functional godhead-personalities, seer-personalities called the Ṛṣis, and maternal-personalities inseparably with Him, the devīs who are counterparts of the devas. Each of these divine. Personalities is capable of being and giving everything. True as the *Gītā* emphasised all worship of other Gods also leads to Him; but as Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself has stated that worship is beneficent, effective and unfailing which is of Kṛṣṇa, the total Personality in whom are combined all the powers of the Ṛṣis and devas, for He is Viṣṇu, whose is the supreme transcendent Place, *paramam padam*. The sātāvika Godhead, the sātāvika worship without selfishness or desire for self, sātāvika-knowledge that leads up to the total integral experience of the One Supreme as containing within Himself all the rest of the Gods and Ṛṣis is the requisite factor in religious consciousness. Such an experience of oneness with that total and integral Godhead alone can lead to liberation, to the feeling and knowledge and effective enjoyment without limitation of the richness of the

World of the Supreme Reality without fear of return into the limited, constricted world of struggles. Thus it is also a fact that when we drop out all sectarianism by which we mean the conflict that is raised between the worshippers of the several gods or functional aspects of the One Supreme Divine, and seek through the disinterested sātāvika-form any one of personalities of the One Divine, in its highest form, that divine personality will act as the relator with the Total All. It will itself reveal that aspect of its own nature, however veiled by the functional disguise incident on the Cosmic function of the Godhead which is always one of splendid providence and beneficence on the plane and for the plane at which it is specifically located out of its own will. This revelation is surely likely to make the worshipper transfer his adoration from the image of God or idol which the Deity he had so far worshipped had revealed to Him to that All-Form. This does not mean anything more than an enrichment of the knowledge of the nature of the Deity interrelated with His own higher form and higher orientations. Thus Agni, Sūrya, Candramas, Yama, Indra, Varuṇa, Aśvins, Prajāpati, Tvaṣṭṛ, Viṣṇu Brahmaṇaspati, Soma, Rudra, Maruts, Vāyu, even Vṛtra, Vali, etc., figures, are all functionaries of the One Divine in the three planes Bhūh, Bhuvah, Svar, Viṣṇu passing beyond all. Thus when Śrī Kṛṣṇa announces that the Vedas deal mainly with the *triṣṇas* and *triviśayas*, and that He is beyond them, He is revealing the fact that He is the integral Godhead, the One in all manifestations and in all births, even as the Āṭvār says. He is the one Being of whom all Vedas speak.

In this context, before we proceed to the conception of the Godhead in the Upaniṣads which deal with this in a metaphysical manner, we may remark that the conception at which we have arrived is capable of being considered from the standpoint of the Organic Philosophy which seeks to integrate all the functions of the Divine as Godhead's personalities in special relation of dependents or bodies of the Divine. Thus whilst Agni, Indra, Vāyu, Sūrya, Rudra, and Aśvins are really functions of the Divine One, yet they are sufficiently stable in

their *ādhibhautika* nature and for common-sense experience so as to intimate some stable pattern of God's functions. This is what has given them a *rūḍhi*-meaning. But when the worship of the total Divine is made, not for any benefit in respect of that particular aspect of which that divinity is the governing or presiding authority, as in the sacrificial rites prescribed in the Brāhmaṇas for worldly happinesses, then that divinity becomes the door to Infinity, and the meaning of the word designating that divinity has to be etymologically applied to the One Supreme Godhead, the Godhead of Gods. It is in this sense that these Gods, functionally presiding divinities over some particular domains or planes or elements or uses, become bodies of the Divine One, and the names that they have got have to be etymologically,¹ that is to say, functionally referred to that Supreme One Being. In either case, all worship when done with the knowledge of that supreme Divinity will help the realization of liberation and integral revelation.

We have surveyed the galaxy of the Rg Vedic Gods comprising Varuṇa, Viṣṇu, Agni, Rudra, Indra, Sūrya and Soma, and found that in each we have a Personality characteristic of the Godhead which we have found to be the Religious Object. In Varuṇa we have the Rta-lord, the Lord of Truth; in Agni the supreme puissance and power of Tejas and Will; in Indra, Pure intelligence, supramental Might and Lordship and richness; in Sūrya, we have the all encompassing Jñāna; and in Viṣṇu, the transcending triple movement of the Divine Godhead who has reached the Highest Abode after encompassing all. These Personalities of the Divine are indeed One Godhead only (Rg V. 1. 165. 46). His manifold personalities or perfections expressed in the places of Earth, *bhūh*, Mid-region, *bhuvah* and sky, *Svar* and

1. Etymology arrives at root meanings, and all roots are verbs according to Pāṇini and this has been realized by modern philologists also. A name is a functional reality, and the importance of meditation or Japa of names of God reveals the growth of the planal consciousness as integrated with other and higher planes. *Sātvikopāsana* is the necessity.

beyond (the *parama pada*). Brahman and Prajāpati reveal the creative activity of the Divine and as the Vast Infinite Being. No doubt even in the Vedic hymns we come across the supreme accessibility of the gods through prayer and offering of oblations which reveals their responsiveness and goodness. Thus we have even in the personalities of the Divine, the six appellations or *guṇas* that are ascribed as specially perceivable in addition to any infinity of adorable qualities, namely *jñāna*, *bala*, *aśvarya*, *vīrya*, *tejas* and *śakti*, as enumerated in the Purāṇas and Āgama. Because of the possession of these six attributes the Godhead is called Bhagavān.

The Upaniṣads however reveal the self-same personalities of the Divine at first in three terms of Sat, Cit and Ānanda, later amplified as Īśa,¹ Adbhuta-vīrya,² Madhu,³ Transcendent⁴ or Paramapuruṣa,⁵ Antaryāmin,⁶ Akṣara,⁷ Ānandamaya,⁸ Jyotiḥ,⁹ Akṣi,¹⁰ Ātman,¹¹ (śarīri),¹¹ Embodied Supreme personality.

1. Īśa. Up. 1. *Īśāvāsyam*

2. Kena Up. III 2. *Etad Yakṣam iti*

3. Ch. Up. 3. 1. *Asau vā adityo deva madhu.*

4. Katha. Up. III. 1. *Rtam pibantau...and* Katha, Up. III. 11. *Puruṣān na param.*

5. Ch. Up. 6. 2. 1. *Sad eva somyedaṁ agra āsit,*

6. Bṛh. Up. 5. 5;

7. Muṇḍ Up. I: Bṛh. Up. 5. 8. 8ff; Kena Up. IV: *Tad Vanam: Delight is His Name.*

8. Tait. Up. III.

9. Ch. Up. 3. 13. 7ff & Bṛh. Up. 6. 4. 18 *Jyotiṣām Jyotiḥ...*

10. Ch. Up. 4. 15. 1

11. Bṛh. Up. IV. (Antaryāmi Brāhmaṇa); Subāla Up. cf. Bṛh. Up. 5. 7.

God in the Upanishads

We have traced briefly the development of the idea of God in the ṚgVeda bearing in mind that God was conceived through the manifestations as personalities of the *perfections* of the Divine. The figures of Varuṇa, Indra, Agni, Pūṣan, Prajāpati, Viśvedevāh, Rudra, Maruts and others, signified the several powers of the One Divine. In this connection it is but right to point out that the Deities were such as suited the several seekers who apprehended the glory of each of these.¹

The Upaniṣads only drew out of the Ṛg Vedic literature fundamental principles, and are more philosophical and less symbolical, though this symbology is not wanting as in *Bṛhadāraṇyaka* and the *Māndukya* Upaniṣads and others. The symbology is, however, very much less in evidence than in the supramental poetic expressions of the Vedic seers and the Brāhmaṇas.

Each of the Upaniṣads or sections of the Upaniṣads in the longer ones, intimated one or more perfections or knowledges of Brahman, the One God manifest in various ways, who has become all things, so to speak, and is their indwelling self.

The nature of God as the ultimate cause and creator, and how the world came into being, are beautifully explained in the *Chāndogya* and *Taittiriya* Upaniṣads. The indwelling nature of the Divine Lord is explained in the *Antaryāmi Brāhmaṇa* of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*. The omnipervasiveness of the Lord is expounded in the *Īśa*, the indescribable power of the Divine is expounded in the *Kena* or *Tālavakāra* Upaniṣad.

1. When there had happened the three divisions of Gods Viṣṇu Trivikrama was the one who passed beyond the three. It only means that planal differences are the determining factors in the progressive understanding.

niṣad. The *Kaṭhopanīṣad* deals with the importance of the Divine knowledge. The *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* reveals the lordship of the Divine over mutable and immutable nature.

The Self is the most important fact in reality. The Self is the thing by which every other thing in the universe lives and moves and has its being. The teaching that "Not for the sake of the wife is the wife dear, but for the sake of the Self is the wife dear"¹ expounded by Yājñavalkya to his wife Maitreyī reveals the fullest value and worth of the experience of Brahman as Self.

Brahman verily was in the beginning, one only (*Brh. Up.* I. iv. 11). All the gods and all the powers are subordinate to Him. The gods, Agni and Vāyu are incapable of burning or blowing off even a straw thrown before them by Brahman (*Kena Up.* 14 to 23). Even Indra had to return defeated by its power. He was the first to see and know Him as such, and hence he became foremost amongst the gods. Thus the seer of Brahman was equal to or greater than all the gods.² This One Being is the One of the many gods numbering 3³ 306 and this Being is called Brahman by Yājñavalkya (*Brh. Up.* III. ix. 1-9). This is the fullness *pūrṇa*, the whole which is the self of all. From it fulness proceeds, into it all fulness is withdrawn and yet fulness remains. (*Brh. Up.* V. i). This Person is the Seer who cannot be seen, the hearer of all hearing who cannot be heard. He is the thinker of thinking who could not be thought. This is His transcendence and power. The evolution of the several elements and things, sheaths and powers, are dealt with in order to show that the Upaniṣadic seer had sought to penetrate into the inner core of the real, which he had already divined as the Spirit, the Universal which has become the individual many, who, so to speak, is the soul and self of all things, the Lord and creator and dissolver of all things, in which everything rests supported

1. *Brh. Up.* II. iv. and elevation of our knowledge of Divine Powers which finally possesses the three planes.

2. *Brh Up* III i 1-3; III ix 13

by His infinite power. But He is beyond all perceptive and inferential faculties. Even imagination cannot know Him. But this Being is not a mere Void, a *śūnya*; on the contrary it is the fullest reality, the only substance so to speak of the world and all. The Upaniṣads have to be construed as one whole, despite the fact that the instructions and explanations are given from variant points of view, points of view which do not collide or thwart the understanding. The cosmological and the psychological proceed on convergent lines till they are found to meet in the unity of the Self, the Brahman, the One which is the self of the many.

The Lord is the self of all, of all things that exist, earth, water, fire and air, of mind, knowledge, moon and sun and stars, in fact of everything (*sarvabhūtānām*) "He who dwells in the earth and is within the earth, whom the earth does not know, whose body is the earth and who rules the earth within, He is thy self, the ruler within, the immortal." (*Brh. Up.* III. vii. 3-22)¹ "That person is without internal organs, pure with contact" (*Mund. Up.* II. i. 2). "He is the one God hidden in all beings, dwelling in all beings, the perceiver, the only One, free from qualities" (*Śvet. Up.* VI. 11). "His power is revealed as manifold, as inherent, acting as force and knowledge" (*Śvet. Up.* VI. 8). "He who has become all Beings" (*Īśa Up.* 7) "He of whom the unevolved is the body, of whom the imperishable is the body, of whom death is the body, He is the inner self of things" (*Subāla. Up.* VII.), He is Truth, Knowledge, Infinity. He is knowledge, Bliss is Brahman. (*Br. Up.* III. x. 28). He is *Ānanda*.² By His light all this is lighted (*Kaṭha Up.* II. v. 15). This indeed is the great self, the strong, the giver of wealth, undecaying, undying, immortal, fearless. He is One seer, the nourisher, the all-vivifier, the one whose most excellent form, is experienceable through His grace (*prasāda*). The Lord is

1. *Br. Up.* I. iv. 16: *Ch. Up.* III. XI. I. III. I. VI. IX. 3-4.

2. *Taitt. Up.* Bhṛguvallī 6 *Ānando Brahmeti vyajānāt. Ānandādheva khalvimāni bhūtāni jāyanti. Ānandena jātāni jīvanti. Ānandam prayantya kīsamvisantīti.*

master of miracles and wonders.¹ He is the best,² the supreme,³ greater than the great,⁴ higher than whom nothing is at all. He is qualitless except in the sense of having transcendent form and Being, effulgence, without equal or superior,⁵ the support of all,⁶ who grants all desires,⁷ the Object of desire,⁸ and the adorable Being,⁹ whose form is most excellent,¹⁰ from whom all evil recedes,¹¹ unpierced by evil,¹² the remover of evil.¹³ All these descriptions must be understood to pave the way towards the apprehension of the fulness and the perfect nature of the object, which removes it from every effort to step it down to the market-place of social life. The transcendence of the Divine is the promise of progress to humanity; the trust in that Being which is impelled by the religious instinct and the faith in its power and wisdom all reënforce the consciousness of the aspirant and seeker after liberation. It is also clear that our future is not merely a promise to be kept in heaven. It is even here that we can enjoy the delight of communion with the religious object. Mystic feeling of 'pantheistic' oneness or unity is realized with such tremendous vividness that no one thereafter hates his brother man, for he finds that there is nothing to hate, and everything to love. The Seer of the *Īśā* amongst others points out the fruits of discovering the omnipervasiveness of the Divine Lord to be the utter giving up of hatred and sorrow and delusion. The love that flows from man to man is the love of the self as Yājñavalkya says. For the

1. *Īśā.* 4-5 : *Svet.* III. 19 ; *Bṛ. Up.* IV. iii. 33. *Mund.* II. ii. I.
2. *Kaṭha* II. 17 ; *Svet.* I. 7 ; III. 7. *Maitri* V. 2.
3. *Kaṭha* II. 20. *Svet.* III. 9.
4. *Kaṭha* III. 11. *Mund.* III. ii. 8 ; *Svet.* 12.
5. *Svet.* VI. 8.
6. *Svet.* I. 7.
7. *Kaṭha* V. 13.
8. *Mund.* II. ii. 1.
9. *Svet.* VI. 18.
10. *Īśā.* 16.
11. *Ch.* VIII. iv. 1-2. & VII. 5.
12. *Īśā.* 8.
13. *Mund.* VI. 6.

reciprocal function of the Divine in religious consciousness is the *prasāda* that is evoked by the surrender and praise and meditation on the Lord in all as all-self. Thus the *R̥g Veda* says "Verily I speak and say what shall be welcome to gods and men; whomsoever I love I make strong. I make him a Brahman and make him a prophet and a wiseman." (*R̥g Veda* X. 125. 5).

Aham eva svayam idam vadāmi

Juṣṭam devebhir ata mānuṣebhiḥ |

Yam kāmāye tam tam ugram kṛṇomi

Tam brāhmaṇam tam ṛṣim tam sumedhām ||

It is also clear from the *R̥g Veda* that God was worshipped as feminine too as Aditi,¹ the mother of the Ādityas.

1. Aditi in Yajus V. (Krishna.) is designated *Viṣṇu-patnī* IV. iv. 12. (Taittiriya)

VI

God in the Darshanas.

Theism is the belief in God¹ Taken in a very general sense what is implied by theism is that it 'not only affirms his existence but also shows that' such a God is intimately related to the historical process of the universe and the individuals. There are very many ways in which this relation could be defined. Some keep God aloof from the process whilst granting his existence; some others make God and the universe identical ; some keep God as the *beau ideal* for all and nothing more; some others expect that ideal Person to help in the efforts of the individuals; some make God the creator, sustainer, and destroyer of the Universe; some others grant Him only absolute transcendence; some make him only the moral governor of the Universe; some others the efficient cause of this Universe; and some make him all these and in addition the material cause. Some make God the power that is of the good struggling for the success of the good and the right against the evil and powers of darkness which co-exist with Him; some others try to explain that the powers of evil and the powers of light are both the products of the will of God existing for the purpose of revealing that the powers of light despite great turmoil and suffering have the innate power to win the kingdom of the world for God, and that the creation is an occasion and field

1. Personal God is God. There cannot be an impersonal God, according to theism. Personal God is refuted on the ground of his being but a 'mask' (Persona) or personification of the Absolute. He is a creator etc. of the phenomenal world. But according to Absolutism the Absolute is the ground of all things and as such it is much truer to affirm Impersonalism or Atheism. On the other hand since this possibility of being ground and source and creator etc. are all implicit in the original Being, we must more rightly hold that the Absolute is both Impersonal and Personal, ground and creator-cause.

for the triumph of virtue over vice, a supreme effort in which all souls combine to aid or thwart the powers of light; God in this case is a spectator interested in the right albeit, but not participating in it. Some others hold that God is incarnating as the Sage, Creator, Teacher, Messenger at crucial periods of this historical struggle between the powers of light and of darkness, interposing His righteous will for the establishment of the right after periods of darkness.

The hopes of men for redemption and salvation are sought to be fulfilled by a miraculous advent of God or His messenger or His seers, who supply the necessary effort to them by energising their consciousness and leading them through an emotional toning up, through a philosophy of life, or a way of Ācāra, to the summit of happiness. This has been seen to be the case with the religions that have been named after their founders, namely Buddhism, Confucianism, Zoroastrianism (also called Mazdaism), Jainism, Christianity, Mohammedanism (also called Islam). But throughout we can also discover that these names are not really the true names. Each of the religions sought to be known after the truth that they stood for. It is however a convenient thing for outsiders to name them after their founders.

Not all the philosophical schools in India accept God. Indeed Sāṅkhya and Mīmāṃsā and others outside the Vedic pale did not feel the necessity for the acceptance of God. The fact seems to be that either they were not willing to give up the right to struggle for the truth or they found that a God as defined by ordinary religion did not reflect the highest that they knew as necessary for the realization of their happiness. The law of life being known to be the strict law of Prakṛti and its various manifestations or modifications, with which the soul of man had absolutely no connection, there resulted the freedom from the false idea that man is bound or that he should earn his freedom. Mīmāṃsā held that the results needed not the *prasāda* or grace of the gods who have been sacrificed to. This was a turn towards

naturalism and chance, which they considered was more efficacious. They revealed a pragmatic scientific temper and revealed that the law of Karma, whoever enjoined it, was objective, that is, independent of its author once set in motion.¹ Nor were the logical schools more compromising. They too held that the processes of the universe finally have to be referred to an *adṛṣṭa*, which when closely inspected turns out to be a *svabhāva* or naturalistic theory. In all these cases we are presented with the spectacle of reason trying to find out other ways than intuition or *śāstra* for explaining the process. The stage was set for discovering the conditions of happiness here or freedom or *dharma* (way) by these three schools: all the three had presented a picture of atheism or denial of God; for it is precisely the purpose of a revulsion against God to exalt the individual intelligence and will and individual ability. The tendency thus is clearly individualistic, materialistic or mechanical. The soul which was accepted in the Sāṅkhya as bond by Prakṛti's modification is shown to have never been bond at all; the intelligence that struggled in the darkness of the meshes of Prakṛtic qualities was never indeed enmeshed; and happiness that was lost was never lost at all. This is undoubtedly due to the expectation that intellect will solve the difficulties; only its solutions showed that unless it starts with the conclusions it seeks to arrive at, it can never draw the conclusions it arrived at! This is the pathetic fallacy of reason. It must assume what it has to prove. The pathos of this position is avoided undoubtedly by Mīmāṃsā, the *Pūrva-mīmāṃsā*, which some writers contend should never be divorced from the *Uttara mīmāṃsā* (the Vedānta), as they form one thesis. But having divorced it as some have done, and it is with them we have just now to deal, the position is that they had exalted the practice, the ritual, and have shown that this being done what

1. The Buddha held a similar view if we only perceive the fact that the Dharma is a law of the Nirvanic State, even as Karma is the law inexorable of the Samsāra or phenomenal. The fact is that they are reversals of one another. And the question of the Deity was never essential either.

consequences follow. So admirably, and in the scientific manner (or pseudo-scientific manner) they have drawn up in meticulous detail how things have to be performed so as to yield results without the intervention or dependence on any God. This mechanisation of ritual has led up to a magical theory. Whilst magic promises the fruits here and now, this theory promises or assures on the basis of Veda, or superhuman revelation and its truth, that they will happen after death. A supernatural magician is the Pūrvamīmāṃsin, revelling under the garb of science and strict causality. But the *Apūrva*-theory is in a worse predicament. It is the definition of possibility in the future, of a not-yet gathering its momentum till fruition, or coming suddenly into existence at that fruitional moment. This is a wise ignorance which promises the confluence of fruits and persons in the undefined and undefinable hereafter, without the help of an agent or ordainer.

The inspection of what the concept of God means to the several systems will show why God was affirmed by them. In other words, the clear understanding of the attributes of God is a necessity imposed by the revealed contradiction in the reasons offered by the systems. We may at the very start affirm that reason cannot prove God, as it definitely intimates that the source of this Knowledge of God and His nature is the scripture alone (*Śāstrayonitvāt*. I. i. 3). Others have given reasons for the existence or acceptance of God, and some have denied that such a God is either a necessity of thought or a need for practice.

Taking the systems which accept God, let us take first the Yoga system. It contributes five *sūtras*

Īśvara-praṇidhānāt vā (I. 23)¹: Or [concentration] is attained by devotion to the *Īśvara*.

1. Trans. Woods, HOS. *Kleśa* is really affliction and not merely hindrance. *Āśa* is a vehicle (cf. S. B. Hed trans). The other *sūtras* referring to devotion to *Īśvara* Y. S. II. 1; II. 32, II. 45.

cf. *Great Epic of India*: Hopkins, regarding theism and deism in yoga of the Mh. B.

*Kleśa-karma-vipākāśayair aparāmṛṣṭaḥ puruṣa-viśeṣa
Īśvaraḥ* (I. 24)

"Untouched by hindrances or Karmas or fruition or by latent deposits Īśvara is a special kind of Self"

Tatra niratīśayam sarvajñabijam (I. 25)

"In this (Īśvara) the germ of the omniscient is at its utmost excellence."

Sa eṣa puruṣam api Guruḥ kālenānavaschedāt (I. 26)

"Teacher of the Primal (Sages) also, forasmuch as (with Him) there is no limitation by Time!"

Tasya vācakam praṇavaḥ (I. 27)

"The word expressing Him, is the Mystic Syllable (Praṇava) "

The Lord exists for the purpose of meditation and devotion since he is beyond all the afflictions, and actions and fruitions. He is the highest limit of Intelligence, whom none exceeds in wisdom, and He is the supreme Guru of all the Ancients unlimited too by time as He is, He is the eternal Being, free from beginning or middle or end, and His name is Praṇava, Om.

In Yoga we find that God is conceived as the Ideal Person or Puruṣa necessary indeed for meditation and devotion. He is a liberated Being unlimited by bondage, supreme in His knowledge, omniscient, and eternal. The argument appears to be identical with the ontological argument that because we have an Idea of a Perfect Being Supreme Being, He must exist. But there are two additional arguments adduced which point out that the great Patanjali (or Hiraṇyagarbha?) was aware of the inefficacy of the ontological argument which assumes existence because we can think of the idea of the perfect being as the *limit*, the highest. Īśvara is the Guru, the one Being who because of His eternal Existence and uncontracted knowledge and who has never been the subject to bondage or sorrow and karma-fruits, had permitted the universe to continue as an orderly universe by teaching the ancients who have handed over the traditional knowledge.

through the centuries. If such a Person is not, there would be eternal darkness and none would have known anything. This argument resembles the teleological argument of the western Philosophers, but is different in so far as it points out that there is needed the existence of a perfect intelligence who is willing to teach the truths of the scriptures and revelations to all at all times. This teacher's qualification or willingness is not however explained except in the commentary by Vyāsa: "Although He is above all feelings of self-gratification, yet (to this Īśvara) the gratification of living beings is a sufficient motive."¹ Compassion is the principal motive of God and this is clearly attained through the self-surrender taught in four sūtras (I. 2; II. 1; II. 32; II. 45). Surrender is the condition as it were of His grace. The relation of God to man thus is one of compassion generally for the souls wallowing in sorrow, actions and their fruits (*kleśa-karma-vipāka*). God so far is a necessity as the teacher of Highest Perfection rather than as a Lord or Governor or Creator. He is the Ideal Being of Knowledge whose existence is necessitated by the actual existence of knowledge and śāstras and the Vedas which teach Him. It is to re-enforce this Vedic authority, for His existence that the next sūtra (I. 27) says *Tasya vācakaḥ Pranavaḥ*.¹ The Mystic Syllable OM is His name.

God has been conceived as Īśvara not only because of His causality, nor only because of His moral supremacy but also, and mainly because of His being the Supreme Intelligence, Omniscience and Freedom from all bondages. The argument for His existence through the uninterrupted teachings of śāstras transmitted to us. The perfectness of the scriptures is evidenced by His perfection, whereas the existence of His perfection is evidenced by the actual existence of these scriptures, a circular argument assuredly. Our Inferences however

1. J. H. Wood's translation. *Tasyātmānugrahābhāvepi bhūta nūgrahaḥ prapojanī*.

02. *Māṇḍūkya*: *Kaṭha*: *Ita*. Cf. Dr. E. Das. *Pranava Vēda*.

can only lead up to the concept of such a being but not His actual existence. Īśvara as the highest God of Yoga is not even an operative Cause, the *nimitta kāraṇa*. He is a world-teacher, a resplendent Being standing transcendent or above the process having no relationship to it, a radiant star in the sky from time sempiternal, full of compassion to the ignorant wallowing bond souls. Different in every respect from the other creatures, unequalled by any one, free from any contraction of His intelligence either in dissolution or creation. He is a saviour in so far as He is always ready to impart the secret of immortal existence and release from matter; His very non-causality of the world is something which protects Him from the charge of partiality and inequalities of creation as between the souls. But whilst it does grant him relief from the odium of being the cause of evil, in another sense it involves a deep line of pain to be writ in His face because of the knowledge of the suffering of the innumerable number of souls which He would fain succour from their distress, and this because of the omniscient compassion that He is endowed with. Īśvara thus in Yoga is a glorious and grand Being, but not even a Philosopher-King of all creatures. He is a splendid Spectator of the unequal struggles of creatures for freedom from bondage.

Though no clear-cut argument for the existence of God is given in the Yoga-sūtras, yet as I have pointed out, the implication of the arguments point out to the need for the apprehension of the Object of adoration as a necessity on a par with the necessity to assume the existence of a transcendent God unsullied by the process, unaffected by the sins and misery and yet deeply conscious of the need for Love. The Lord is shown as compassionate teacher, loving the souls intensely and guiding them on the Good path. He is not Ahura Mazda of Zoroaster, a fighting God, a captain of the truth-striving souls, but the leader of men, a leader who leads through His puissance, for he is the Vidvān. The promise is an omniscience equal to His own. Whilst we may gratefully acknowledge the actual implication of the sūtras dealing with God they do not lead us to

assume anything more about Him. Yet the very implications of the chapter on the siddhis which are of eightfold kind, point out that this supreme Omniscience is something higher and greater than these. As such to possess this Omniscience means to be in possession of those siddhis too, which belong to it as such. Thus Īśvara is not absolutely void of powers and capacities, but what is not clear is whether He is the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the universe. In so far as this is not clearly enunciated by the Yoga system it does not meet the total demands of the religious consciousness. Religion demands finally a creator whose creatures we are, a supreme Power in splendour unsurpassed, and in strength unequalled.

Turning to the Nyāya-sūtras we may at the very start say that we do not have much help from the Sūtras themselves. The Vaiśeṣika sūtras do not mention God even once. There are three sūtras pertaining to the topic of the Īśvara in the Nyāya Sūtras.

Īśvaraḥ kāraṇam puruṣa-karma-phalyādarśanāt. IV. i. 19.

Na Puruṣa-karmābhavē phalanīṣpatteḥ. IV. i. 20.

Tat kārītatvād ahetuḥ. IV. i. 21.

The interpretation of these three sūtras has been very confused and some treat the first to be a pūrva-pakṣa which holds that "Īśvara is the cause because of the fruits of the karma of the individual not being perceived." This it is said is answered by "Not so, because in the absence of the man's acts the fruit is not produced;" and the last sūtra determines as it were that "It (man's agency) is not the (sole) cause, because that is caused by that." The obscurity of the meaning will be apparent. Considered in conjunction with the later developments we may say that first sūtra appears to be the Siddhānta rather than the pūrvapakṣa. The creation is made by God not for the sake of merely bringing about the fruits of karma of the individuals, since if the individuals did not perform their activities, the creation could not come about.

This is the second sūtra; and the third sūtra points out that the differences between the fruits of actions of the individuals are due to their accompanying *Īśvara's* will and do not form the sole cause. That is to say *Īśvara* is the Cause of the universe not having as His purpose the bringing about the fruits of individuals alone.

If that were the only purpose, then *adṛṣṭa* would have been enough. It is because creation is not merely due to the need to fulfil the fruits of actions of individuals that there is needed a God, an *Īśvara*. The teleology then of the creation is not accepted. God is needed to explain the actual existence of the universe, and the universe is not dependent upon the need for the individuals, as a field for their achievements or enjoyments of fruits. Further *adṛṣṭa*, the unseen force that is described as the potency in all the movements of atoms of fire and air and other elements,¹ also appears as "the unseen force derived from the works or acts of the previous world" (*sañcita* and *prārabha* karma). Whilst it has the limited potency of making movements of the atoms and souls and karmas, it is incapable of initiating the creation of the world. It is this limitation on the powers of *adṛṣṭa*, that entails the postulation of the *Īśvara*. The *adṛṣṭa* may do limited office for the Divine *Īśvara*, even as the *apūrva* of the *Pūrva-mīmāṃsākas*. It is therefore that the great Udayana had to undertake to prove the existence of *Īśvara* strictly on logical grounds: that the world or creation is of the nature of an effect, that therefore there is needed a cause which brings out this effect, that this should be an intelligence of the highest order since limited intelligences cannot produce such unique effects as creative process. These arguments have been roundly criticised by the Vedānta as trying to prove too much. All that we can show is that there could be but not that there *must* be. The proof for the actual exist-

1. *Tarka-Saṃgraha*: Pratyakṣa-paricchedah II. M. M. Knappswami Sastriar's translation.

ance of an Infinite creator or Cause, of an Unmoved Mover can only be through revelation.

The syncretist schools of Nyāya distinguished between two types of Intelligences:

*Jñānādhikaraṇam ātmā. Sa dvividhaḥ. Jivātmā-
paramātmā ceti. Tatra Īśvaraḥ sarvajñaḥ para-
mātmā eka eva. Jivastu pratiṣarīram bhinno
vibhuḥ nityaśca¹*

"The substratum in which cognition inheres is the soul (ātman). It is of two kinds—the supreme Soul and the individual soul. Of these two, the supreme Soul is one and is the omniscient Lord. The individual soul, on the other hand, is different in association with different bodies, though it is all-pervasive and eternal."

The eternal Intelligence is One, the souls are many. The creative process was initiated by God, and once this was done, *adṛṣṭa* did and is doing the rest. It acts as the mechanical principle and as equally a mechanically result-giving principle for the souls. It is not intelligent; its intelligence must therefore be referred to something that is intelligent.

It need not itself be intelligent-stuff, as an immanent factor, but like the potter it is necessary that it should have a moulder. The fact that plants and seeds and plants come in a particular order should not make us think that they are not effects due to an operating cause. The Greeks, especially Anaxagoras, thought of an intelligent principle which explains the ordering of the process and combinations. It is something that is not referable to the innate forces of revulsion or attraction, falling down and crashing into one another or inhering in one another. Chance is not the final word and *adṛṣṭa*¹ may well be chance or the impersonal power in all things, elements

1. As pointed out earlier, *adṛṣṭa* is the first intellectual statement of the implicit reason in things in Indian Philosophical Schools. The *Apūrva* of Mīmāṃsā again is the unseen reason or power in Karma results of Vedic rites. The primitive *Mana*, *Orenda* or Christian Grace are less intelligible terms as compared these.

etc. To make *adr̥ṣṭa* itself explicable and rational it is necessary to postulate an intelligent principle *Nous*, comparable to the God of Nyāya. *Īśvara* accordingly is one who is an operative cause and nothing more. Once then the causal argument is accepted, whilst we may not be able to prove the immanence of this principle as an involved principle in this universe or as the material cause *upādāna kāraṇa*, we can affirm the need for postulating the operative or *nimitta-kāraṇa* of the Universe.

God who has thus been established as the *Īśvara* in Nyāya is the cause of the process in a more direct sense. Cause means the power to bring about a particular result, and it is true that the presence of this power is not felt except as natural law. Further the criticism against this idea of the first cause or efficient cause, the unmoved mover of Aristotle, who is beyond and above the process, is yet unanswered. God's infinite nature cannot be proved nor His existence determined by any proofs that we can bring. The Nyāya view however in one sense continues to hold the view that the Cause, the operative cause, is different from the universe or effects which it causes, and in this sense that *asat-kārya-vāda* has a place. It tries to point out that *asat-kārya-vāda* is true in so far as we perceive the effects to be different from the cause and as such not in the cause. The *sat-kārya vāda* on the other hand, points out that the cause is itself the effect in a prior state and that the manifestation of itself is the effect. The implication of the intelligence in the process is affirmed by the one and denied by the other. But the attempt to explain the process as something definitely ordered by an external intelligence, a creator-god however extraneous to the process, is the Nyāya conception of the Deity. It is not necessary that God, as an efficient cause, should be implicated as a changing and manifesting force. Suffice it to say that His ordering is like the government of a king. This is the argument for the *Viśveśa*, the Lord of the Universe.

This view does not make God the origin and the sustainer of the universe in a material (*upādāna*) sense as well. But whether it is necessary at all in a strict theism to accept the material causality of God in addition to His efficient or operative causality is an important question. The creator has been established but the total nature of the deity or God is not exhibited. The existence of an external ruler is, as yet at the stage of postulation. The world is a creation and the Creator should be, mainly because of the newer and newer potentialities coming into existence. This is all that we have in the system.

The all-knowing sentient principle under whose supervision the good and evil (*dharmādharma*) of the souls, unintelligent in themselves though having the potentiality of sentience, bear fruit, is God who is the operative Cause as well as the wise dispenser of fruits of action.¹

The Sāṃkhya system has, on the contrary, refuted the idea and existence of the Īśvara. It contends that Īśvara is not different from the highly evolved souls. Souls free from attachment, subtile and free from the implications of the dance of Prakṛti are verily Īśvaras.

The four sūtras pertaining to the Īśvara are :—

Īśvarāsiddheḥ;

Muklabaddhayor anyatarābhāvānna tat siddhiḥ;

Ubhayathāpyasatkaratvam;

Muktātmanah praśamsa upāsasiddhasya vā.

"Īśvara is unproved." "Nor could there be any proof of his existence since he could not be either free from or bound by troubles of any kind." "In either way he could not be cause or creator." "Utmost He can be only a liberated soul." This conclusion whilst showing clearly that inference cannot prove the Īśvara, also points out that if inference is to be our guide Īśvara can well be likened to a liberated soul. He is not any different or distinguished entity as such.

1. Cf. *Nyāya Sūtra* IV. i. 21.

The arguments brought forward to show that Īśvara cannot be the cause of the world on the basis of *sat-kārya-vāda* can be considered to apply to material causality rather than to efficient causality. Inferentially speaking the claim that mere mechanical nearness, *sānnidhyam*, is enough to bring about the changes in matter, convert the sāmkhya system into a kind of materialistic doctrine upholding *svabhāva-vāda*. It may be assumed then that the argument against Īśvara is in the main negative, namely, God cannot be proved by inference; and this might have led to the defence of the position that God is not necessary even as the efficient cause. Instead a teleological cause is supplied namely the enjoyment of the puruṣa. This in fact is the weakness in the entire doctrine.

A theistic interpretation indeed is possible as is evidenced by the earlier Sāmkhyan presentation (?) in the Mahābhārata. The Sāmkhya thus, like Nyāya, stops at the point of inferring the transcendent Spirit. A naturalistic interpretation with the help of *adrṣṭa* does the same office as the *sannikarṣa* or *sānnidhya* in the Sāmkhya.

The rationalistic trend is certainly more strong in the Sāmkhyan conception than in the other two, and the naturalistic explanation is found to rest on a foundation not so sure as may at first be intended. A logical basis for the existence of God is impossible. A metaphysical need for a world-principle, a world-reason, especially a world-end or a world-cause alone dictates the acceptance of God. And it is precisely this moreness of the metaphysical view which transcends the limits of logic.

It is usually contended that Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā also declines to accept the existence of God, not for the reason that He might not exist but that He is a superfluity. The mechanical equivalence that is usually made between the actions or rites or sacrifices and their fruits, the imperative of fruits or fruit-giving by the several gods invoked, makes the gods the creatures of the doer of rites. Achievements of Yogic powers of seers which make them masters of

the forces of nature, of Gods who are the lords of the elements and of the many mansions of the universe, reveal the fact that mantra and ritual are more than the gods. This appears to be, despite the supernatural agencies involved, a mechanical affair. Given the rite, the result must follow. The more exact and proper the rite, the more thorough and complete the mastery. Mistakes and calamities follow wrong and improper performance. These results do not depend upon the moral quality of the agent nor upon the moral purpose behind the act. Killing and slaughter may well be the aims of the sacrifice and these will be achieved by the mantra and the mystic power that comes out of the rite. This mystic power non-existent previously, *apūrva*, thus is not only the imponent of the law of relations between the rite and fruit, but may, for all that we know, only point out the superiority of the Veda. The author of the Veda is inconceivable. The eternal laws verily cannot have any authors but can have discoverers, seers and auditors. Veda falls in this category of eternal verities, and as such it is *apauruṣeya*, not man-made, nor God-made too. Law is greater than the law-giver. The denial, however, is not specific in the Sūtras of Jaimini. God is not admitted as a creator or destroyer of the universe, nor as the law-giver nor law-maker, since all these would impugn the eternity of the Veda. But as Venkaṭanātha had pointed out, the Pūrva-mīmāṃsā should not be read apart from the Uttara-mīmāṃsā, in which case, the denial of an inferred Īśvara will not be contradictory to the revealed Īśvara of the Vedānta.¹

All that we discover then by viewing these systems as a constructive synthesis in respect of the special topic under discussion is that God is endowed with all auspicious qualities. He transcends all the material qualities. He is a Guru and an Object of adoration; He is perfect and luminous and omniscient, and the ordainer of Law which He does not Himself set at naught. He thus distributes impartially the deserts of actions and rituals performed by each and thus is

1. *Paramabhāṣya*: Nīrāvāra mīmāṃsā Bhāṣya.

karmādhyaṅga. He is not capable of being proved with the help of inferences and analogies or perception. It is only by means of revelation, and the vision got through the grace of the Divine that we can know Him. Even the Veda has given us but glimpses of His supreme transcendent nature and has shown Him as a wonderful Being infinitely more supreme than what has been mentioned or communicated by even the seers of the Vedas.

As a philosopher wrote "a God whom we could see would no more be a God,"¹ but a God who can never be seen can never be a God either. But it should be well appreciated that God is transcendent to sense and is eternal, and superior to everything that we know. It is the Vedānta which firmly insists that it would not be enough to know the law; we shall know the law-giver, the Source and ground of all law. God is at once the Supreme Being free from all imperfections and possessing all blessed qualities in infinite measure. This *Ubhayalinga*² quality cannot be asserted on the basis of the Inference. Inference as pointed out will only lead to the concept of God, or mere thought of Him.

"God not only *can* be thought but he *must* be thought whilst we must refer the pyramid of laws and ends in the world to a highest principle of order called God."

One thing is clear that the logical necessity by which we mean the necessity of thought is that by which one has to explain the causal ground of the Universe. We may with Feuerbach affirm that "God is my first, the world is my next, and man is my third and last thought", and using pure reason we may arrive at the supreme concept of God. That this concept of God can be the highest abstraction of which the human mind is capable, may be admitted; but whether it is the final expression of truth is quite a different matter. God indeed is the logical premise of

2. *Philosophical Tendencies of the Present day*: Stein: trans S. Maitra. Vol. II. p. 140

3. *Vedānta Sūtras* III. ii 11-25

the universe, but should this logical premise be an Absolute or Concept, the unchangeable and unchanging essence of the world even as Śankara and Plato saw? That this God is best apprehended as the essence of all existence and as such the most comprehensive existence must be granted. But is it necessary to affirm that God cannot also be an existence even perceptually? Is it also necessary to affirm that this God, if He were at any time amenable to sense-experience, should therefore become a doubtful existence?

God is integral and if He be the cause of the Universe, He must participate in its total existence; and, as such, we may concede that He is existent and from eternity and as such is superior to it because it is changing and perishing or rather taking on new forms at His will. The integral view cannot abolish God nor can it make God just a concept and grant it a conceptual 'existence' and nothing more. The belief in the relative truthness of thought as against sense has been the cause of this unfortunate denial of existence to God or the Absolute or rather the unfortunate limitation of meaning of existence to the ideal being and not to sense, which is denied as false or merely phenomenal existence. Religious consciousness and mystic affirmations lead to the affirmation of existence of the Divine or God neither on grounds of perceptibility by sense nor on grounds of conceivability by thought, but on the ground of revelation or Vision got through the grace (*prasāda*) of the Divine, as the Kāṭha Upaniṣad has declared.

VI

God in the Pancharatra¹

Catur mūrtir aham śaśvallokatrāṇartham udyataḥ |

Ātmānam pravibhajyeha lokānām hitam ādadhe ||

Bhā mūrtis tapaścaryam kurute me bhuvi sthitā |

Aparā paśyati jagat kurvāṇam sādhoasādhuni ||

Aparā kurute karma mānuṣam lokamāśritā |

Śete Caturthām tvaaparā nidrām Varṣa Sahasrikīm ||

Krishna (Dronaparva 19. 32-34.)

*"Threefold are those supreme births of this divine
Force that is in this world; they are true;
They are desirable; He moves there wide-overt
Within the Infinite and shines pure, luminous and
fulfilling....."*

Rg Veda, IV. 1. (Śrī AUROBINDO'S translation)

*"Catur-vidhasya Bhagavān mumukṣūṇām hitāya vai |
Anyeṣāmapī lokānām śṛṣṭhithityanta siddhaye ||"*

Viśvaksena Samhitā.

Eṣa sarvāni bhūtāni pañcabhir vyāpya mūrtibhiḥ |

Janma-Vṛddhi-Kṣayair nityam saṁsārayati Cakravat ||

Manu Smṛti XII. 124.

"One person: Three persons: In all Four persons:

*Being thus the enjoyable Being, and the person realized
through Merit, and the Person of (many) manifestational Forms
O First Lord! Lying on the serpent in the Milk Ocean, and
Beyond it, Thou art the Transcendent Special Form."*

Tirucchanda Viruttam.

1. This Chapter was published in *New Indian Antiquary* Vol. VI, 1948.

2. Cr. *Introduction to Pāncarātra*: O. SCHRADER, pp. 35-41.

Cf. *Viṣṇusahasranāma-bhāṣya*: Parāsarabhaṭṭa. name 122.

"Paravyūha-vibhavā-tmanā trividham param brahmā" iti Bhāgavata siddhāntaḥ. Tatra parānnāma akāryam kāryād-anavacchinna-pūrṇa śāḍ-guṇya-mahārṇavat-kalikaikātapatrikṛta nissīma nityabhoga-vibhūtikam. Muktopasṛpyam, anupādīkām avasthānam.

The theory of multiple manifestations as persons of the Divine Transcendent Being in Religion is not new. It is a constantly recurring principle that the Divine continuously incarnates in His Creation for whatever purpose of *Līlā* that might be held by Him. The most obvious purposes that underlie these descents are (i) that the Divine is working out a wonderful potentiality in His Nature for self-enjoyment or delight, and (ii) that the Divine does this for the sake of rescuing the souls which are wallowing in Creation and is uplifting them and make them 'share' in the Delight of Ascent of themselves and Enjoy the Descent of the Divine. In the first view, we may accept God's complete 'Selfness' of all creation too, and that there is nothing other than the Supreme Divine, such as souls and matter and other entities, and, even if they are, they are but self-projections from a wide multiplanal activity that appears diverse. So much so, some of these entities do not betray even in the slightest the qualities unique to the Supreme Spirit, except forsooth in the subordination of these to the higher levels of conscient activity. But even then the lower ones try to resile from or reconquer the consciousness that subdued them. Temporary successes, of consciousness; however, may as well be no successes, and there remains the solid threat of annihilation and absorption into this Unconsciousness or Nothingness.

The view that 'All is Brahman' (*sarvam khalvidam Brahma*) and the view 'All this is for the habitation of the Lord' (*Īśāvāsyām idam sarvam*) are identical in one sense, for the chief common factor is that 'all this is of the Lord,' belongs to the Lord' and is possessed completely by the Lord.

Vyūhasca mumukṣusisṛkṣayā pradeya śṛṣṭi-sthiti-layāḥ, śāstra-tadartha tatpahalāni dhyānārādhane līlācetiḍṣakāryopayukta vibhaktā paraguṇa rūpavyāpāraśikara-vyūhā nirvāhita līlā vibhūṭikam. Muktisādhakam caturdhāvasthānam.

Vibhāvāśca tacchāyāḥ sura-nara-tiryagādīḥ svavibhava-sajātiyāḥ aiccha prādur-bhāva-vargāḥ. Prādurbhāvaḥ kecit sākṣat, anye tu. śṛṣṭyādi viśiṣṭa puruṣādiṣṭhānena. Itareca vyaktiṣu svayam evāvatīrya yathā arcāvātāra iti.

If the whole universe be the Lord, then the pantheistic situation arises. The theistic attitude demands of the Deity something more than the *all-is-ness*. It claims for God transcendence over all that is. Further in the pantheistic attitude there is possible the one full experience of the Divine as All, and that all is Good and complete. There is no place for Grace and Surrender, and all evolution becomes meaningless whirlgig and nothing more. Religious consciousness then will be one of quiet resignation, and not what Spinoza may conceive of as the Quiet, which is the result of a *speculum sub specie eternitatis*.

The second view, on the other hand, reveals neither their quiet resignation, nor yet the conception that the world is a static universe, just an emanate from a God, like the souls, and an inferior form of the Divine. The metaphysical view is not clearly visualised. It may entail the view that all are created by God, and perhaps that all are indwelt by God too, but it may not include the view that all *are* God, God-veiled or self-veiled. The second view is frankly realistic, accepting the world as an inconscient obstructing medium frustrating the vision of the Divine or even the inflow of His Grace towards the individual, thus doubly, that is, physically and psychically, acting like an opaque room. Whatever penetrates from without it it can never be known. Into this shell-covered existence, if the Grace of God has to penetrate, it alone could do it; no mortal power can do anything. Into this World then the Divine enters out of His Grace, spontaneously, not waiting on the wails of prisoners or on the prayers of the penitents. This is something that comes out of the Common Grace, that Universal Nature of the Divine as Providence.

Thus it is that theists always affirmed that God out of His sublime Mercy created the Universe, so that individuals may realise their true nature as intelligent beings, who ought to worship the true Divine, and thus achieve that happiness that they have denied to themselves in the periods of darkness.

How shall we conceive of this activity of the sublime Mercy or Providence? The answer is there is a descent of that Providence into the Scheme of the Universe, wherein the Divine Himself becomes the co-worker, the leader and the Ruler and the Teacher of the Way. This activity of Providence or providential design of the universal order may be likened to an inner propulsion in the inanimate and animate creation or as a shaper of things even like the artisan and sculptor amongst us; but in higher creation, as in the human or mental being endowed with conscience, and a reason which is capable of itself following up any instruction, it happens by an inner and deeper selfing by the Divine and not as an outer mentor or dictator. It is true, even here, because of the registered unity of the outer universe and because we could be shaped to a certain extent, if not completely, as near completeness as our materiality can permit, that men could be shaped into a set and uniform pattern by coercion and conditioning through constant habituation to a particular routine of existence till it becomes second nature. But beyond, or over and above, this inner lighting of the self in the mental there happens a special need for the special providence to relieve the sin and evil and 'unjust' suffering of mankind. This implies still more special descents of the Divine Being for the sake of the Universe and its creatures, sinners as well as saints. It may be asked why there should be so much purposeless suffering, and then a need for speculating or postulating the actual occurrence of special descents which may be more or less universally helpful according to the particular historical occasion? A whole universe may be balanced on the fate and realisation of a saint, whereas in another case, not a gnat may be affected by it except the evil.

In these cases, the occurrence of the special providence would be as far distinguished from the general or Universal Providence by a wide range which might flow from the Actual Personal Descent of the Divine to partial manifestations of soldiers of God or Saints of knowledge, or by a mere will to

save a particular individual. All these ideas have been so clearly stated by the ancient theologians of India, and they called the Actual Descents of the Divine as Avatārs, the partial descents as amśa-avatārs (as in the case of the ālvārs) or upāvatārs and then the messengers were called the Ācāryas, Prophets and Seers, tried and seerlike knowers of the Divine, and lastly the miraculous occurrences in life when men are saved. Some thinkers hold that there is no personality at work. Things happen as if by destiny needing no extra-mundane God. Asks Prof. John Laird in his Gifford Lecture, "Must the graciousness of things, in special critical conjunctions as well as in their common order be something that is *put* into the world by an extra-mundane God, or may it be a feature of the world's pattern truly and faithfully interpreted? It seems to be that the latter conception might well be true". (*Mind and Deity* p. 201). The question is not whether the extra-mundane God *puts* into the world something, but whether it is He Himself who descends into it in such a manner as to be at one with it and appear as if it is that 'pattern truly' the World-Order itself? This is what is meant by the conception of Creation as an expression of the Divine Grace. This is what is called *Līlā*.¹ Organicism in Indian Philosophy was established as the *sine qua non* of the evolutionary ascent of souls with their Self as Lord, with their Guide as immanent as well as external, but all leading up to God, who is the Lord of both the Nature and the Souls.

How this process of Descent is achieved and how this *Purpose* of the Divine is carried out as if it were the inner and self-force within each individual creature impelling it to move upward through struggles and strifes, battles of force and of wits, surmountings and conquests, physically and psychically, of one's nature and the rest too, is a problem of singular importance. It is only when the eye of the scientist is glued to the process alone, that he discerns no need for the supramental

1. Cf. my 'Concept of *Līlā Viśiṣṭādvaitic Philosophy*': *JBHU*, Vol. 1, 1936, *Līyam līlāṁ līlā*,

force that descends into the very marrow and vitals of the individual and creation. He cries out, 'Nature does all.' Pertinently and not infrequently the reply comes, even from the ranks of the scientists, the *Unconscious Nature can do but cannot explain*. It can contain the higher and project the higher, but this it can do only through the stress of the Higher, if not as a *dues ex machina*, as a goal, beckoning from the future, but as an indwelling impulsion from behind.

That in the largest and profoundest affirmations of the Indian thinkers taken as whole, we do have these two attitudes taken up together so that God may well be, because of His Infinite Nature and Perfection, a Goal to be achieved (*puruṣārtha*), ever present, beckoning the individual creatures to struggle onwards with Him as the One sempiternal Light shedding His resplendent rays on all alike, and also the Original inner, or rather behind, Impellor, so thoroughly identifying Himself with the creatures He had brought into existence as to appear as their own inner vitality, inner conscience and inner reason, which are thirsting for the higher reaches. They cannot discern, except by a negation of themselves in the lower planes and prior history. It is only when we perceive in the Possibility which is, in reality, the Actuality of the concrete realization of this Dual Activity of God as the Light above and Mother below what we can fully undertake to solve the Riddle of our Struggle and Progress.

The rationale of the Divine 'splitting into the many'¹ for the sake of impelling from behind, sustaining within and beckoning forward is to be understood as above. This is the theory of Vyūha in Indian Philosophy, especially of the Pāñcārātra Tantra.

1. Vyūha means dispersal or removal also. *Īśa. Up. 16. vyūha rasmin samūha tejah*. Vyūha means also Organization for defence in military science. Separating or individuating defensive organization which is a unitary organization capable of being used for offensive as well as defensive action. Mahāyana Buddhism accepts split-personalities of the Buddha such as Ādi Buddha Dharmakāya, Nirmanakāya and Sambhogakāya.

Vyūha means a sundering apart.¹ Of what is this a sundering it may be asked? Pāñcarātra says that it means the keeping apart for the purposes of creative, redemptive, dedicative, providential and destructive activities definite personalities of His Infinite Being. This entails an apparent split alone, since all the personalities of the Divine, whether cosmic or individual or embodied, are One alone. The Pāñcarātra theory postulates four such 'splits' which are the minimum demanded by the Cosmic construction or Order. The Redemptive Transcendent who is ever above the Creative order is the *Para*; the second consisting of triple forms is that which is of the Cosmic Deities of creation of the Universe, characterised by certain definite acts of creation and sustention possessing all the Will and Lordship, strength and Energy (*spiritual*) Light, and Knowledge and Power. The Pāñcarātra doctrine describes the three Personalities of the Divine in the Cosmic as manifesting two qualities each of the Supreme Lord possessing amongst an infinity of excellent auspicious qualities, six well-known qualities of *aśvarya*, *bala*, *vīrya*, *tejas*, *jñāna*, *śakti*. The names of these three split-personalities (an unfortunate phrase when taken in the sense of modern psychoanalysis which will be dropped hereafter) are Samkarṣaṇa, Pradhymna and Aniruddha. The manifestation of these personalities is successive and possibly from one another as it is sometimes described.² But this does not mean the birth or origination of the souls such as Samkarṣaṇa, Pradhymna and Aniruddha

1. *Ibid*

2. Cf: *Mahāsanathumāra Samhitā* :

The Mahābhārata version of these *vyūhas* can be expressed thus : From the Supreme, Aniruddha came into being. He, in the morning produced Brahmā, and after all creations being entrusted to him, in the evening out of His wrath He (Aniruddha) begot Rudra (*Śānti Parva*, Ch. 342. 17-22; 343. 104). This creation is thus prior to the general creation. For the same view the earlier version is to be found in the *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa*. IX. 1. 6 (Julius EGGELING's Trans). Cf. VI. 1. 3, 9.

"When Prajāpati had become disjoined the deities departed from him. Only one god did not leave him, to wit, manyu (wrath); extended he remained within. He (Prajāpati) cried and tears of him that fell down settled down on Manyu. He became the hundred-headed, thousand-eyed,

for they are not souls at all, but Personalities of the Divine charged with creative, sustentive and destructive activities in every sphere of knowledge, Work and Devotion, of Mahān (buddhi), Ahankāra (Selfness) and Manas (mind).

The question here is whether or no we have to take the Cosmic powers to be Vyūhas in the sense enunciated as the descents of the Divine which are to be considered to be periodic as against the view they are just powers, permanent or series (*pravāha*) but not descents. If we consider the Divine as triple in the powers of the Brahmā, Rudra and Viṣṇu, as Creator, Destroyer and Sustainer or Ruler, or in ancient terminology, Agni, Indra and Viṣṇu, then, these descents are different since they are not the Supreme who cosmically enters into the scheme for some act of redemption. Now the descriptions of Samkarṣaṇa, Pradhyumna and Aniruddha seem on the one hand to recommend the view that they could be identified with the three gods, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Rudra, but on a deeper consideration we have to say that that cannot be done. But here what seems to be the cosmo-theology is that these Samkarṣaṇa, Pradhyumna and Aniruddha are the first three splits of the Divine and the creation of Brahmā and Rudra are consequent on the emergence of the *tatvas* or material categories such as Water etc., as the Nārāyaṇīya section points out.¹ In which case it would be wrong to

hundred-quivered Rudra..." This is advāraka śrīṣṭi according to all thinkers since it is prior to the general creation. The Śaiva view also accepts a prior manifestation of the Paramaśiva into Sakfi and other transcendent categories the last of which becomes the matrix of creation or the creator.

Cf. *Sat. Brāh.* XI. 4. 3. 1 for the birth of Śrī.

Thus we have to conceive of Brahman,—Samkarṣaṇa—Pradhyumna and Aniruddha from whom Brahmā and Rudra take their births. That is to say, Brahmā and Rudra are not Vyūhas of the Divine. *Niyamena teṣām Brahmādinām Bhāgavatāragāṇāṁ svaparigāṇānt devamanuṣyādivat śrītiprakarāṇaṣu śrīyatayā parigāṇānt ca. Viṣṇusahasranāma Bhāṣya*; Parāśara Bhaṭṭa :

They are cosmic powers governing *Mahat* (cosmic intellect), *ahankāra*, (cosmic egoity) and *manas* (cosmic mind).

1. The *Parama Samhitā* says that Vāsudeva is for Dharma, Samkarṣaṇa for Jñāna, Pradhyumna for Mokṣa whereas Aniruddha is for Īśvaratva. (Ch. II. 99. 102) (B.O. Series).

identify the three vyūhas of Nārāyaṇa with the three gods of the Pantheon. The Split or Incarnation does not entail the utter ceasing of the causal Being, God. It is simultaneous Unity in multiplicity and vice versa.¹

The Divine is not conceived of merely as the Lord of the supra-Cosmic entities of Mahān, Ahaṁkāra and Manas incarnating in them for the purpose of those redemptive activities of which the human being must obviously be unaware. It may also be the permanent residence in those spheres of the supra-cosmic existence so that souls who have ascended to those planes might enjoy and serve the Divine in those spheres. These are the Maharloka, Tapoloka, Janaloka, supramental spheres inaccessible except to the seers.

But when the Descent is conceived of as the descent into the soul as its indwelling light and self and Object of profound contemplation, the descent herein mentioned is not the same as the Upaniṣadic statement that He ever is the indwell-

It is interesting to find that the *Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa* gives an original account of the four vyūhas or forms of God. The inscrutable Para, Vāsudeva, the Sesa who supports the earth (darkness, brute creation), the Active Pradhymna, the fashioner of virtue (in the language of Tirumalīśai Alvar : *pūṇiyattin mūrti*) who incarnates in divine, human or brute bodies or with such bodies, and fourthly the Anantaśayana form wherein He abides in water on a serpent-bed with passion as His attribute and who is active (possibly in Yoga-nidrā as they say). (Canto. IV. 43-59. Parāiter's trans. p. 21. Bib. Ind.). Cf. Bhatta : *Viṣṇu Sah. Nāma Bhāṣya* : name 521. *Anantātmā* : Bhogindrasya Ātmā.

1. Tertullian wrote that "the peculiar properties of each substance are preserved in tact. *Salva est utriusque proprietas substantiæ* so that in him the spirit conducted its own affairs that is the deeds of power and works and signs and the flesh underwent its sufferings..." (*Christian Theology* : HEADLAM p. 355) It would be clear that this is not the conception of Avatārhood in Bhāgavata and Gītā. The Avatāra as descent into the terrestrial scheme underwent sufferings and privations even as postulated by Tertullian but they must be considered to be for the love He bears and as an example of how God's will has to be considered to be for the extraction of the experience of Delight that is God's even here and with the consciousness that God is with us. The identity with the view of Vyūhas could scarcely be denied from the extract. Cf. *Mysticism and Personal Idealism* by Dean INGH.

ing seer as such. But the Supreme Divine descends verily to the minute soul so that He could enjoy the soul and in turn be enjoyed by it.

For as the Upaniṣad itself has said it: it is not knowledge nor askesis nor personal effort that makes one attain the Divine. Whomever He chooses, he attains Him *yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyaḥ*. We should therefore hold that prior to indwelling as Object of Contemplation the Divine is pervasively present in every individual, but once the individual has been chosen for his intense devotion to Him alone, He out of His supreme Grace indeed comes to reside effulgently and puissantly at the very core of his being. God is the omnipervasive Being in each of the microcosmic souls which has been described as 'hundredth part of the point of the hair' (*Śvet. Up. V. 9*). Within that *añṛ* or minuteness indeed the Divine becomes minuter (*aṇoraṇiyān*) just as He had become greater than the greatest or vaster than the vastest. This Objective Presence that the Divine grants to the soul devoted exclusively to Him alone, is a Wonder of Grace that passeth all understanding. Of unique value and inestimable significance is this Descent as Antaryāmin. The Lord indeed of the Transcendent has come back to His cave and thrown resplendent light and has made it into a Palace of self-luminosity and self-effulgence and Supreme Māyā. So is this in the case with all souls, higher and lower. The importance to Religion of this descent into the inter-cosmic is a descent of which the Religious consciousness is aware as Revelation, Realization and Resurrection, the three stages of that growing intimacy matured within the cave of the Heart, the white tower of Light or White-lotus of Puissance. The descent as Antaryāmin within the devotee's body is a revelation like any other in space and time and the history of man. The descents are all of the Love-order, descents which are full and complete and transcendently beautiful. This is the of the Seer who asked us to remember that he who worships God as external and outward is but a creature of the gods (*Bṛh. Up. I. vi. 10*). The

inner Lord must be known, and entered into or rather He must be invoked by a total and entire surrender, to enter into oneself, completely as Antaryāmin.

This exposition leads to the most important question whether souls also can be of the same kind as these divine fulgurations. This appears to have warranty from the fact of certain descriptions which speak of the creation as comparable to the sparks going out from the burning fire *yathāgnejvalato viṣphullīṅgā vipratīṣṭheran* : (*Kāus. Up.* III. 3).

On this account has the Pāñcarātra been criticised by Saṅkarācārya. Against this view Rāmānuja defends the souls' non-origination, since Samkarṣaṇa and Pradhymna and Aniruddha are not souls but emanates.¹ The doctrine of fulguration or self-division through qualities is said to be impossible for qualities without substance cannot exist; the continuum of triple dualities of qualities appearing at different levels of of material manifestations is possible, but could it be said that Samkarṣaṇa, Pradhymna and Aniruddha are of this type? Rāmānuja, as pointed out, holds that the vyūhas are not souls at all, neither nityas nor baddhas, nor as it appears the cosmic deities like Brahmā, Rudra and Indra and others.

Any explanation according to the theory of Vyūha is either emanational (*i.e.* fulgurational) or obscurational, according to the accepted conception of the soul. The first view means according to gnostics (knowers) that all souls emanated from One Central or Fundamental Essence and that their degradation or imperfection depends directly on their distance from their essence, for the fact of ejection is the important fact about this fulgurated or fulgurating force or momentum. This means that the souls that have been created, though they partake of the Divine Nature or substance or essence, really

1. *Vedānta Sūtras* : I. iii. 2 : Cf. *Spirit and Reality* : Nicolas BERDYAYEV p. 134, "Mystical affirmations such as that God is born in the soul is born in God, eternal genesis, is peculiar to the depths of the Soul, God is more human than man himself, God is within us but we are without, can all dispense with theological concepts."

represent imperfectly that essence, because of the distance. In other words, the emanation theory does not speak of any real creation according to some philosophers but only of a false ejection, or an illusory projection comparable to illusory sense representation of essences or ideas on the space-time canvas (which is also another illusory canvas or mirror). But this theory, whilst explaining the fall or degeneracy of the soul and may therefore conform to the 'law of entropy' enunciated in modern physics, does not explain the immortality of souls. It is however open to us to accept Prof. Laird's view that immortality means future immortality not a beginninglessness one. This explanation is not accepted by prior thinkers though it is quite plausible. That by itself cannot refute the idea of logical non-relation between beginning and mortality. This fiction of beginning-and-end-necessity relationship has been at the bottom of most philosophical theories of inexpressibility and entailed constant appeal to scripture. This inexpressibility doctrine had its repercussions on the doctrines of inexpressibilities of karma and avidyā and others whose beginninglessness was considered to be compatible with their end or destruction. The *ajāti-vāda* or non-creationistic view of Gaudapāda has displayed more loyalty, logically speaking, to this doctrine, so much so, it laid stress on the law of non-destruction. Things are, every have been, and never go out. Or as it has been expressed things are not, never have been, and never come into being.

Thus the souls are not to be considered to be of the same kind as the vyūhas, and indeed the vyūhas are always capable of emergence as soon as the purposes of the Divine are exercised in respect of Cosmic and individual functions of His supreme Grace, whereas the individual souls are immortal as well as beginningless. They are only withdrawn into the Divine womb where they subsist in subtle forms and at the time of creation emerge in their gross forms. The *sūkṣma* becomes *sthūla*. It would be wrong therefore to take the Grace-Forms of the Divine as the individual souls, nor should

we consider the origination of the souls as of the same kind as that of the Divine Emergences which are Descents, *avatāras*, for the purpose of evolution and upliftment of individuals and for Impelling the entire Universe to the Highest strands of His Consciousness-Being.

The *Manu Smṛti*, in its last chapter (XII-124) detailing who is to be worshipped, states that neither Agni nor Indra but He of the Golden 'Hue, Who pervades all beings by His five-fold forms is to be worshipped. This is Viṣṇu-Nārāyaṇa, who has been described as the Source of all earlier in the first Chapter of the same Smṛti. It is clear that Manu or Bhṛgu had the Pāñcarātra Vyūha-theory in his mind. It is the theory taught by Nārāyaṇa Himself. It would be wrong to identify these five forms, *pañcabhir mūrtibhiḥ* with the five elements or other tattvas as some commentators have done.

Western theology though it is trying its level best to find everything of vital value in Hindu Religion in its own modern formulations, and is seeking precisely to do what the Indian philosopher is trying to do in respect of his philosophy, that is, trying to read the Western Wisdom in its own literature, is chary of accepting the ancient formulation of the Pāñcarātra and Āgamas generally regarding the Unity in multiplicity of the Divine Nature. This principle is established we have attempted to show, conclusively in respect of the Vedic conception of the Brahman, who is All-gods. Christianity has accepted only a trinity and it is unable to explain this trinity except through recourse to 'christian piety' even as Dr. Headlam states (*Christian Theology* p. 466) Indian thought is not propelled by the necessity of piety but by the perception of the Divine One as revealed to the soul in a multiplanal or multi-personal nature, for this is the meaning of the apprehension of the Divine as the Infinite, qualitatively and quantitatively. Multiple relations exist in the very Person of the Divine All, *Sarva*. The Divine exists in this supreme multiplicity in each individual through His unimaginable omnipervasiveness and personal relationship.

This is the central teaching of Pāñcarātra, full, choate and clear without complications, *ādhyātmically* perfectly experientiable, *āhibhuatically* sane and historical, *ādhidaivically* luminous and divine.

The Pancharatra-sastra and the Upanisads.*

It is well-known that Pāñcarātra is an Āgama and a tantra śāstra. It is Vaiṣṇava literature dealing with rites and worship of God Viṣṇu of the form of Vāsudeva. Its unique doctrine is stated to be the doctrine of vyūhas (fulgurations)¹. It accepts the theory of Arcā (image or icon) as a legitimate and essential manifestation of the Divine. The theory is stated to have been promulgated by Nārāyaṇa Himself. The *Māhābhārata* contains in the Sānti-parva a good account of the Pāñcarātra system, and it is stated there that Pāñcarātra is as good a method for realising the liberation (mokṣa) as Sāṃkhya, and other systems. The literature of Pāñcarātra however is much wider than these references. There are saṃhitās, the most well-known being the Nārāyaṇa Pāñcarātra, Mahāsanatkumāras, Abirbudhnya, Jayākhyā, Lakṣmī, Pādma and Parama saṃhitā. The Pāñcarātra theory of creation hypothesises two creations *samasthi* and *vyasthi*, primary and secondary (supracosmic), and posits the fulguration of the Transcendent (Para) into the triple forms of Saṃkarsaṇa, Pradhymna and Aniruddha whilst Himself remaining the fourth as Vāsudeva. These are the cosmic creator, sustainer, and destroyer. It is also stated that it is from Aniruddha that Brahmā, the creator of the cosmic worlds and creatures, was born. These forms are supratemporal, whereas all the cosmic forms are historical or temporal. There are three forms which fall within the temporal, the Antaryāmin, Arcā, and Vibhava (avatārs). All these forms are one unity, a *unitas quintuplex*. All these facts

* This article is reproduced here with modifications from NIA 1946.

1. Cf. *The Philosophy of Vyūhas* : NIA 6.112nd 1943.

2. Cf. *Introduction of Pāñcarātra* : O. SCHRADER,

are most clearly presented in that most excellent monograph "*Introduction to Pāñcarātra*" by Dr. SCHRADER. The other works that may be usefully consulted are Dr. S. KRISHNASWAMI AIYANGAR'S introduction to his *Paramasamhitā*¹ and the introduction to *Jayābhyā samhitā* by the learned editor of the Baroda Gaekwad Oriental Series.

Efforts have been made to find out whether the Pāñcarātra theory has any affiliations with the Upaniṣads. The most that several writers on the subject, both orthodox and otherwise, have found out is that they consider the reference to *Bhāyana* in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (VII, 2) means the Pāñcarātra system. The precise meaning of the word 'ekāyana' is not clear. It may mean the doctrine that holds that all have their basis or support in the One Supreme, *Tad Ekam*, the Advitiyam. But the context there is unfortunately not quite complementary to the theory, for Nārada complains that it had not helped him much in the solution of his fundamental problems. Indeed Nārada was the first to write down a Pāñcarātra samhitā!!!

Before I attempt to put forward my suggestion in this respect, it is best to consider what exactly the term *rātra* in Pāñcarātra means. *Rātras* are said to be nights (*rātris*). The teaching of this system was propounded to five immortals by the Divine Lord. Dr. Schrader quotes an interesting passage :

"When the Kṛta-Yuga has just appeared, by the grace of Keśava, the following five, namely Ananta (serpent) Garuda, Viśvakṣena, the Skull-bearer (Śiva), and Brahman, hear it (sāstra) in parts as follows; in the first night Ananta (has his questions answered), in the second night Garuda, in the third night Senesa, in the fourth (is answered) what has been chosen by the Vedas (Brahman), and in the fifth Rudra (is the questioner). Thus each of these hears for himself the Religion of Faith (Śraddhasāstra) in the form of Knowledge, Yoga,

1. The late Dr. S. Krishnaswami Aiyangar tried to link up the Pāñcarātra sacrifices (Ahina-sacrifices Tait. Sam. VII. 1.10) with the Pāñcarātra, but it was unsuccessful. cf. Sats. Brāh. XIII. 6.11 XIII. 5. 4, 20. Ait. Brāh. 25-8; VIII. 14.

construction, and conduct, consisting of one hundred thousand ślokas. (Hence the whole of it) has an extent of five lakhs of (ślokas) it is called Pāñcarātra."¹

Rātra here means a lakh, a night, and from what Dr. SCHRADER himself suggests it may mean just a part or section. But the last meaning is based on the fact that the Mahāsanatkumāra-Saṁhitā is divided into five chapters each belonging to a divinity or Ṛṣi (seer); accordingly, in the above work the first belongs to Brahman, the second to Śive, the third to Indra, the fourth to Ṛṣi Rātra, and the fifth is stated to be not available to the learned savant. But it seems much more likely that *rātra* means a teaching about the night, for sometimes it is equated with knowledge (*vidyā*). The Pāñcarātra doctrine seeks to dispel the darkness and doubts and ignorance about the five levels of consciousness. As we have pointed out, the doctrine of the vyūhas (including the highest) is peculiar to the system.² Linked up with this five-foldness of the Divine it becomes clear that the doctrine leads to emancipation through the understanding of the five-fold nature of creative manifestations or darknesses. The five sacraments of the Pāñcarātra also have an intimate connection with the five-foldness of divine contact or contact with the Divine All-dweller Vāsudeva. The Viṣṇu Purāṇa indeed seems to echo much of the Pāñcarātra doctrine. Jñāna, Yoga, Kriya, Carya, and Prapatti are the five-fold approach to Divine Realisation. Thus *rātrā* means knowledge that abolishes the night of ignorance. It is that which helps the crossing over; *trātā*, the deliverer the tantra, the *vidyā*. *vidyā*. Further it is also seen that not only is the *tattova* five-fold, it is five-fold in *hita* (means), and five-fold in *puruṣārtha*, that is dharma artha-kāma-mokṣa and kaṁkarya.

1. *Ibid.* pp. 22, 26. The above quotation is from Vihagendra Saṁhita I, 31-34.

2. *Vedānta Sūtras* : II. 41 : Śrī Sankara holds that Pāñcarātra is refuted. Śrī Rāmānuja holds that it is not refuted but approved. Śrī Yāmuna's *Āgamaprāmāṇya* seeks to show that Pāñcarātra is not contradictory to Vedānta.

The Upaniṣad that deals with exclusive clarity about the night is First Praśna of the *Praśnopaniṣad*. In reply to the question as to who was the creator of the creatures or rather the origin of the creatures, the seer Pippalāda says that Prajāpati was the creator of both the sentient and insentient, *prāṇa* and *rayi*, the twins which are also to be represented by the figures of Āditya and Candramas. These twins by their union bring about creatures. But no sooner than he states this, he proceeds to state that Prajāpati in respect of the temporal (*vyāstisriṣṭi*) is Samvatsara which has two divisions, uttarāyaṇa and dakṣināyana, devayāna and pitṛyāna, *prāṇa* and *rayi*, so to speak; and Prajāpati is also Māsa, or month of two pakṣas, śukla and kṛṣṇa, which again are *prāṇa* and *rayi*. Prajāpati is also the Day-Night, and *prāṇa* is day and *rayi* is the night. The preservation of *prāṇa* is counselled by the practice of brahmacarya; and sacrifices are asked to be performed in śukla pakṣa, and the Release is stated to happen in the devayāna. This knowledge of creation is necessary; that Prajāpati is the creator, that the creation proceeds in two steps, *samaṣṭi* and *vyāṣṭi*: as *samaṣṭi* he is the creator of source of both *rayi* and *prāṇa*, and it is *prāṇa* that liberates, *rayi* that confines. It is, as shewn, the night, *tamas*. We can see here that there are five *rayis*.

The word '*rātri*' used in connection with '*rayi*' when substituted in the place of *rayi* in the above passages yields a very interesting result. There are indeed two superior *rayis*, Candramas and Rayi. There are three inferior or temporal *rayis* namely Pitṛyāna, Kṛṣṇapakṣa, and Rātri. The most interesting fact is that Kṛṣṇa-Vāsudeva (Nārāyaṇa) who is considered to be pūrṇa-avatār, who is stated to be the God of the sāttvatas, the propounder of the Pāñcarātra doctrine

1. *Manu Samhitā* I. 65-67. There is a slight difference between *Manu* and *Praśna Up.* for the latter holds Śuklapakṣa is *Prāṇa* and daytime whereas the former holds śuklapakṣa to be night-*rātri*.

cf. *Bhagavad-Gītā*, VIII. 24 agrees with the Upaniṣad version rather than with *Manu*: "Agni, lustre, a day in the *śuklapakṣa*, uttarāyaṇa, those departed then attain Brahman. Brahman-knowers are those men."

and its Goal, has been stated to have been born under the five rays or *rātris* |

Śrī Kṛṣṇa has been stated to have taken birth in the Candravamśa (Yadus of the Aila clan). His own birth took place at the beginning of the Pitr̥yāna (dakṣiṇāyana), Kṛṣṇā-ṣṭami, at mid-night. His star was Rohiṇī, the star of exaltation of the Moon. This is the Bhāgavata account.¹ The *Harivamśa* gives the star as Abhijit.²

Thus Śrī Kṛṣṇa incarnated in the five *rātris*, and by this the five *rātris* got illuminated, transformed, emancipated from their darkness. The fullest emancipation of Prakṛti (Matter)³ which is the meaning of *rāyi* or *rātri* was achieved by the Divine in his fullest decent, through his five-fold forms. No wonder, as if to emphasis this fact his own brother, son and grandson were named after the vyūhas. It is also no wonder then that Śrī Kṛṣṇa of the five nights is the lord-promulgator of the Pāñcarātra method, the occult infallible path of light in darkness, conquest through absolute surrender to the Ultimate One Being who is manifest in all hearts and in all darknesses, even as the supernal light and sole refuge for the devotee. The Divine Kṛṣṇa of the form of dispelling darkness is the *Prāṇa* in the *Rayi* as its master and illuminer and the emancipator of all those who are struggling in its darknesses.

Just as a fact of great interest let me point out the case of the other avatār, Śrī Rāma. We find that he is stated to have been born in the Uttarāyāna, Śukla-navamī, mid-day, of the Solar line; indeed his is the birth in the five *prāṇas* or five day-times.

1. *Bhāgavata* X, 3, 1-8.

2. *Harivamśa* 60.17-18:

Abhijitnāmanakṣatram jayantīnāma śarvarī,

Muhūrto Vijayōnāma yatra jāto Janārdanaḥ.

cf. *Matsya Purāṇa* 46-14 states Kṛṣṇa was born on the Amavāsya tithi.

3. *Prāśnopanīṣad-bhāṣya*: Raṅgarāmānuja interprets *rayi* as *prakṛti* cf. the same edited and translated by me and D. T. TATACHARYA to be issued by the Sri Venkatesvara Oriental Institute.

I am further fortified in my reasoning by the internal evidence in the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata, the works devoted to the Solar and the Lunar lines, so to speak.

In the Śrīmad Rāmāyaṇa Śrī Rāma is instructed to go to Sugrīva by Kabandha and make acquaintance with him and not with Vālī. The point is, as Vālmīki states, Sugrīva is the son of Sūrya whereas Vālī is Indra's son (*Indu*, Indra being almost identical since Soma is the favourite drink of Indra). There are other reasons of corresponding lot of losing their wives which would evoke sympathy. But Sugrīva with whom friendship is sought, is Sūryaputra. The unity between them became proverbial: '*Rāmasugrīvaḥ aikyam*' is stated to be the most perfect unity that all souls can seek if devoted. The lunar power was slain, both Vālī and Rāvaṇa belonged to it.

In the Mahābhārata Arjuna, Indra's son, is the companion, and bosom friend of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and Karṇa, Bhānuja, son of Sūrya, is the foe. The alliance here with the lunar by Śrī Kṛṣṇa of the five nights is obviously a mystery to many, but those who see the pattern of *dharma*, in both cases, will observe that both the night and the day have to be governed by a higher and supreme consciousness, the Divine, in the double forms suitable to the *dharma* which is to be established and the *adharma* which is to be dethroned and annihilated.

Thus the path that Śrī Rāma taught by example was the path of light and duty, open and easy for all, where everything is crystal clear to thought. (Esoterically the Śrī Vaiṣṇava school of Śrī Rāmānuja holds that Rāmāyaṇa is the śaraṇa-gati-veda). The contrast is that Śrī Kṛṣṇa always was Divine,

1. Śrīmad-Rāmāyaṇa: Āraṇyakāṇḍa 72, 11 ff, (Kumbhakonam ed: Kish. kāṇḍa and Bālakāṇḍa.

"Tāto " avardhata vālī tu balavīryasamanvitah

Sūryaputro mahavīryah Sugrīvaḥ parihīyate

Kish. 16.26

" Mahendramiva durdharṣam mahendramiva duḥṣaṇam

Mahendraputram patitam Vālīnam Hemamālinam.

Kish. 17. 11.

Vānarendram Mahendrābham indro Vālīnam ūjitam

Sugrīvaṁ Janayāmāsa tapānaś tapatām varah.

Bālakāṇḍa. 17. 10.

the Transcendent, whereas Śrī Rāma was always human. The two avatārs had relatively different purposes. Śrī Rāma was born for the Treta-yuga, the age when light was available to all, and order, Ṛta was well-known. But Śrī Kṛṣṇa was born for the Kali Yuga, the age of darkness, materialism, separations and conflicts; and Kṛṣṇa, the Master Adept, Avatār, Godhead, Redeemer who is the knower of all darknesses, the Āditya (the brother of Indra ?) is the *Rātri*, the Supernal Sun, bṛhad bhānu, the person of Viśvarūpa who revealed to Arjuna His other impenetrable form of Absolute Effulgent Transcendence (Para) beyond the Tamas (Rayi).¹ He is the knower of all darkness, the sanātana Puruṣa who is the source of all things conscient, being the supraconscient and beyond, the saccidānanda-mūrti. God's Grace, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Grace, alone can lead us beyond the darkness.

Praśnopaniṣad really and definitely intimates the doctrine of the five *rātris* or *rayis*, and the emancipation of man from these *rayis* is, by way of *prāṇa* and *Praṇava* which are taught in the following *praśnas*.

There is another correlation suggested by Manu in the *Manusamhitā* which intimates that the Supreme known as *Prāṇa* or eternal Brahman is established or pervades all beings in his five-fold forms (*pañcabhir mūrtibhiḥ*).² It also

1. Harivaṁśa story of the fetching of dead children of a Brāhmaṇa.
2. *Manusamhitā* : XII, 123-4 :

Ētamake vadantyagnim manum anve prajāpatim,
Indrameke pare prāṇam apare brahma śāśvatam.
Eṣa sarvāṇi bhūtāni pañcabhir vyāpya mūrtibhiḥ,
Janmavṛddhikṣayair nityam samsārayati cakravat.

cf. B. Gītā XVIII. 61. of *Mahābhārata Dronaparva* 29.32 to 34 (*Bhagadatta-vadha*) :

Caturmūrtir aham śāśvai lokatrāṇāṁrtham udyataḥ
Ātmānam pravibhāyeha lokānām hitam ādadhe.
Ekamūrtis tapaścaryam kurute me bhuvi sthita
Apāta paśyati jagatkurvāṇam sādhyasādhunī
Aparā kurute karma mānuṣam lokamāśritā
Sete caturthī tvaparā nidrām varṣasahasrikīm.

The *Prāśnopaniṣad* states : Māso vai prajāpatis tasya kṛṣṇapakṣa eva rayiḥ śuklaḥ prāṇas tasmād ete ṛṣayaḥ śukla īṣṭim kurvantītara itarāsmīn.
(12) *First Praśna*.

intimates that the day-night division applies in the case of our day to men, kṛṣṇa-śukla pakṣas are night and day for the pitṛs, and dakṣināyana and uttarāyana form the night and day for the devas. This is indeed important as validating our procedure of interchanging the terms *rayi* and *rātri*.¹

Dr. MOHAN SINGH in his original work '*New Light on Śrī Kṛṣṇa*' has written a good lot about Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the close correspondential conclusions that one could draw in order to prove the 'eternal nature of Śrī Kṛṣṇa' the Luminous-Transcendent, the occult and rich Being who has indeed become all things remaining as their eternal breath and being and self (ātman). But this is an additional fact of the Pāñcarātra Nārāyaṇa-Kṛṣṇa doctrine. The Divine is the five-fold Self (breath, prāṇa, āditya), emancipator of creatures. He is the trans-cosmic Being whom even the gods know not; He is the threefold vyūha, creator, ordainer, controller or regulator, preserver and destroyer who indeed is beyond all categories of space and time; He is the indwelling all-lord, the inner self of all creatures without any distinctions of caste or creed or race or religion, kind or nature, in animals, birds and worms too; He is the glorious teacher-saviour, warrior and redeemer of all good souls and up-lifter of all to higher rungs of His own celestial mansions of light and greater life; He is the Arcā, the adorable mūrti residing eternally in the abodes of worship, as the releaser and receiver of our surrender. All these are Śrī Kṛṣṇa Vāsudeva, He is the teacher of the Gītā, the warrior of the Mahābhārata, the adored

1. *Manusamhitā* I. 65-67.

Ahorātra vibhajate sūryo mānuṣa daivikē
Rātriḥ svapnāya bhūtānām ceṣṭāyai karmanām ahaḥ.
Pitṛye rātryahanī māsaḥ pravibhāgastu pakṣayoḥ
Karmaceṣṭāsvahaḥ Kṛṣṇaḥ Suklaḥ Svapnāya Sārvarī
Daive Rātryahanī varṣam pravibhāgastayoḥ punaḥ
Ahaḥ tatrodagayanam rātriḥ syād dakṣināyanam.

Manu differs from Pippalada regarding Suklapakṣa. He considers Suklapakṣa to be Prāṇa or day. Manu thinks it to be night *Rātri*.

cf. *Daivikānām yugānām tū Sahasram parisaṃkhyayā*

Brahmam ekam ahaḥ jñeyam tāvatīm Rātrīm eva ca. *ibid.* I. 72

beloved of Brindāvan, the father of mankind and its great leader, and the Adorable Object of worship by all gods seers men, cows, and creatures alike; He is the One of whom the Veda speaks in superb ecstasy of multiplanal and multi-personal existence. As the Harivamśa describes the birth of Kṛṣṇa.

Avyaktaḥ śāśvataḥ Kṛṣṇa Hariḥ Nārāyaṇaḥ prabhuḥ ।

Jāyate Bhagavāns tatra nayanair mohayan jagat ॥ 60.18'

The prayer of the Veda praying to Agni true wealth (*rāi*): *Agne naya supathā rāye*intimates a truth of great value. It is true that there is difference between *rayi* and *rāt*: but the fact is that the Supreme is the true wealth, the real prakṛti, the source—the Transcendent, which has indeed to be achieved with the help of the Divine in all these *rayis* or *rātris*. This is the occult truth, knowledge only got through the Grace of the Dayāmūrti Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the master of Māyā, (Māyon as the Tamil name of Viṣṇu indicates).

VIII

God as Mother¹

There has always been a tendency to treat God as more nearly resembling a mother than father, though the claim for motherhood has been firstly made in favour of our Earth. The reason for this predilection is not far to seek, for we are more surely born of the earth and are sustained by the products of the earth, rather than by any other entity, even as our human mother had brought us out of her womb and has nourished us with her milk and provided us with all the protections from changes. Thus from ancient times the earth has been worshipped as goddess in various forms, and the so-called pastoral and other goddesses are linked up with the earth-goddess. After all, the mother is the self-sacrificing

1. Cf. *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*: vol. I. p. 147 writes about the Divine spirit or Mother goddess in the mediterranean: "In regard to the Aegean Divine Spirit itself, personified in the iconic age as a goddess and a young god, the student of comparative religion finds himself on very familiar ground. A goddess with a young subordinate god is known in early times, in every coast of the Mediterranean which looked towards Crete. In Punic Africa she is Tanit with her son; in Egypt, Isis with Horus; in Phoenicia, Ashtaroeth with Tammuz (Adonis); in Asia Minor Cybele with Attis; in Greece (and especially in Greek Crete itself), Rhea with the young Zeus. Everywhere she is a virgin *i.e.*, unwed, but made the mother first of her companion by immaculate conception, and then of the gods and all life by the embrace of her own son. In memory of these original facts the cult (especially the most esoteric mysteries of it) is marked by various practices and observances symbolic of the negation of true marriage and obliteration of sex..."

But this Śakti worship was not followed by Sumerians and Aryans, Babylonians and the Assyrians: "Ishtar the most prominent female deity in the Babylonian pantheon, corresponding to Ashtarte (Astarte) or Ashtoreth of the other semites, occupied a subordinate place as compared to Anu, the heaven God, Enlil, the earth god, Eas, the water god, Sin, the moon-god, and Shamash the sun-god." (*The Indo-Aryan Races*: Chanda. pp. 150). The Semites seem to have passed through the matriarchical stage of society before their separation. (*Ency. Rel. & Ethics* Vol. II. p 115b) quoted by Chanda.

nourisher of the child inside and outside the womb, and the child owes its first love and loyalty to the mother.

But there has always been another tendency, also traceable to the anthropomorphic analogy which made God the father, who was the real seed-giver, and therefore more fully to be known as the source of our life, whereas the mother was the bearer and nourisher of the seed. Thus man had known two sources of his life and birth, the father and the mother, Earth and God, the Spirit, Primeval Male. That is the reason why the progenitor and cause of the universe was known as Dyāva-Prthivī in Ṛg Veda. This twin-divinity has been always the religious idea of God, though it was at certain periods considered that there was One deity with both the functions of Nature and Deity, the womb and the granter of the Seed.

Some thinkers indeed claim that the idea of God involves the idea of first cause, and as such it would be more appropriate speak of God as the *bhūta-yoni*, as feminine rather than as masculine, for no male has been as such a creator or producer of another creature. As we have stated, some others do not think it inappropriate to speak of God and His Nature or spouse, who conjointly might be said to do the creation-business. This view got philosophical sanction in Sāṃkhya where Puruṣa and Prakṛti together in some manner start the process of evolution. Some theorists by a wise distribution of functions it may be said granted to God intelligence, consciousness and transcendence, whereas they granted to His power śakti, considered as female, the ability to manifest the universe. Inappropriately enough some of those belonging to this school by reason of that inveterate habit of rational thought to speak in dichotomous terms argued that Consciousness is absolute passivity whereas the power of Consciousness is dynamic but ignorant

1. cf. *Life Divine* : Vol. II p. 31ff. Brahman-Māyā, Puruṣa-Prakṛti, and Īśvara-śakti are the triple diunity corresponding to the Cosmic, Individual and Universal modes of the Saccidānanda.

(unconscious). This delimitation of functions of the supreme Deity to omniscience without omnipotence, and of His power to omnipotence without any consciousness in the world-creation, whilst it may appear to be an easy solution, is by no means easy of acceptance, for it makes God wait on His power which was a personified subordinate deity. But a more understandable solution was also mooted. It was to make God one only, having both the qualities of consciousness and power, who by the one ideated and by the other executed that ideation. But here arises a third question : why indeed should God create the creatures if He was perfect in Himself and create such impoverished creatures ? This is a question that we shall have always to bear in mind as the sorest point of all theologies and philosophies of Absolute Perfection or the Absolute.

But then the Mother-idea is not fully expressed by the mere fact of origination. Vedānta holds the view that Brahman is to be considered as the Source of all birth and others (*Janmād yasya yataḥ* : I. 1. 1), and under the word 'ādi' was included such other functions and as 'sustention' 'destruction'. It was only the theistic schools which included under this also the other function of 'redemption,' which however was held by some to be included under the word 'sustention'. The fact of love for the created is indeed held to be included under the general notion of 'sustention'. God loves His creatures, else He would not have created them. He therefore nourishes them, leads them by the right path away from the wrong path, incarnates constantly into His creation for enjoying the company of His creatures, uplifts and redeems and establishes the law for His creatures. Granting freedom to them He even instructs them in the arts of utilising that freedom for the great Freedom of the Universal life that is Himself alone. This paternal instinct for the creatures born of Him is, it was deemed, more fully realized in the mothering-parent than in the fathering-parent, since the father is more a ruler and sovereign

than the mother who is considered to be more approachable too.² That such a position is possible and is available in our social life, as in the lives of lower animals, where the care-taking of young ones falls on the mother, is clearly proof of this contention. Whether from the point of view of religion, we do need to worship the Divine in this two-fold manner through love for the mother-hood of God so as to attain the free-hood which is the Grace of God, the father, is an important question. We have shewn elsewhere that the Divine God's Nature must be considered to be such that it enfolds all the manifold ways of approach and relationships that respond to the individual's manifold needs of being, and evolution and freedom.

At least this view seems to have played a distinguished rôle in the systems of Hindu Philosophy called the Āgamas. Just as 'the goddesses, devīs, in the R̥g Veda and literature,'³ so also we have mention of śaktis or powers, the counter-parts of the deities, devas. It is however to be borne in mind that the Āgamas also claim to speak the voice of the Veda and in a more elaborate and 'intensive form' than has been preserved in the darśanas schools of Philosophy. The Purāṇas also lend colour to the view that they have attempted a kind of synthesis of the philosophical and practica (āgamā) views.

1. We know from certain important studies in Psychoanalysis in modern times especially by Sigmund Freud and his school that the child is jealous of course unconsciously, of its father and this is due to sexual unconsciousness (for we should not use the word consciousness in this context). It is because of rivalry the male child will hate the father, whereas the female child will hate the mother. But such a view does not clearly explain the growth of the idea of Fatherhood nor the Motherhood of God as such. The father is undoubtedly the master of the house in certain matters whereas the mother is equally the master of the house in others, though the relative externality in social contact pertains to the father, and relative internality regarding home affairs pertains to the mother. The Concept of Love is not capable of being contained within these two spheres in any credible isolationism or autonomy.

2. Cf *Śakti*: Sudhendu Kumar Das : (Calcutta University) I st chapter,

II

The Mother Idea in the Veda must primarily be referred to the originative or 'wombal' nature of the Divine, *bhūtayoni*. Agni is most closely associated with the processes of birth,¹ and growth in living beings, being the celestial fire as well as the inner fire. So too, in Tvaṣṭṛ the specific functioning of bringing about the transformation of the form of creature is expressed. It may be conceded that though at the beginning one does not conceive of the unity of the Creator and His field or power, later on rational analysis revealed the two personalities, the creator and his power and field, which are represented as husband and wife, who form on an inseparable Unity.

When we trace the history of the term Śakti (or Saci) in Vedic literature,² we come across the twin concepts of vivification and reproduction, both of which belong to the idea of concept of motherhood. It is further seen that these two purposes are served by the jñā-goddesses such as Sarasvatī, Ilā, Dhīṣanī, Medhā and others. The development of these goddesses of knowledge³ into diverse personalities along with the Devī Sacī, Indrāṇī, Agnayī, Vārūnī, Āramatī, Puramdhi, Pṛthivī, Uṣas, Lakṣmī, reveals, according to certain writers, the emergence of abstract personalities represented by or corresponding to the functions or forces of the corresponding Gods.

It is clear that the so-called abstract nature of the powers is a description that can be relative only to our analysis of

1. The Pañcagni Vidyā is a clear enunciation of the principle of Fire creation.

2. Dyāvā-Pṛthivī is the pair in RgV. I. 364. ; V. 84 ; AV. XII. 1 Pṛthivī in later literature becomes bhūdevī (*bhūmādevī*) the consort of Viṣṇu *viṣṇor pṛthivī patiḥ*. Of her: AV. XII. 1 writes "She is great, shining, firm and quickens the earth by scattering rain from a cloud."

3. Jñā goddesses give the clue to the equation made about Māyā being equivalent to jñāna or vāyunam, for they act from a deep and fundamental superconsciousness that appears as ignorance or veiling power, but only so to the conscious mental being.

the functions or otherwise, and no deity is abstract as such, for He or She stands for a specific function. Metaphysically speaking, these powers expressed in terms of their reproductive and vivificatory functions were felt to be different conceptually, because conceptualised, but as having a unitary ground in one substance. Thus we find the growth of multiplicity, whether we conceive this multiplicity as entirely feminine or masculine or masculine and feminine, by an arbitrary definition of sex.¹ But common though this practice might be, yet we have to keep our eye fixed on the essentials, and never forget that it is the One Substance that is the ground of the many functions or qualities or powers, and these powers and qualities and functions reveal to us the substance, and it is only when we see them so related to the One Supreme Consciousness, that we pass beyond the illusion of the many.

The Brāhmaṇa literature lifts these śāktis from the position of mere powers, which was already passing into the notion of spouse, to the level of patnis who have equal places in the Sacrifice.² The metres Gāyatrī,³ Trīṣṭubh, Anuṣṭubh Jagatī are all considered to be powers. Gāyatrī⁴ is *tejas*, Trīṣṭubh is the specific energy of the senses, Anuṣṭubh the

1. Rg V. I. 164. 16: "They told me those were males, though truly females; He who hath eyes sees this, the blind discern not."

2. Jñā: women is a collective term for the consorts of gods. These are the several meanings given by Sāyana in Rg V. V. 43 13 VI. 49. 9; 48. 2. Cf. Nirukta. III. 21. They are female powers. Cf. Ait. Brāh. III. 37; Kauṣ. Brāh. III. 8 says that they are controllers of union (in full moon and new moon offering). Later Sat. Brāh. VI. 5. 4. 7. Jñāh: metres. Tait. Brāh. V. 1. 7. 2. *Chandāmsi vai jñāh*: But metres are living forces as well as special syllabic groupings into particular metres such as Gāyatrī, Anuṣṭubh, Trīṣṭubh, Jagatī, which are definite measures.

3. Gāyatrī is the special measure of Agni, for like him it has the power to carry sacrifice to the Gods. Gāyatrī is of 24 syllables etc. Rg. V. III. 62. 10; B. G. X. 35. Anuṣṭubh is Vīrya, Vajra with which the gods pierce the Night of the Asuras: *Tāndya Brāh.* IX. 1. 1. It has eight syllables to a quarter. Metres are produced from *Vāk* (*Pranava*). cf. Sri Aurobindo's exposition of the Kenopaniṣad (*Ārya* II. p. 90 ff) where he shews that the mentioned in Kena I. i. 3. 3 does not refer to mere speech but to *Vāk* - word power, that creative power which is stated to be at the beginning.

potent principle of Sacrifice (yajña). She contains in herself force, *balam*, *vīryam*. (*Tait. Sam.* II. 4. 3. 1). Metre being measure, we can see here already that *Māyā* is also measure. Therefore later on we find that *Māyā* and Metre and *Sakti* we all equated.

Dr. Das shows that the *śakti* or power of the metres and syllables is finally resolved into the concept of *Vāk* (Cow).¹ *Vāk* is that which is finally the outcome of *Prajāpati* (creator) whose *śakti* she declares herself to be.² She is stated to be the mother of *Ṛk*, *Sāman* and *Yajus*. She is the active power of Brahman proceeding from Him (*Ṛg V.* X. 125). She is speech which is the productive principle of energy. Indeed it is even stated in the Veda that without it the created beings cannot be free from blemish and sin. That is the reason why things are given names. (*Ṛg V.* X. 1' 5. 6; *Śat. Brāh.* VI. 1. 3. 9-10).

Vāk in the *Ṛg V.* is already the supreme principle of manifestative power, the supreme female energy. She was first with Brahman, then with *Bṛhaspati*; and in the *Brāhmanas* we see her with the Creator-Ruler of creatures

1. *Ṛg V.* X. 71 and 125 are entirely devoted to the hymning of *Vāk* which is called the Cow; cf. *AV.* VIII. 10. 12-13. cf Dr : Das (p. 25 ff *Śakti*). Weber considers *Vāk* to be a chaotic primordial principle. But whether it is a chaotic primordial principle because of being the Mother-principle is not quite clear. In fact the Womb is the Dark abode, indistinguished matrix of all eternal possibilities, the *Tamas*. Deeper than this mother-principle is stated to be the Supreme Consciousness, whose primal movement is the Mother, eternally in and of that.

That creation as the first projection or delivery of *Vāk* from the creator is clear from *Śat. Brāh.* VI.1.9; *Pañcavimāśi Brāh.* VI. 1. 3.; X. 2. 1, where *Vāk* interrogated by *Prajāpati* replies to him saying that she was his own self. *saiva te Vāg ityabravīt*! Again P. B. XX. 14. 2 *Vāk* is stated to be the companion principle of *Prajāpati* in the matter of creation; *Prajāpati va idam kva asīt Tasya vāg eva svam āsi. Vāg dvitiya sa aikṣāt, idam evam vācam vyasṛjata sedam sarvām bibhavanty aīt*. *Kāthaka. S.* XII. 5. (27. 1) *Prajāpati va idam āsīt, Tasya vāg dvitīyāsīt, tam mithunam samabhavat, sa garbham ādhatta*.....

Āit Brāh. X. 1. stated that *Vāk* is the nivid of 12 syllables which came out of *Prajāpati*, while the latter was practising askesis (or energising).

(Prajāpati). She is the ubiquitous principle of being. She is Sarasvatī, Bhīṣanī and Varuṇī, Parameṣṭhīnī (A.V. XIX. 9. 3). Thus we find that the stage is set for the Motherhood of God in and through the power of Vāk who is stated to be as ubiquitous as Brahman Himself. She is the Śakti, and Brahman is the Śaktimān. All male powers and female powers may be considered to be just fulgurations or spreadings or differentiations (conceptually considered even separated from one another without losing that central unity in the Divine Brahman), and related as such in every manifestation. So much so the Śrī-Sūkta could say: *Īśvaraḥ sarva bhūtānām tam ihopahvaye śriyam*. (9), even as the Bhagavad Gītā says of the Brahman Puruṣottama 'Īśvaraḥ sarva bhūtānām hṛdde Arjuna tiṣṭhati.' Indeed she appears as the Daivī Māyā or Prakṛti of the Gītā.

The Śrī-Sūkta appeals to the great Agni Jātavedas, the knower of all created beings or births, to lead the devotee to Her of supremest beatitude and even worldly fulfilment and wealth and children. The idea is that Śrī, Lakṣmī, is the auspicious giver of everything and without her there can only be *alaksmi*, true and unmitigated sorrow. The appeal to Agni is because the true messenger is always the Outer fire of the altar, and the inner fire of consecrated and burnished Will, aspiration, who is the knower of our inner being and growth and life and, as such is the first leader towards the true happiness from which all worldly wealth may also be got. The one important truth that must be grasped by any student of mystical consciousness is 'Knowing that one knows all, attaining That one attains all, enjoying That one enjoys all,' since His is the entire world of being and non-being (transcendent Being). Śrī or Lakṣmī is the fulfilment of the aspiration, the goal of all striving and the peak of Good Life in God or Truth or Delight. That she is the indwelling being

1. Cf. Śrī: Tait. Up. Sikṣa valli cf. *Mitinda Panha* 191 *Jātaka* II 4. cf. *Elements of Buddhist Iconography*: Ananda K. Commasewamy 10. p. 22. Śrī is known as Padmā.

of all creatures and beings is also intimated by this Sūkta. Thus it prepares the way for the development envisaged in the later āgamas, where she is stated to be seated in the heart of not only all creatures but also of God wherefore God is spoken of as Śrī-nivāsa, the abode of Śrī or Sreyas. It is also to be noted that without her Grace final release can never happen; for as Śreyas is the goal of all reality, without a descent of the Divine Grace or Śrī, there can never be any true and complete realization. But this view is not yet visible in the Sūkta where Agni Jātavedas is being invoke to lead the soul to her. It is only in later Vedānta of Rāmānuja that we find the Śrī becoming the Agent, the *puruṣakāra*, who leads the soul to the Divine. In other words, the duty of leading that belongs to Agni Jātavedas is referred to Śrī herself. But it may also be construed that there are two stages, the Agni Jātavedas leads up to Śrī, and Śrī leads the soul to the Supreme Realization. This view is supported by the Kenopaniṣad story of Ūmā Haimavatī helping the great Indra to know who the Wonderful Being that appeared was, thus playing the rôle of the leader-teacher of the Gods.

The Mother in the Agama.

The Āgama or Tantra literature is, we may remark, the source of sectarianism, or rather the source of exalting godheads over one another. They are considered to be very old but we could place them about the period of the sūtras if not contemporaneous with the Upaniṣads. These tantras are the Śaiva (pāśupata and siddhānta), Vaiṣṇava (Pāñcarātra and Vaikhāṇasa), and Śākta. We know that Buddhism and Jainism also have their own āgamas. The literature on the Śākta-worship has been made available to us by the Tantric Texts published under the able editorship of Avalon (Sir John Woodroffe) and the Kashmirian Texts edited by Jagadish Chatterjee. A full exposition of the tantric form of metaphysics and theology could well be gleaned from Dr. Chatterjee's book *Kāshmirian Śaivism* and from Arthur Avalon's innume-

fable works. Here I shall deal only with the most important aspects.

Śakti is all important. She is the Mother who could lead us to Śiva. She is the *puruṣakāra* (agency). "Lalitā is the supreme Śakti-aspect of the Brahman, the Aniruddha-sarasvatī (the all-spreading and itself unlimited power). It is claimed by Kaulas, among whom may be mentioned the great Naiyāyika commentator Bhāskarācārya, that this aspect of the Brahman is recognized in the Vedas (Rg. V. V. 47. 4). "Lalitā is the Brahman as the active principle in creation, when Her power is fully evolved the Śākta seeks her alone. It is She who visible through Her manifestations counts for Him." Therefore the view that the Mother of the Universe is not to be taken to be the spouse and therefore inferior to Brahman has been propounded by many faithful ones at all times.²

The relationship between Śiva and Śakti is close and inseparable (*avinābhāva*). Śiva and Śakti are one, and neither is higher than the other. "In the supreme state Śakti exists in her own svarūpa form as being-consciousness-bliss (*saccidānandamayī*) indistinguishable from Śiva." But they Śakti is not identical with Māyā. "Śakti is not to be identified with this form of it (*māyā*)...Māyā is a particular and comparatively gross form of Śakti." The original or primal form of śakti (*ādyaśakti*) is the goal of śakti-sādhana. To attain that is to attain Śiva, for "Śiva and Śakti exist in mutual embrace and love eternally." From this Śakti that is undoubtedly united with and supported by Śiva proceeds the creation of the world through several descending movements of Nāda (Primal Sound), Bindu (vortex) and etc. Māyā is a particular gross form of Śakti as she appears after evolution of the first three principles of Nāda, Bindu and

1. *Kāmakaṭṭhāśāstra*: Introduction. (Tantrik Texts) Vol. X.

2. *Mother and Mother's Thousand Names*: Markand R Dholakia.

cf. *Lalitā-Cult*: V. R. R. Dikshitar. Madras University 1942.

Vidyā.¹ Māyā is the disintegrating force of multiplicity, a veil and a limiting force of the manifold thus manifested, and finally is the veiling force that hides away the central continuity from the many which have been manifested and limited.

Whilst we find that a more rational account of the two-fold powers of the Divine can be given, we also know the extremes to which this discrimination (analysis or separation) has led to. So much so, Vedānta had sternly to revert to the Neuter and the Transcendental (*nirguṇa*) aspect of the Deity, Brahman. For example the *Kubjaka Tantra* (quoted by Arthur Avalon) says "Not Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, creat, maintain and destroy; but Brāhmī, Viṣṇavī, Rudrānī. Their husbands are but dead bodies" On the contrary, there is the saner statement of the *Mahānirvāṇa Tantra* which says that Para-brahman, Devī, Śiva and all other devas and devīs are but One, and he who thinks of them as different from one another goes to hell. This latter recalls in some measure the true spirit of the Vedas.

In Sādhana, the individual soul being microcosmic representation or reflection of the Śiva (macrocosmic Being), the śakti, the inner power within (kundalinī), leads it when awakened, to higher levels even as a mother does, and finally grants it the experience of the Ultimate Union between Śakti and Śiva within itself and in the Cosmic Vision. Some writers try to make a distinction between Śiva and Paramaśiva, a distinction that has a bearing on the microcosmic and macrocosmic, jīva and Śiva. But through out Śakti is one only, for She leads the jīva for the sake of Śiva and not only for the sake of the individual soul, jīva.²

1. This corresponds to the Advāraka and Sadvāraka śrīṣṭis.

2. *Maṇḍala Brāhmaṇa* Up, I. *Evam sahaśānanda padā mano līyate tadā sām̐bhavī tam eva khecarīm āhuḥ*. According to the major Upaniṣads these are levels or centres of Consciousness above the Ājñā, Above the Ājñā is the Soma and then there is the Amanaska or Ummani and beyond it are the Nāda and Nādānta and Bindu centres.

Śrī Śankārāchārya's most famous Hymn to the Mother, *Saundaryalahiri* has a magnificent description of the Supreme Beauty and Glory of the Mother who is the *causa sui*.¹

"Śiva unless cojoined with Thee will not be able even to move; the great Gods therefore worship Thee." Wherefore even to prostrate before her or to praise her Her grace is required. "With a dust of Thine feet the Creator Brahmā creates the world and a dust of Thine feet alone does Viṣṇu of the form of Serpent of thousand heads support with great strain or effort. That too does Śiva wear for powdering His body. Further that very dust of Thy feet becomes the Light of the Sun; for the Darkness within, for the Ignorant, for the Idiotic (or Inconscients), it becomes the Honey of the Consciousness-flower, for the poor (in wealth or in spirit) it becomes the Wish-giving stone, and it becomes the Tusk of Varāha (The Slayer of Mura) for those who are sinking in the ocean of births (and deaths)." Śrī Śankārāchārya speaks of Her as being worshipped in the form of Śrī-Cakra, and of Kundalinī Śakti moving freely in all the psychonic centres as plexuses within the human body. From Her proceeds all creative poetry, beauty, attractiveness, power of destruction of all evil, disease, fevers, and delight supreme, and attainment of fullest union (*sāyujyapadavim*) She is all things and elements, and always contemplating on the Cidānanda Form of Śiva. Thus the first portion of the *Saundaryalahiri* called the *Āandalahiri*, "Waves of Bliss," is a magnificent description of the Mother's supreme Nature as beyond the *trayi* (the triple). She is however considered to be the spouse of Śiva, Sadāśiva, the Cidānanda, who is spoken of as the Being in

1. Śivassaktyāyukto yadi bhavati śaktaḥ prabhavitum
Naced evam devo na chalu kuśalaḥ spanditum api
Atas tvām ārādhyām harihāravirāḍādibhir api
Prasāntam stotum vā katham akṛtapaṇyāḥ prabhavati.
2. Pavitrikartum naḥ paśupati parādhina hṛdaye
Dayamitrair netrair aruṇadhavala-śyāma-rucibhiḥ
Nadaśoṇo gaṅgā tapanatanayeti dhṛūvam ayam
Trayāṇām tirthāṇām upanayāsi sambhedam anagham. 54.

the Sahasrāra (the thousand petalled-lotus on the crest of the head). She however is also the Mother of Love.

Thus all the stages of ascent are to be achieved by the individual soul who had descended into the formations of Śakti and had become limited and bond and even ignorant, only through the deliberate awakening of the indwelling serpent-like Kundalinī Śakti through some definite processes. Once she has been awakened, she becomes thereafter the real leader and guru and liberator. Indeed it is held by some thinkers that the main aim of Yoga is to link up this Kundalinī with the Śiva, and individual effort is the instrument of this union. On the contrary, it would appear that the most legitimate Yoga is the Yoga achieved by the irresistible Mother within who unites the individual soul and the Śiva in a perfect Unity. The process of awakening of this Kundalinī alone involves individual effort, and beyond this it does not go.

The Śākta view that the macrocosmic Mother (Umā Haimavatī, Kalī, Durgā, Śakti) is identical with the *adhyātmically* realised Kundalinī within the psychonic system of the individual, reveals in a large and profound understanding that the individual body is but a *kṣetra*, the field, wherein the play of delight (*līlā*) between Śiva and His Will personified as Śakti takes place, wherein the witnesses are the devas and devīs personalised as the super-organs of mystic experience and knowings and their powers and the individual soul. The microcosmic representation of the God gradually begins to lose itself in the Absolute Universal and its continuity with all the infinite glory of that Absolute is thus established.

III

Now we turn to the Vaiṣṇava āgamas. There are two schools of Vaiṣṇava āgama, the Vaikhāṇasa and the Pāñca-

1. The Buddhistic tāntrik worship can be looked up in *Sādhanamālā*, Geikwad Series Baroda. And *Sri Vidyārnava* 2 vols. Kashmiri Govt Sanskrit Series,

rātra, and both of them claim a status equal to the Vedic literature. Vaikhānasa literature is a brāhmaṇa literature whereas the Pāñcarātra, is a tantra said to be taught by Nārāyaṇa Himself. The Vaiṣṇava Āgamas accept the Motherhood of God along with the Fatherhood of God, and of course as elsewhere the question of the status of these two forms of the One Divine has engaged much attention. It can be stated however that the Motherhood of God has always held a subordinate position to the Fatherhood of God; love always has been subordinated to Law and Sovereign Being. Power was always subordinated to Truth, though the precise ratio or rationale of subordination has remained undetermined. Yet it was well recognized also that the Mother was equally the creator and sustainer and uplifter of the creation, and these processes more truly belonged to Viṣṇu and His Power or Śakti or inspirer Śrī, Lakṣmī, even when considered in the purāṇic manner.

Śrī or Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa (Viṣṇu) are in closest union entailing insaparable unity. They are two in One, though it must be clear also that this diunity is maintained in all the various functions of the Divine Deity.¹

Śrī or Lakṣmī is Śreyas, the True Good, as distinguished from the Preyas, the worldly goods; though popular imagination had always made Śrī, the goddess of wealth and plenty, and inconstant and indiscriminating, in her distributions of wealth. This later phase more truly belongs to the Earth or Bhū or Bhūta Śakti goddesses and not to Śrī: *śreyas kārini*, or the Kriyā Śakti, the "Sudarsana portion of Lakṣmī."²

The place of Śrī is finely indicated by the four magnificent verses of Śrī Yāmunačārya (A. D. 1000) called the *Catusthloki*. He holds that Śrī is equal in every respect to the Lord being the co-enjoyer of the seat, vehicle, attendants, and whose veil (*yavanikā*) is Māyā, the world-deluder

1. Cf: *Introduction to Pāñcarātra*: O. Schrader, p. 80.

2. *Ibid.*

(Jaganmohini) whose infinite nature is incomprehensible even to the Lord Puruṣottama.¹ She is singly capable of performing all activities *svakiyam viśvadhāriṇā sāmārthyam eva hi svadhā* "Her special province is however Grace, dayā or karuṇa. For it is stated to be her Grace (*iṣat tvat karuṇā nirikṣaṇasudhā sandhukṣaṇāt rakṣyate.....śreyo na hyaravindalocanamanaḥ kāntāprasādāt ṛte.....*". In every from of the Puruṣottama, as Transcendent Lord, as Creating Deity, as incarnating Avatār, as Indwelling Self of all, she too in an appropriate manner is incarnate. The vyūhas of the Mother are thus closely related with the Vyūhas of the Puruṣottama, so much so, the relationship between the Mother and Puruṣottama has been described as *avinābhāva*, inseparability, and comparable to the relationship that subsists between the Moon and His rays, *candra candrikayoriva*.¹ The Mother Śrī is thus the fullest consciousness-power of the Divine Puruṣottama, and in Śrī Vaiṣṇava theology, She is approached as the Mother who leads us as the agent of our ascent to the Lord, which She fulfils through Her illimitable Grace and knowledge. In other words, She is the Teacher and the Way, Even the Vedic Agni is considered to be just leading us to the Mother alone.

The difference between the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava views consists in the fact that the Śakta-Śaiva view grants to Śakti all the power of creativity and being and making and sustaining by making Śiva just a Transcendent *Sat*, Witness. Thus truly in one sense they make "Her the All". The Śrī Vaiṣṇava view, whilst not denying such a possibility, regulates the idea of cosmic Being and action by the original Grace and redemptive interference and Will. Further, whereas the former makes the Mother also veiler or the Ignorance that is the characteristic of the lower Prakṛti, Śrī Vaiṣṇava theology makes Śrī, the Parā-Prakṛti, the most illumined consort of the Self, the inward Love, the Heart of the Divine in and through and above manifestation. Her's is the reign of purity,

1. Cf. *Introduction to Pāñcarātra* : O. Schrader p. 30. Also refer to the chapter on the Pāñcarātra Idea of God

illumination, the *devayāna*, the true and permanent wealth, the love that elevates, transforms and divinises our natures.

The truth is that whatever may be the actual possibility of postulating infinite number of devatās, and even when we could achieve a plausible explanation of the several manifestation belonging to the several planes of being, such as the *bhū*, *bhuvah* and *sva*, and their subdivisions which may account for seven planes above and seven planes below, we know that just as we arrive at a cosmic Puruṣottama, the One Deva who contains and manifests innumerable forms. His eternal Being, called the several devas and devīs, even so, we must finally arrive at one primordial Mother-power who manifests Herself in manifold ways. We have to note that Śaktaism was metaphysically postulating that the One primal śakti descended into the lower strands of the ignorant world of inconscient matter or rather made for the possibility of the infinite incorruptible Śiva, the One Saccidānanda Being appearing as if ignorant and inconscient, bond and miserable. Whatever may be the explanation, whether we hold that the transcendent Mother-Power, had, on the one hand, preserved Her sovereign Cidānanda and remained the higher Mother, and on the other, projected a portion of Herself into the Ignorance for play and thus appears in the form of Nature, the Prakṛti of the Sāmkhyas, the Māyā of the Māyāvādins, in our estimate it is necessary to hold that there are two primal splits, one descending movement seen as the Māyā, Prakṛti, Avidyā, which whilst being innately pure consciousness is appearing as Ignorance, limitation, and bondage, *pāśa*, whilst the other split remains the eternal source, the eternal continuity of the transcendental, the height and the true altitude of Being, which is the eternal immortal sense of the projected finity and ignorance, which the ignorance cannot know, but which in the search for liberation the individual feels to be the true Mother.

The Vaiṣṇava view also postulates Bhū-devī, the Ṛg Vedic Pṛthivī, Mother-earth, and considers that she too is an

eternal, *nitya*, but she is the presiding deity of the earth, not the earth itself. But the status of this Bhū-devī in the Veda has been shewn to be rather varying and all that we can see is that Bhū-devī¹ is in fact the Supreme Power in her aspect of presiding deity of the creatures in evolution, and is the leader of the souls in her own dark inconscient manner. If Bhū is the first or terrestrial mother, Śrī is the second mother, our spiritual Mother, and both are indeed inseparably united in the Divine. Śrī Vaiṣṇava thinkers however do not equate this twofold Mother, as Bhū² and Śrī with the Diti and Aditi, for that to them is not the ultimate truth of the Bhū who is stated to be the giver of the plenty. Bhū is not prepared to tolerate the asura any more than Śrī, but it may be stated that She is the visible giver of *Preyas* when Śrī has been attained. Any account of the Bhū-devī will have to be speculative in Vaiṣṇava Theology. We can however point out here that Sītā of Rāmāyaṇa and Śrī Āṇḍāl are considered to be children of Earth, amśas of Bhū-devī, partial manifestations of Bhū-devī. It is stated in the Vaikhāṇasa and Viṣṇu Purāṇa (I. 9. 144) that Bhū devī was herself an incarnation of Śrī, during the incarnation of Parāśurāma, the celibate.

Thus it is clear that in the fullest understanding of the Divine Nature of the Mother we have to conceive of the twofoldness of the Divine as the Mother of the Transcendent World and as the Mother of the Created world of līlā. And the Mother in the one is the apparent ignorance driving us in

1. Bhū may considered to be the Bhūta Śakti of Lakṣmī

2. Bhū or Pṛithivī: RV. V 84; AV. XII. RV. I. 164. 27. Gṛhya Sūtras Gobhila Gṛhya III. 7. 3: Aśvalāyana Gṛhya II. 1. 15. Sankhyāyana IV. 15 Pāraskara II. 14. 9; Apastamba XVIII. 5, & XIX. 22. cf. O. C. Gangoly; Earth Goddess I. H. Q. XIX. 1.

2. Rāghavate "bhavat sītā rukminī kṛṣṇajanmanī

Anyeṣu cāvatareṣu viṣṇoreṣa "nāpāyanī. 1.9.44.

Devatve devadeheyam manuṣyātve ca mānuṣi

Punaśca padmā sambhūtādiyo 'bhud yathā hariḥ

Yadā ca bhāgava rāmas tadā 'dhūd dhārini.....

evolution towards the Mother Beyond, the Śreyas. No less in Ignorance than in knowledge, the Purpose of Mother is the experience of that Supreme Illimitable Being of the Puruṣottama. To us the Līlā appears as the play of Avidyā so long as we know not the Mother beyond. For as the great Āḷvar Śāthakopa stated (in the *Tiruvāśariyam*) we play with the doll-image of the Mother when she herself is with us. When therefore we learn to know the Mother as even behind the veil of Her māyā, then we begin to drop off these play things and see in Her the One in the triune. The third form of the Mother is called Nīlā, (*Medhā Sūkta* in the Yajur Veda is stated to refer to Nīlā) Black Dark Mother, beyond all our knowings and the ineffable transcendent Being in whom is wrapt the Divine Kṛṣṇa ever in cosmic ecstasy.¹ She is Grace who hides from God the Faults of devotees.

In the Yoga of Śrī-Vaiṣṇavism in general, there is no place for the dionysic worships of Kālī or the pure power-aspect. Śrī Vaiṣṇavism makes the Mother the agent of our transformation on Sātvik lines as Mahā-Lakṣmī or Śrī who ever resides in the Supreme Puruṣa, Puruṣottama, Nārāyaṇa or Viṣṇu, the omnipervader. God is the Means (*upāya*) and the Goal (*Upēya*) and Mother is the agent, the puruṣakāra. Purity is the essence of the yoga of surrender; *prapatti* or *saraṇāgati*, and Mother's acceptance of the soul and the agency are possible only under conditions of purest *sattva*, harmony. The ascending soul should know that *sattva* has more power and efficacy and everlasting delight than the rajasic or vital power. The transformation of the Mother from the pure power-aspect into the Mother of Beauty and Light and Purity is the transformation that has entailed the growth of the concept of Ahimsa and benevolent

1. Nīlātungaṣṭhanagiritatī sūptam nṛbodhya kṛṣṇam
Pārārthyam svam śrūtīśatasiddham adhyāpayantī...

(Taniyan Sloka of St. Āṇḍal.)

cf. *Dayāśataka* 8: Venkaṭanātha

Nīlāmayatu mām Nīlā yadbhogapaṭalair dhruvam
Bhāvitam Śrīnivāsasya bhaktadoṣeṣvadarśanam.

love even to the enemies, and the realisation that God is indeed in all beings without any difference. Man's privilege and unique quality consists not merely in his intellectual abilities but more in his having the heart of sympathy and *karuṇa* or love. But the transcendent nature is such that She has no yet become the vital force in the ordinary life of mankind. Śrī Rāmānuja knew that man cannot take heaven by violence. The worship of Kālī or titan deity, though it may well be a truth that cannot be forgotten in the nature of the deity as such, will, in the end, defeat the end of realisation of God in all and in each.¹ But more than all, the one significant feature that has to be noted is that the Mother is the Self of all creatures even as the Puruṣottama is the Self of all creatures, and together they lead and transform the soul; and we the souls form their bodies. We are *śeṣas*.¹ He along with She is the *Śeṣi*. More and more our *sādhana* should incline towards the realisation that Mother is the soul of our bodies and that She with Her infinite wisdom and love will be the agency of our transformation. Though at the beginning of the *Sādhana* She may appear (even as the Divine Puruṣottama) as above and even outside, gradually She will be felt within the soul. She then uplifts the soul and makes it realise that it has a supreme freedom of moving with Her to the domains of infinite Being and *ipso facto* to the domains of the Supreme Puruṣottama. Surrender means quiet but determinate offering of all of one's activities to the Divine Mother and Lord who together will grant the highest liberation. It is then alone we shall be able to realise the unity of the triple or multiple manifestations of the Mother. Even as in the case of Vedic godheads, where the several gods are arranged in a hierarchy due to planal activities, and therefore appear to be subordinated to those of the higher planes, here the goddesses being but counterparts (*sahadharma-cārini-s*) of the gods are hierarchically arranged as belonging to several planes. The

1. Cf. My articles "Evolution of the Concept of *Śeṣa*" in the B. C. Law commemoration volume 1945 and "Śrī Rāmānuja's Philosophy of Society." *Vedānta Kesari*, 1948.

Highest enfolds all gods and goddesses and thus becomes the Primary Cause of all, for into Him all these are withdrawn. The *Paratattva-niṣkarṣa* means only this Supreme Determination of who the Highest Person is whose manifold activities and manifestations all these are. The attainment of that Person who is universal without being abstract, who is One without refuting the manifold and multiplicity which are but His own projections of His inherent richness of content is the one thing that will make for integral living. The *vyūhas* of the Infinite Being are indeed personalities of that One Being who is the integral Saccidānanda ; and each of these personalities of the One is an integral expression of that Rich Oneness. The gods and goddesses on the contrary are, in later thinking, reduced to the level of functionaries, even like souls which have each a station and a duty, *dharma* and *loka*. Originally the gods and the *vyūhas* might have been one, but later on due to the realisation that all the godheads or gods must be held together, their Oneness was expressed by the term *Vyūha*, the presiding Integral Deity of each plane. This entailed the rejection of most of the goddesses from being the *vyūha* of the Supreme Integral Mother, and thus they became just bodies of the Mother even like the souls. That is why later we find that souls are described as belonging to several *jātis*, classes, like god, man, animal, plant and mineral according to the kind of body inhabited. And even the gods are said to be bond by karma ; that is, they no longer play the role of *jīvanmuktas* but only *baddhas* (bond to cosmic duty) who have to get out of *samsāra* (creative *līlā*). Śrī thus becomes the Supreme Mother, an agent of release even for the Gods and goddesses, even as Nārāyaṇa-Viṣṇu becomes the Goal and Means for the release of the gods and goddesses. The purāṇa-level of thinking had arrived at this stage, for the *mukta* or the liberated soul passes beyond the gods and

1. *Śrī Sūkta Bhāṣya* : Nanjiyar ; *sarvasurāsura-manuṣya-munīndrīdībhīr lakṣaṇīyam prārthanīyam : sarvaśāstavya-nimittabhūta divya lakṣaṇa-sambhannam vā.*

goddesses to the abode of the One, Supreme Being with Śrī (the Diunity).

According to Śrī Vaiṣṇavism therefore there are three Divine forms of the one Mother namely Bhūdevī, Nīlādevī and Śrīdevī.

Sri Aurobindo's Vision of the Mother.

Sri Aurobindo's concept or rather vision of the Mother is an attempt at an integral exposition and as such includes every phases of the Vedic, Brāhmaṇic, Upaniṣadic, tāntric and Vaiṣṇava conceptions. His valuable exposition about the integral relationship of the several powers of the one Mother of Grace and Supramental Being, *saccidānanda-mayī*, reveals the reality of the several personalities of the Mother in several planes of consciousness, involved as well as evolved and transcendent. The Mother is the unveiled eternal consciousness force (*cit-śakti*) of the Original Being (*sat*) and may indeed be described as the Reality in dynamic existence. She truly is superior even to the highest manifestation of herself, *maheśvarī*, the supramental Being of calm, benignity, inexhaustible compassion and sovereign majesty, who is beyond the reaches of mortal man's highest intuition. What even the highest human intellect or even awakened intuition knows are but three of her forms. The first is *Mahālakṣmī*, the Mother of Poise, Beauty Harmony, Rhythm, opulence and captivating Grace, the *śatva* Śrī, if we may so speak of this revelation of the Mother to the purified vision and understanding. She can brook no impurity and stands no ill or evil and force. She can only be known and adored by worshippers of absolute Beauty. The second form amenable to human vision, is *Mahākālī*, a nearer mother of supramental strength, power, swiftness and a world-quaking force, intolerent of vice, a very form of time's destructive power. The worshippers of arbitrary power attain her but hard is her rule and violent the catastrophe that normally overtakes the egoistic worshipper of hers. She may be

represented as the *rajas śakti*. The third form amenable to the purified vision of man is Mahāsarasvatī, who is the supramental consciousness endowed with profound capacity for intimate knowledge, flawless work, quiet and exact perfection in all things and is patience. She forges ahead amidst the vilest and the most exalted men. These are all supramental beings and are called the four supernals, the Mother of Four personalities projected out of Her Infinite and Descending Grace working integrally on the four planes of awakened intelligence and dedicated being. Mahākālī is the supramental omniscient Will, Mahālakṣmī is Omnipotent Knowledge, whereas Mahāsarasvatī works in and through the three lower planes of Ignorance namely the mental, the vital and the physical.¹

"The four aspects of the Mother, four of her leading Powers and Personalities have stood in her guidance of this Universe...Wisdom, Strength, Harmony, Perfections are their several attributes...To the four we give the four great names, Maheśvari, Mahākālī, Mahālakṣmī, Mahāsarasvatī" says Sri Aurobindo.² Mother's powers are however not exhausted by these four personalities. There are infinities in Her that surpass all understanding. Mother is the principle of the large evolution of man, for it is indeed She who is descending into the creatures and grants them the wisdom to see the truth and elect to follow it, the will to move, even alone to the great evolution and the power of frenzy, It is she who guides man by the delicate perception of the ideal of harmony, and beauty; and it is she again who makes him profoundly dissatisfied with mere truth, power, or even beauty and leads us to the realisation of Perfection which is Truth, Power, Beauty, and their fullest expression. The liberation which the Mother achieves for man is thus the liberation from Ignorance, liberation from restriction and

1. They correspond to the Vedic Gayātrī, Śrīvitrī and Sarasvatī, the Turya being the Maheśvari. cf. *Sāṅdilya*, Up. I.

2. *Mother*. pp. 48-50.

limitation, liberation from disharmony and struggle and competition, and false rhythms, and lastly liberation from the sense of incompleteness.² This is the meaning of the ultimate transcendent destiny. Thus the Mother is the agent of our transformation, *puruṣakāra* to use the language of Śrī Vaiṣṇavism, and without Her descending grace nothing whatsoever can occur. Sri Aurobindo's exquisite representation of the multiplanal nature of Mother, as Mahāsarasvatī, Mahākālī, Mahālakṣmī and Maheśvarī, reveals the corresponding need for the aspiration of man to be truthful, faithful and loving and whole.¹ The two things absolutely needed in the Yoga of Divine Evolution are the aspiring integral offering of the soul and the descending integral Grace of the Mother, an integral offering and an integral acceptance and finally indwelling which leads to the divinisation which may pass through the stages of gradual sublimation through the activities of the Mother's fourfold nature in the offered up *adhara* or body-life-and-mind-and-psychic being. Her's is the transmuting work, and indeed She is the Philosopher's or rather the Mystic's or Pūrṇa-Yogin's Stone.

The importance of the Mother to our spiritual experience is to be gathered from the stress laid on the nature of Grace, Dayā or Karuṇa, much more than on the other aspects of the nature of Deity. This at least is the importance in the earlier schools of theology, especially in the Śrī Vaiṣṇava and Tāntrika. But that is not the only reason for her greatness and the need in Sri Aurobindo's philosophy. The Mother works through the supermind, integrally making effective the triune qualities of the Absolute *Sat Cit* and *Ānanda* and working out the integral unity of the Knowing Subject, known Object and knowledge.³ It may be urged that when we can

1. cf. *Introduction to Pāñcarātra*: O. Sphrader, p. 62 note 3.

Māyā Śakti is called Śakti, Bhagavat Śakti, Mūla prakṛti, Śāśvavidyā or Vidyā, and also Mahālakṣmī, Maheśvarī, Bhadrakālī, We can see that unlike as in Āgama (Lakṣmī Tantra), in Sri Aurobindo's philosophy these are powers of the Supermind.

2. *Life Divine*, Vol. II, pp. 31 ff.

easily attain the Saccidānanda without this mediation of the Supermind we need not resort to this entity or power of the Saccidānanda. It is true also that some persons have been able to achieve this Absolute Saccidānanda Consciousness and they have once and for all time given up the manifestation. At least it appears¹ to be a Heaven from which we need not return at all, Identity having been achieved absolutely and finally. But that is not the goal nor Evolution or is it utterly desirable. The Saccidānanda has a secret mystery in the creative action wherein it seeks to manifest its innate and supreme secret of multiplicity in terms of its own large identity without throwing all these into the whirl of opposition or even contrariety. Sri Aurobindo sees that the power by which we can gain this unity of multiplicity without compromise or contradiction lies only in the Supermind, the pure vehicle of the Mother, Cit-Śakti in its integral unity. It is the Mother who can take up the entire lower forms of manifestation, matter, life and mind and even the overmind and mould them in the pattern of the significant unity. In that or in Her all things become significantly real, for all these are but real-ideas projected from Her substance by Being. That is the reason why we call that the Mother. But even this Mother can never be touched unless man abandons for ever the mind, the instrument of his present knowings, and passes into the Silence of the pure self, the *caitya-puruṣa* (the psychic Being). That is why Sri Aurobindo points out the necessity of a total surrender to the descending Supramental Power, four-fold in its downward movement, and capable of accepting the soul's surrenders and transforming or raising its consciousness and will and delight natures. Total surrender thus really is a stepping stone to the entry into the silence of the pure Self, and prepares for the action and therefore recognition and a awareness of the Mother in

1. I believe that rebirth will be enforced on every being, ray or fulguration so long as it does not grasp the Saccidānanda in its limits and in its foundational triunity. And though one may achieve by a sheer jump or leap the Absolute Identity, its own otherness will enforce a step down into experience of its multiplicity in its unity.

the descending creative movement of the Supermind. Thus the Mother is not merely an agent of our transformation, not merely again the mere mediating eminence which leads us to the summit of Saccidānanda as such, from the mental and the overmental (intuitive) stages; she is indeed a different kind of Consciousness in every way from the mental. That is the reason why we should guard against the explanations normally given that the so-called supermind is but a more intensive consciousness or a more wide awake skill in intellect 'born out of thinking hard.' There is no shading off of the several levels into one another here, for the supermind itself, though interpenetrative in its unified vision and awareness, is yet not merely our consciousness, mental and overmental; it is too universal to be private, too fundamentally and integrally united and inseparably so united to be just a composing and synthesising activity. This is the meaning of *avinābhāva*, and it is through the Mother alone we can not merely understand that truth of Reality but also enter into the Joy of its manifestation, which is unfortunately denied to us who are of the mental level, but is also denied to many who have lost themselves in the glamour of the Nirguṇa, which is but one aspect or side of the Absolute Divine. Mother grants not merely the awareness of the infinite determinations and processes and powers in their integral fusion and organic rhythm but also the awareness of the transcendence of the Absolute over all these in its illimitable puissance.

Śrī Rāmānuja's analysis of the three forms of the Mother reveals her action as consisting in supporting the physical leading to the Divine and granting the Divine to the soul. Śrī Aurobindo's analysis shows her evolution any action of super-mentalisation of the organic.

The Divine and Mother and Maya.

In this chapter I shall consider more fully the nature of the relationship between the Mother (Śakti) and the Divine Person is one of the most inexplicable and inexpressible in theologic Philosophy. Intellectual understanding of the relationship could only lead up to analogical description. It can only apply within limits. The relationship between the finite and the infinite is difficult to describe; much more so in the case of infinities, and it appears that both the Divine Person and the Mother are infinities.

Pāñcarātra holds that the relationship between the Divine and Mother is one of connection or inherence like that of an attribute and its bearer (*dharma dharmi sambandha*), I-ness and I (*ahanta* and *aham*), moon and moonshine, sunshine and sun. The Viśiṣṭādvaita of Śrī Rāmānuja claims that the Mother is also a Person like the Divine, though she is like the moonshine to the Moon and the sunshine to the Sun. The difficulty of this position would become apparent as we proceed to find out what other categories are of the same sort. Whilst it is conceivable that Śakti and Śaktimān can be inseparable, it becomes difficult to believe that śakti could develop a unique activity of her own though under the sovereign permission of the Supreme. Thus all the systems of thought that uphold the theory of Śakti or Mother and her inseparable relationship with the Absolute will have to explain at length the relationship more clearly than they have been able to do. Diunity is the truth. But How?

(1) The Supreme Lord (Nārāyaṇa) is Consciousness, Perfect and whole, *saccidānanda*.¹ He has consciousness that is also perfect and whole. The former is known as *svarūpa-nirūpita-guṇa*, whilst the second is known as *nirūpita-svarūpa-viśeṣaṇa* or *dharma-bhūta-jñāna*. The former is also

known as *dharmi-bhūta-jñāna* or substantive consciousness. In the case of Supreme Lord, these two are Infinite, Integral, Perfect and Eternal, that is undergoing no changes such as limitation or restriction or conditioning, either by His own will or by means of others, since there are none such.

(2) Any other Infinite Being will therefore be in the former, co-existing and co-expansive and co-conscious. It may therefore be considered to be non-different from the former, being indistinguishable. In this explanation, the difference between the Śakti and Śaktimātrā or Consciousness-Force and Consciousness consists in the fact that the one is the source and foundation of the other.

(3) As against the former view, it may be said that if we accept that they are related to each other as Moon is to his rays, then we may be able to explain the relationship perhaps more satisfactorily, provided we consider that the rays can each have a personality of its own, independent of or subordinate to or co-existent with the Moon, their source. It is however held by almost all tāntriks that the real doer and active agent of all activities is the (Śakti or Lakṣmī,) the the executer of all activities, who is present nascently in the Divine Infinite.

(4) To understand this position it would be necessary to enter into the general nature of the attributive or functional Consciousness (*dharmā-bhūta-jñāna*) which partakes to a certain extent of the nature of the rays. *Dharmā-bhūta jñāna* is essentially a cognitive function of the Divine as also of the individual souls; and this cognitive function of the latter could in liberation become co-extensive with that of the Divine. *Jñāna-sāmya* or equality with Divine cogniscience is affirmed in the scriptures that deal with the nature of the freed soul.

(5) The nature of the Divine is more than the cognitive, even as is the case with the individual souls. It is not only omniscient but also omnipotent and omnipervasive and, above all, omnibeneficent. The functions of these orders are there-

fore of the same kind as the first mentioned. They may be called *dharma-bhūta-śaktis*. It may, however, be remarked that there is recognized a great difference between the souls and the cognitive consciousness in that the cognitive consciousness is luminous but not self-luminous, whereas the souls are self-luminous centres even when they are also modes of the Divine. These souls can become and are the bodies of God in so far as they could be utilised, controlled, sustained and enjoyed by the Divine for His own occult purposes. The consciousness belonging to the functional order is not an object of enjoyment, though it is an instrument of enjoyment. This preliminary statement seems to be necessitated by the fact that *Māyā* is declared to be a power of the Divine, though a lower one, than the other power known as the Mother, the beneficent power and personality of the Divine Himself.¹ As Sri Aurobindo has written "Divine *Māyā* is the knowledge of the truth of things, its essence, law, operation which the gods possess and on which they found their own eternal action and creation and their building of their powers in the human beings." In one sense, it appears to be the *Ṛta* of the Veda, the Divine Law, the *satyadharma*, the sovereign function of Divine Existence. Different from this is the *adaivi* *Māyā* which is said to be that which causes false mental forms and appearances. It appears as a mysterious tremendum which deludes the many whilst it remains or is almost nonexistent in respect of the One. According to Śankara, he who believes that the many are real is ruined by it, whereas he who believes the many to be non-existent or does not perceive anywhere difference or manyness, is superior to it, and indeed for such a person it does not exist. If any type of relationship is to be stated to exist between these two *māyās*, it might be said to be one of opposition. They are dialectical opposites. *Māyā*, therefore is inexpressible, *anirvacanīya*.¹ But other systems of thought whilst perhaps conceding that *Māyā*, whether Divine or lower, is inexpressible, do not consider it to be a derealiser. It is creativity, the Knowledge-

Will aspect of Divine Nature that exceeds the bounds of all types of possibility conjectured by the intellect of man or even by Gods. It is also true in that it is a fundamental inseparable attribute of Divine Nature and Existence.¹

Māyā is inevitably linked up with the notion of Creative Existence or Līlā. Speaking about Creativity, Dr. A. N. Whitehead says "Creativity is the pure notion of activity conditioned by the objective immortality of the world....It is the ultimate notion of the, highest generality at the base of actuality. It cannot be characterised because all characters are more special than itself." He proceeds to state that "Neither God nor the world reach static completion. Both are in the grip of the ultimate metaphysical ground, the creative advance into novelty." But this makes the category of process more ultimate than Perfection. But this, as the Viśiṣṭādvaitic teachers and other tāntrika writers and Sri Anubindo point out, is one portion of the Divine, and an inferior portion, though the most important for creation and exhibition of the eternal possibility of the Absolute which alone can be the true metaphysical ground of all process and creative advance into Novelty. There are other manifestations of the 'līlāic' activity, such as the redemptive aspect, the Mother aspect and avatār-aspect. The descending Grace of the informing eternal Omniscience enters into the scheme of His own Māyā with essential Freedom and superiority, everywhere and everywhen, so that souls caught up in the wonder that is Māyā, may be rescued from its enchanting grip and limitations and exceed it. The question is whether, as Dr. Whitehead points out, we should grant to His Creativity as the most abstract notion for Māyā, a status higher than Deity or God. As we have pointed out, the view taken by Viśiṣṭādvaita is that Māyā as mere creative power is subordinate to the will of the Divine, and as such is not to

1. Cf. *Bh. Gītā* XI. 14 for a description of the mind-reeling nature of Divine Vibhūti, and XVIII. 61 and Cf. *Kaṭha* Up. I, iii. 1 & *Vedānta Sūtras*, A. N. Whitehead places creativity above the Deity.

be placed above the Divine. A second point that might be mentioned here is that Māya is a real causal category and, even as the dreams are real, the creations of the Divine for the sake of subjective experience¹ are to be considered to be real activity of the Divine alone. If indeed we have to place or arrange these powers or *dharma*s or functions of the Divine in some hierarchical manner, it would be necessary to place supreme goodness or redemptive power, Dayā or Śrī, higher than Māyā. It is however clear that without Māyā, the world-process would not be, nor the manifest wonder of it. It is also clear that the lower power of creativity, that is, creativity within the limits of space-time-causality, may ultimately derive its luminous but veiled ability and intelligence from something that is transcendent to the space-time-causal schemes and delimitations of Ignorance, from something that is supernal. But to that supernal power and being these space-time-causal schemes would not be limitations or plunges into ignorances, but free and unrestricted fields of freedom, and as such Play. Māyā would then reveal the greatness (*mahatva* and *bṛhatva*) of God and subtly inform the transcending infinities of His abundant Nature, described by Whitehead as 'creative advance into novelty.'

The third aspect, similar to the *dharma-bhūta-jñāna* and *dharma-bhūta-śakti*, is the Ānanda or delight-aspect of God's enjoyment of the universe is as dynamic an experience as the other two. This is the affective knowing or affective aspect.

But there is a fundamental point that has to be considered ere we proceed further. It is the question whether we can ever consider these *dharma*s or functions as conscious or self-conscious. Viśiṣṭādvaita is definitely against imputing any consciousness or self-consciousness to the *dharma-bhūta-jñāna*. Nor can it therefore be a *śarīra* or body, because it is

1. cf. My 'Ramanuja's Theory of Knowledge' Appendix II on Dreams,

the instrument of a self in enjoying or knowing or controlling a body rather than itself a body. To affirm any such nature would only lead to infinite regress. *Dharma-bhūta-jñāna* and therefore *dharma-bhūta-śakti* and *ānanda* are *acit* (insentient). "It gets the name of conscient (*cit-śabda*) because of having the form of knowledge: it gets the name of inconscient since it is not the substrate of any other consciousness" says Venkaṭanātha.

This defect may seriously infect theories which postulate the triple śaktis such as *cit-śakti*, *kriyā-śakti*, and *jñāna-śakti* of the Divine. These would suffer from the serious fault of being considered to be *acit*, inconscient, and like prakṛti, which is stated to be something belonging to the category of bondage (*pāśa*). Equally any attempts to make Mother a śakti of the Divine involve this essential logical difficulty. That is why Śrī Rāmānuja and Venkaṭanātha have definitely ruled out the attributive or functional view of the Mother.¹ Thus while *dharma-bhūta-jñāna* and even *Māyā* may be classed as inconscients (*acit*), it would be difficult to place the Mother in this category. It is however clear that we are yet trying to find out the further possibilities of the functional activities of the Divine. Despite the inseparability of these dharma from the Divine, and there are undoubtedly the three infinities which make the universe what it is and make God in relation to it its Omniscient, Omnipotent and Sole Enjoyer, these cannot be the Mother. These may however be the attributes of the Mother. The Mother like God is a Person, and if She were

1. For the view in Buddhistic Iconography see Ananda K. Coomaraswamy's *Elements of Buddhist Iconography* p. 22. "Śrī Lakṣmī is essentially Aditi, Prakṛti, Māyā, Apsarasa, Urvaśī, the Waters, all the possibilities of existences, substantially personified. The lotus is pre-eminently hers, because she is the Lotus of the Earth, at once the source and support of all existences, Vasudhā or Vasudharā; that is, with respect to their substance as the Supernal Sun in respect to their form." As will be seen in the same work, Śrī typifies the highest concept of value along with Agni, Viṣṇu Skamba, Sun and Aśvattha. Vaiṣṇava theology does not accept the identification of Lakṣmī with Māyā. Śrī is Aditi, Bhū is the soul of Prakṛti.

that there arises to problem the dual personality of the One Divine. It is a transcendental Diunity unlike Māyā. Further the concept of Mother-personality means the possession of Grace. It is Grace or Providence or Beneficence that distinguishes the divine from the undivine. And that is why the relationship between the Motherhood and the Divine Godhead is one of inseparable co-existence and perhaps even identity, for in them there are not as St. Augustine said of the Holy Trinity of Christian Theology "not three lives but one life; not three minds but one mind, not three substances but one substance." Mother has all the qualities in almost an identical manner as the Divine, namely, of pervading everywhere, of descending into correlated forms into the terrestrial scheme of things, and She has her vyūhas or manifestations corresponding to those of the Divine Himself.

The vyūhas or personalities of the Divine are usually stated to be four: Vāsudeva, Saṃkarṣaṇa, Pradhymna and Aniruddha. Pāñcarātra theology holds that the Divine in His fullness has six qualities (*śaḍguṇa*) of aiśvarya, (Lordship), bala (strength), Vīrya (courage). Tejas (light) Śakti (power of māyā) and Jñāna (supramental knowledge). The three personalities of Saṃkarṣaṇa, Pradhymna and Aniruddha has each a pair of qualities, whilst Vāsudeva has all the six qualities. These qualities are all beneficent. Even as the Divine has these six qualities, the Īśvari Śrī or Mother has these and she too has three personalities known as Mahālakṣmī, Mahāvidyā and Mahākālī according to the Lakṣmī Tantra.¹ The Śāṇḍilya Upaniṣad speaks of Gāyatrī, Sāvitrī and Sarasvatī as the three personalities (vyūhas) of the Mother; the first is Swan-mounted, the second is Garuda-mounted, and the third is Bull-mounted. The Vaikhāṇasa Āgama thinks that these three are the Yoga-lakṣmī, Bhoga-lakṣmī, and the Viralakṣmī. All these forms thus correspond to the Divine nature of Saccidānanda.

1. *Lakṣmī Tantra*: IL 17; IL Mff, VII 13; IV. 67; VI. 18-19.

One more point that might be noted is that the other is not a finite soul but the Inner dweller Immortal. Whilst She is Pūrṇa and Person like the Divine, she is yet His subordinate, *dampatī*, or *patnī*, co-sharer. As such She is not like the finite soul just a thing existing for the pure enjoyment of the Divine, being supported and controlled by Him, though all these are true of her as of the souls. Nor is She just an eternally free soul (*nityamukta* soul). She is capable of indwelling in all creatures as their self even like the Divine. She is the mediatrix, the *puruṣakāra* and thus is most near and dear to the soul. She is love beneficent, kind, central to the Divine Nature. She is the Teacher and Leader of Men to Him, the immortal and transcendent Father.

2. There are some Śākta writers who figure the Divine as Ardhānārī that is half-mother and half-father perhaps basing their idea on the passage *ekameva tvam mātaram ca pitaramca*. or following Kālidāsa's opening śloka of his *Raghuvamśa*]. This same relationship is again stated to be identical with the relationship between the body and the soul, Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī and *Brahmā-sarasvatī* (*avinābhāva*).

X

God in the Philosophy of Ramanuja.

God in the philosophy of Śrī Rāmānuja is not merely transcendent and immanent to the universe but is also the redemptive Creator. The pantheistic account of the Deity given by Advaita and Bhedābheda and the deistic account of the Dvaita are mediated by Rāmānuja through his original conception of the organic relation of the Deity with the Universe. The theism of Rāmānuja claims to implement the truth of the Deity as immanent as pervading everywhere and at all times, and transcendent as Governor and Enjoyer. His 'otherness' in respect of the created is finely and superbly represented by His unique descents into His creatures and Creation for purposes of greatest value and worth to mankind and evolution, which is graciously and felicitously described as Līlā. The most important fact about the world and man is organism. The capital fact about God is that He is the Self of the organism. The organism (or body) is capable of two different states, namely, a causal subtle state and an effectual gross state, and in both the states, the Self is God, for He it is who determines the transition from the subtle to the gross. But He is not tainted by these processes in the sense that He is not limited or circumscribed or determined by the World or His body. The self cannot be a self unless it is free and potent enough to control its body, knows it so thoroughly that it can use it for its own free and sovereign purposes. Thus we find that Śrī Rāmānuja finds it necessary to determine the nature of the relationship that subsists eternally between the Self and its body. In doing so he defines the nature of a body. He describes the body as "that entity (*dravya*) which a conscious entity is capable of completely controlling and supporting for its own purposes,

and whose nature consists in being a source of glorification to that conscious entity."¹

This definition firstly does not limit the body in respect of its nature; it can be matter or spirit. That is the intention behind the use of the word whichever substance, (*yaddravyam*). The Upaniṣads as well as the *Aṃśādhi Karaṇa* of the *Vedānta Sūtras* (II. iii. 42. 52) have clearly shown that the souls and matter are the body of Brahman.² The *Ahikūṇḍalāḍhikaraṇa* (III. ii. 26-29) definitely ascribes the status of body to the material world. Even though souls and matter are Its body, their natures, namely, ignorance or materiality do not affect the Divine. This fact is affirmed by the actual and ever existent power of the Divine, which they implicitly obey. No limitation or impediments ever stand in the way of their being controlled, sustained, supported and enjoyed by the Supreme Spirit.

Venkatānātha expands the definition given by Rāmānuja and states that "Any substance which, in a given state and as long as it is, is incapable of being unrelated to a conscious entity, and which substance, in respect of its own activities of which it is capable, has the nature of being normally determined by the latter, such a substance, in that state, is the body of that conscious entity."³ Here Venkatānātha clearly points out that only substances not non-substances like mere consciousness which is but a *dharma* or characteristic function of the soul, and qualities and activities (*karma*) can be treated as bodies. Secondly, being more critical, he points out that it would not suffice to say that

1. *Sri Bhāṣya* II. i. 9: *yasya cetanasya yaddravyam sarvātmanā svārthe nyanantū ākārayatū ca śakyam tapohesatāṅka svarūpamāṇa tat tasya śarīram*. Several definitions of the body are given by Vaiśeṣika and other schools which are all shown to suffer from narrowness. The *Garbha Up.* defines *śarīra* thus: "because three fires, *kaśatāgni*, *darsanāgni* and *jñānāgni* reside in it (*brāyante*)." This definition is also narrow, since it refers to mere residence.

2. *Ch. Up.* XII, 6.: B, *Gītā*, XV. 7.

3. *Nyāya Siddhāntjanam*. *Yasya cetanasya yadavastham dravyam yavatattam asambhādhānarham avasakyē nyanantavyasabdhāvam, tadavastham tasya śarīram*, p. 100.

a body is a body at all times ; that is to say, even when it is unrelated to the self or soul, as indeed there are cases when the body is separated from the soul on death. A body is a body only as long as there is an indwelling soul within. That is why the words *yāvatsattam* have been introduced (as long as it is). The third point is, that the body should be something that is very closely related to the soul or the conscient entity of which it is said to be the body. This is the relation of inseparable conjunction or relationship (*apṛthaksiddha-viśeṣanāta*) which is the cardinal feature about the relationship between God and the world and God and the souls. They are thus the bodies of God. Now the full nature of the body will not be clear unless as Rāmānuja points out the body is being supported not for the sake of the body, but for the sake of the purposes of that Soul (*svārthe*). It is clear that Venkaṭanatha in his definition of the body does not mention this teleological independence or supremacy which points out that the ends of Brahman or God are not ends dictated by the world or the souls in any manner. God's own purposes are certainly not purposes of achievement, since He does not need anything, for in Him all are fulfilled and complete. What then can be the purposes of God? A body as defined in relation to the souls which are limited and struggling to gain the fourfold ends of life such as *dharma-artha-kāma-mokṣa*, can be said to have some *prayojana*, or goal beyond them, and therefore have some *svārtha* own purposes. But it is clearly indicated that the body should exist for His glorification. Now what is the purpose or what are the purposes which God intends to realise in the universe if it be not for the sake of any of their ends. This is answered by the *Prayojanavārttvādhikaraṇa* (II. i. 32-36). Firstly, as in the case of the world, creation has only *līlā* for its purpose. (II. i. 33). It is God's absolute delight, manifesting itself as play (*kṛidā*), that is facilely played and wonderfully manifesting His Nature. The differences in the world, it is pointed out, do not reveal any partiality on the part of the Supreme; they are

referable to the souls who have been in *samsāra* from beginningless time and have gained the fruits of their good and evil deeds. God has no ulterior ends to gain and His creative and other activities do not possess the specific need to achieve anything but to express His delight. At any rate the purpose is certainly not interest either in respect of Himself or in respect of the souls or material universe. If at all we have to state it as *svārtha*, the manifestation of His body composed of the conscient souls and inconscient matter, is enjoyable to Himself. It is just possible that the delight may also be shared by the creatures, but it would not be an end or aim of the creative process. It exists primarily for the Divine and essentially for His delight. Rāmānuja's definition firstly declares that the aims and ends are God's and the souls and all others exist also as sources of glorification of Him (*śeṣataikasvarūpam*). The whole Reality is a living Reality having eternally God as Self.

*Śeṣatva*¹ of the individual souls and the world to the Deity is also an important aspect of the definition of the body. The glorification of God is the end and aim of souls. The distinction is usually made that this *śeṣatva* is *dāsatva* in respect of the conscient soul, as apparently the main feature of a good servant is to offer praise to the Lord for everything that is done and is being done through him. The prayer is not only in respect of the greatness and glory of the Lord but also an absolute willingness to do the bidding of the Lord. General Gordon's poignant prayer to God. "Let me be ground to dust my Lord if thou wilt only glorify thyself in me", is also a revelation of the inwardness of complete dependence on the Lord. Venkaṭanātha points out that this is *aśeṣatānarham* the incapacity to be something that exists for the glorification of any other soul or end. This is a signal characteristic of the body. It is clear that this is an important religious

1. "Paragatātisayādhānecchayā upādeyatvam eva yasya svarūpam sa śeṣaḥ Paraḥ śeṣaḥ: Vedārtha Saṁgraha Cf. Rahasyatrayasārā: Puruṣārtha bhāṣyādhikāra."

sign or characteristic. So far as the world of matter is concerned it exists as absolutely controlled and sustained by the intelligence, wisdom and power of the Divine for His own purposes. The individual soul has consciously to become that.

It would be clear that the world and the souls are indwelt by the Lord or the Deity through His transcendent 'moreness' and through His inherent power to bring them into existence or withdraw them from it, and to support and control them: as such they exist as a source of glorification to Him.

The theism that we find here is clearly a careful synthesis of immanence and transcendence. Thus when Dr. Radhakrishnan pointed out that the best statement of theism was made by Rāmānuja he stated a profound truth.⁵ That this statement is not a new theory but a restatement of an ancient Upaniṣadic doctrine need not be overstressed. The fact that the many Souls and the matter are being sustained by the One supreme Being, not only sustained but also inseparably related to Him, the Only One without a second like Him, shows that the pluralism of souls and the multiplicity of material modifications do not in any way interfere with the status of that Supreme Deity.

On the other hand, it appears that a clear and definite kind of theism can only survive when multiplicity is held to be real and not unreal, and monism as a metaphysics is ruled out. The monistic truth is the truth of self-identity and it has either to accept the monotheistic view of One Single Deity who is the spiritual ground, cause and saviour of the totality, or else it has to affirm that the totality is an illusion, the manyness is an illusion, world is an illusion and all manifestations are illusion. The only criticism that may be levelled against the acceptance of the monotheistic view by the monist would be that God in that case cannot be legitimately called

the Substance from which everything issues out, which according to it is a necessary premise of causal relationship understood in the sense of substantial modification or process. Now this criticism has been answered by Rāmānuja very luminously. He states that God indeed is the material cause of the universe. The modifications happen in Matter in respect of both its nature and qualities; and in the souls in respect of their functional consciousness (*dharmaabhūtajñāna*) alone. They are the body of the Lord, both in their causal subtle state as well as in their effectual gross state. The changes in state in the "body" of the Lord stand to their respective previous states as effects. Thus the text "All this is the Lord," means only that all this is the body of the Lord whether in their causal subtle state or in their effectual gross state. The Lord is actually the cause since their utter inseparable relationship with Him is the determining fact about their existence. They are thus 'modes', not modifications of Brahman. They are 'attributes' but are not self-existing substances. They are not to be considered to be the main *upādāna-kāraṇa*, material cause of the world. A second criticism however can be brought. God cannot be said to be unchanging, *nirvikāra*, if He is the material cause. This, as has been pointed out, implies no change in His nature as the omniscient omnipotent transcendent and does not entail the conclusion that He cannot have even delight or Will to manifest His own supreme glory and infinity of attributes. A too wooden understanding of the word '*nirvikāra*' has led to the conception of the monistic abstract unchangeability as the true real. It is clear then that theistic thought carefully eschews the abstractions of the monistic view and implements the truth of transcendence of the Deity with the help of the concept of real immanence. God brings about changes or wills changes in the conscient and the inconscient which form His body, to manifest His manifold powers or omnipotencies. In none of these activities is there to be seen any belittling of His

supreme transcendence and power to execute the Will that is His. On the contrary, a theory which utters a warning note against any process does this on account of its fear of loss of transcendence to the Absolute. It is just like a man who having earned a lot of money in a raffle or speculation is afraid of losing what has been gained. Not such is the nature of real 'moreness' or transcendence. It is the height of perfect supremacy to be supreme in the involvement. That is the peak of the nature of the Deity. The monistic as well as the deistic views err in so far as they are not sure about the *real* transcendence of the Deity. It is because of this, God is called a Unique Being unlike every other being, bond or liberated or even the eternally free. To them, action is an involvement in process which might adversely affect their gains of 'moreness' in relation to the world. On the other hand, any action of God is not an involvement but a spontaneous expression of His supreme Will (*ilā*). To the souls the possibility of action or fruits of action veiling or impeding the consciousness is a terror; but to the Supreme Deity the action is not aimed at anything, is not done for any finite purpose, and as such is a transcendent divine action, which is just an expression of transcendent purposes whatever these may be.

In theistic thought we find that the nature of the Deity is such that it grants satisfactory explanations about the relationships between God and the world, and between God and the souls. In Śrī Rāmānuja's exposition of theism we have a unique theory of relationship, namely, *śarīrabharībhāva*, body-soul relationship which has been the mystico-religious doctrine of the ages, which reconciles fully the immanent and transcendent or relational and Absolute natures in the supreme Personality¹ of the Divine.

1. Dr. Strong (*A Creed for Sceptics*) says "The subject is a whole organism or self." (p. 26.) Stout and James hold that human personality is a property of an embodied self "primarily known from the inside by coenesthesia or bodily warmth and intimacy."

Intellectual Monism (not all monism) is antithetical not only to mystical consciousness but also to religious experience. This is so true that it is surprising it needs reiteration. We have seen how Śrī Rāmānuja points out the integral unity of the individual self and the Divine Lord, whose *prakāra* or *śeṣa* it is. This organic unity is the essential and real unity which does not destroy the integral multiplicity and the freedom that is being sought in the bosom of the Divine nature. Intellectual formulations of the relationship between the individual and the Supreme always end in dismissing the individual as a fiction or illusion or non-existence somehow entertained in the process; the process is then dismissed as an illusion, the cause of it being left at one stage to the One Supreme Being or Brahman or Absolute, and at another stage to the individual himself in his psychological disruption or to a indeterminable *tertium quid*. Experience having been derealized, the personality of the individual and its cosmic representation, God, are equally derealized, and this is declared to be the Experience which is beyond the relative. Since, however, the relative experiences are conditional on an absolute Experience, and the relative must bear the stamp of reality even as that absolute Experience, it is surprising that the relative is reduced to nullity or at best to the status of the magical and to the illusion. This is impossible and is not verified by mystic experience. When mystic experience asserts the monistic truth it asserts the Organistic or Synthetic monism or Spiritual Union expressible only by such terms.

As Dr. Schrader pointed out about the statements of identity in the Āgama śāstra, the mystical literature of the Āgamas of Pāñcarātra only mean practical oneness but not real oneness (*Introduction to Pāñcarātra*, p. 95). There is no trace of Māyāvāda in this literature either. Śrī Rāmānuja finds the confirmations of his metaphysical views in the Pāñcarātra Āgama, already visible in the Mahābhārata Nārāyaṇīya section and the Bhagavad Gītā. God is the One supreme Being who sustains and leads all. This Being is

Grace-full, Merciful, Lovable and Adorable. He it is who has been described by all the Scriptures, Vedic, Āgamaic Bhāgavata and ālvār-literatures.

The union that men seek, the immortality that is the promise of the knowledge of the Divine and Service of the Divine is a result of total surrender to God in every respect and integrally. God's Nature is described to us in the three excellent compositions of Rāmānuja, Śaraṇāgati, Śrīraṅga and Vikunṭha Gadyas. The Motherhood of Śrī who is eternally and inseparably with the Divine Nārāyaṇa, is intimated and it is to Her who is Grace that the Surrender is made prior to appealing to the Divine Himself. God's transcendence, worshipableness (*bhajanīyam*), ease of accessibility (*saṁlabhyam*), supreme forbearance and tolerance (*aparādhasatva*), supreme Blessedness (*sīlatva*), fullness of Nature in all planes and manifestations (*paripūrṇatva*)¹, and the six infinite and auspicious qualities which exist for the redemption and elevation and evolution of the Universe till that great Līlā of His creative Harmony is achieved, are mentioned along with the attributes of finitude and serviceableness of the soul who seeks Him; the means of attaining the Grace of God is stated to be only through the constant repetition of the three sacred mantras of surrender to the Supreme, to the Supreme along with His Spouse, and utterance of and abandonment of the self-ness or agency in all activities or *aham-kartṛtva*. Rāmānuja gathers into his Divinity the essential truths of the Mystic Experience of the Oneness of the eternal multiplicity as taught by the Vedic and Upaniṣadic Rsis, the Tantra-Āgama Mystics and the Ālvārs. It is this unique synthesis that grants to his system the living vision of the One transcendent Brahman, Viṣṇu and Nārāyaṇa as indwelling in all, in whom all beings indwell, and through whom the Divine experience and the Divine Life are being achieved through the unique path of integral surrender.

1. Śaraṇāgati-Gadya : com. SudarśanaŚrīrī:

We have sketched the contributions of the other schools to the Idea of God. Rāmānuja gives the most comprehensive account of the Nature of the Deity. It is true that it appears to wear the rigid scholastic garb due to the historic period of his statements, but the poetic note suggests the immensities of his Vision of the Integral Godhead which he represented by the term Viśiṣṭādvaita, or Śārīraka-System, Organicism. Realism, Theism and Pantheism meet in this view because it gives not a mere monotheism, nor a barren monism riddled with Māyā, or illusionism trailing it, but a wholesome Mysticism and Universe of God not a multiverse or polytheism.

The individual soul has been defined as of the nature of Jñāna and Ānanda, that is, it has and is knowledge essentially or substantially, and is and has Ānanda as its essential nature. Its existential nature or *satta* is also granted by its essential and permanent relationship with the Divine as His *prakāra* or *viśeṣaṇa*, *śeṣa*, or *śarīra*. What is denied of it is *vibhūta* or *ananta* infinity. But it is precisely this infinity that it seeks in its religious consciousness. The methods of achieving this infinity are these precise definitions of its approach to the sense of utter union which can grant that supreme felicity of feeling oneness with the Infinite Being; this is the fullest delight, Ānanda-nature of the soul. This is *parama-sāmya*, because of having been accepted to equal participation in cognitive knowledge (*jñāna-dharma* or *dharma-bhūta-jñāna*). The fulfilment of this need of the finite is achieved by the indwellingness of the Divine in an integral manner and of himself in the Infinite Divine in His Vastness even and not merely through the permission of participation in Divine Works. This is the supreme achievement possible to the individual soul *qua* soul, and it is clearly visible in the writings of the most radical of mystics and religious souls that what is achieved is total infusions of the Divine Being in the soul's-nature, so much so, there remains not the slightest token of finitude in its activities or enjoyments

or knowledges, except its self-feeling of having been used or of being used as the *nimitta* (occasion) of the Divine by the Divine: as in the case of Arjuna, and in the case of Nammālvār. Śaṭhakopa sings "I never forget him, He made me Himself; He through me expressed Himself in several sweet correct rhymes on good theme:" (VII. 9. *Tiru-vāymozi*) Again "Thou becamest my whole self.....Thou madest me Thyself wholly...I understand such a One Who dwelt in my body, in my mind and in my soul..." (VIII. 8.) Such thoughts as these are very common in the revelational literature. There persists just that distinctive nucleus of feeling of being the finite simultaneously with the feeling of being possessed by the Infinite Divine, indwelt by the Divine. Sometimes that also is surpassed in the experience so as to abolish the very conception of finitude of the soul. But it remains an *anu* infinitesimal even when surcharged with or taken up or occupied or embraced in an integral manner by the Divine according to Theism. As Śaṭhakopa lived and showed, one ultimately must live by making God his food, his breath, his thought and his being.¹

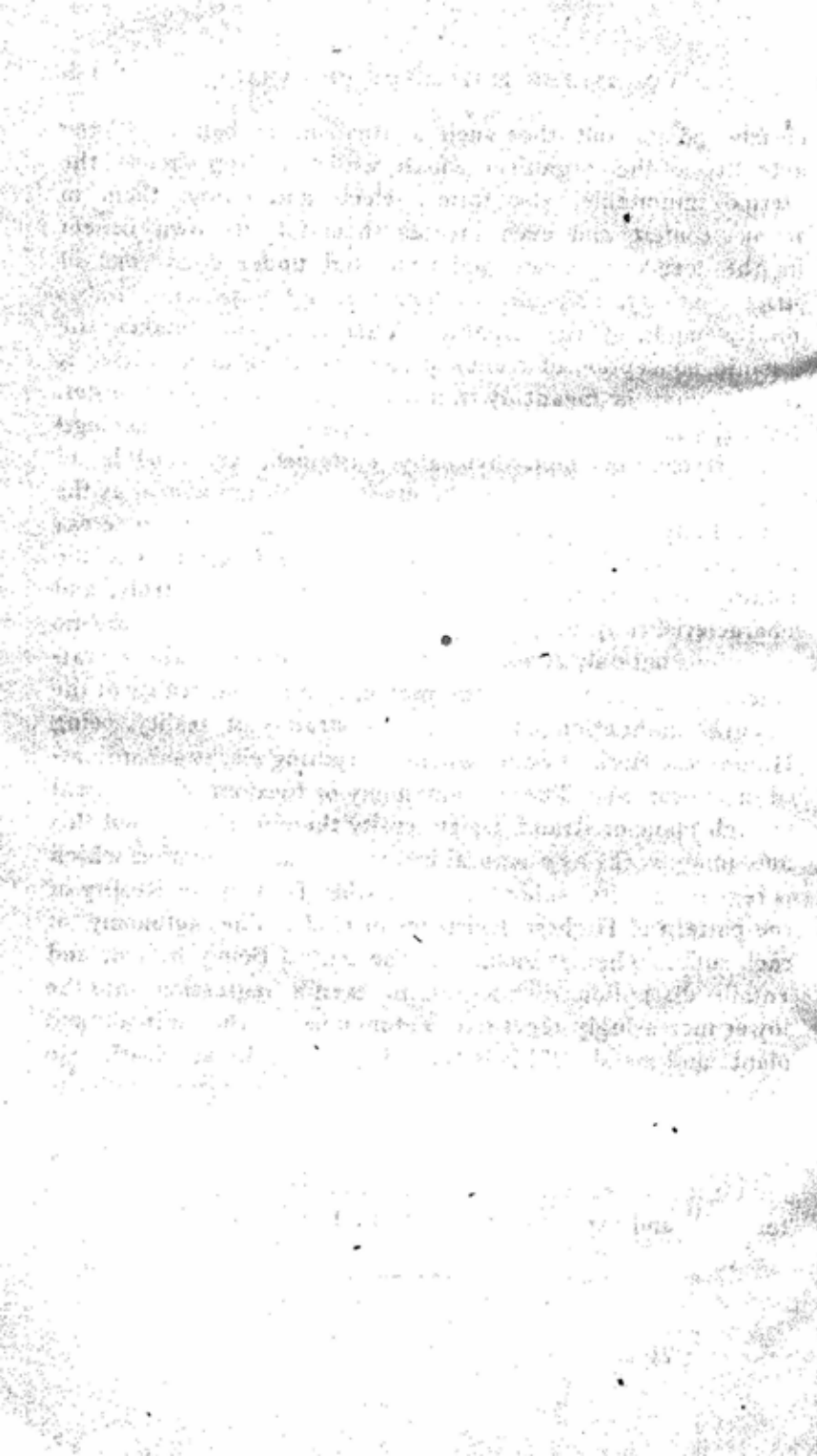
Prof. A. E. Taylor writing in *Philosophy* (April 1941) on "*Back to Descartes*" commented on Bowman's 'Sacramental Universe.' He pointed out that the real dualism is between subjective and physical rather than between matter and mind or objective and subjective since the subjective is always capable of being an object of Cognition. This, all would agree, gets over that strange difficulty of most idealists who hold that the subjective cannot truly become objective, or who, reversing this position adroitly, hold that to be an object of consciousness is to become equivalent to matter itself, that is other than the subjective. Self-experience or existence of oneself is admittedly a cognitive fact which cannot be placed in the realm of the objective or the material and there results a contradiction in

1. My "*Philosophy of Religion of the Āṭvārs* : Journal of the Sri Venkateswara Oriental Institute: Vols. III ff.

solipsistic philosophy which has to be got over only by a leap out of this predicament through an absolute experience that shall not in any sense appear as subjective or objective. Prof. Taylor having thus resolved the dualism finds that the subjective and the physical are the two modalities of being, and that nothing can be at once a constituent term of both modalities. But he finds that the "mind is in fact" compresent in the universe with the non-mental. This compresence is again only possible in virtue of a more intimate functional connection of a kind which must in the end remain a mystery for us, of the mental and non-mental, in fact of the existence of *embodied* personalities" (pp. 128-9). This mystery is not resolved by a mere reference to sacramental functions emerging in these embodied personalities, an emergence that is perhaps capable of being explained by the postulate of divine creativity. A system of values indeed emerges only because of the divine element pursuing its free and uninterrupted course of manifestations in varying degrees in the tissue of reality called the living being, which enfolds an intimate relationship between matter and mind, subjective and physical, and is functionally operating in a manner that is guided by the organic unity and law of growth. But as pointed out by almost all biologists, the operating factors like instinct and animal intelligence and insight do not reveal the conscious thrust towards values and preference for ideals. And as such it must be concluded that it is only at the level of man that the sacramental or the organic-plus-value-view emerges into view.

There must be no ultimate opposition between the realm of the material and the mental or between the realm of eternal immutables and the realm of change. The apparent contradiction raised between these two is due to an abstract tendency to treat mind or soul as immutable, or at least the ideas that the mind has or discovers or enjoys in its own unique isolation in an abstraction-state of mind, as non-existent (in space and time world). The organic conception

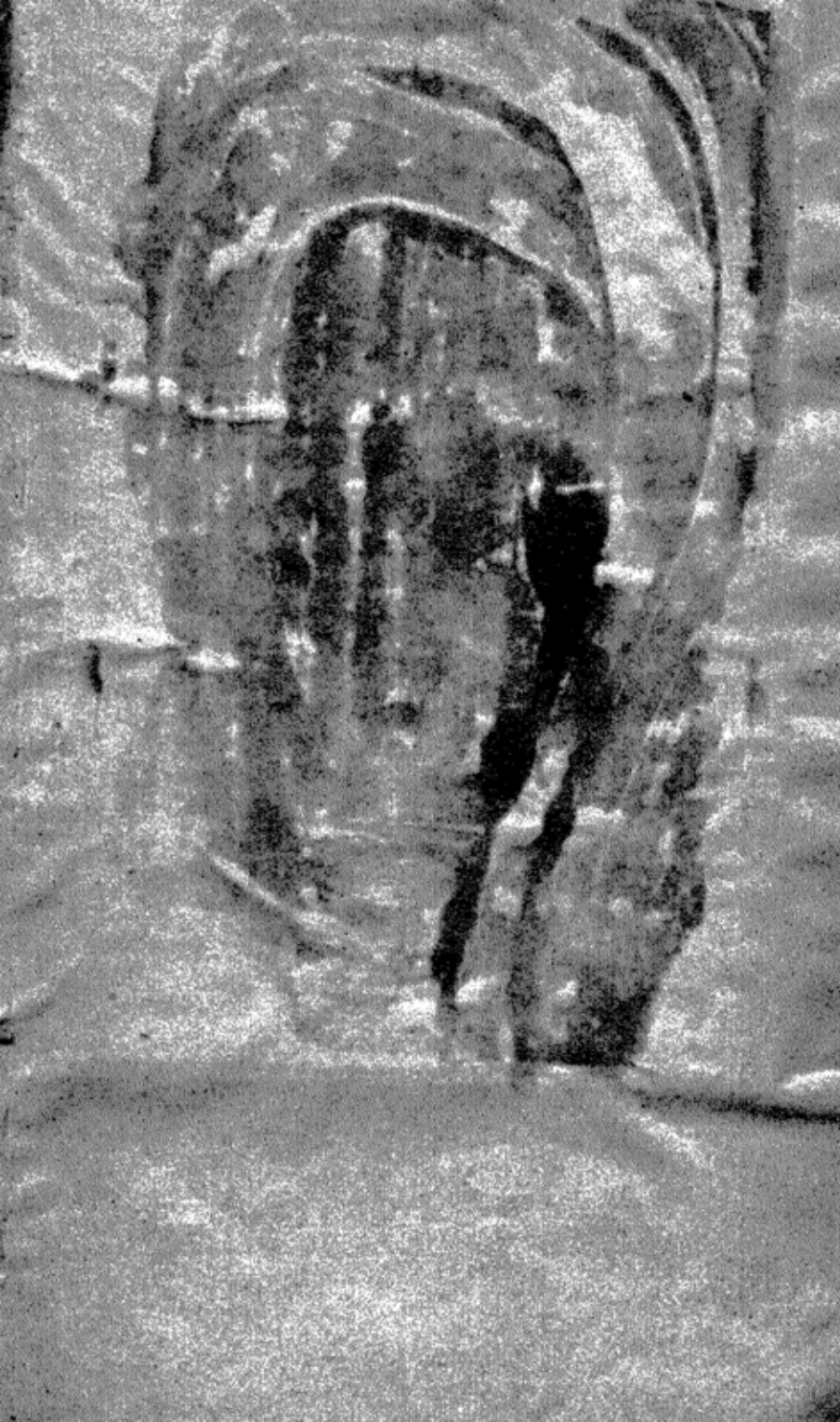
clearly points out that such a dualism is belied by the actuality of the organism which whilst it apprehends the eternal immutable, also forms, selects and enjoys them in *its own context* and even creates them for its own benefit in the forms of space and time and under conditions of strict causality. Nor are we aware of any experience that is totally bereft of the organic. This it is that makes the organic conception of reality or the sacramental universe, if that is what is meant by it, a reality of the highest order. Both the idealistic and the realistic views, whether theologically stated or metaphysically sustained, are unable to bring about a real unity of the many which are as real as the multiplicity. The multiplicity enriches the unity whereas the unity sustains the ever emerging configurations of the totality wherein the several levels of reality are truly, and characteristically and dynamically supported. There are no sublations but only subordinations of the lowers to the hierarchically higher. God is the perfect symbol and reality of the integral unification of the several strands of reality, being Himself the Highest under whom everything else is subordinated or subsumed. There is autonomy or freedom of movement in each plane or strand for an entity therein placed, but this autonomy works as a natural inward self-determination which is registering its subordination to the Totality or Reality or the pattern of Highest Existence or God. The autonomy of each suffers when it violates of the central Being or God, and entails disruption, disintegration, even a regression into the lower increasingly repetitive autonomies of the animal, and plant and metal. This is the principle of threat, death, sin and evil. That is why autonomy involves responsibility to perceive and to know the inward Will of the Highest, or the central Being or God. It is always open to a soul to reach upto it in its moments of deepest submission, concern, struggle for truth and aspiration for God, the Highest Good.

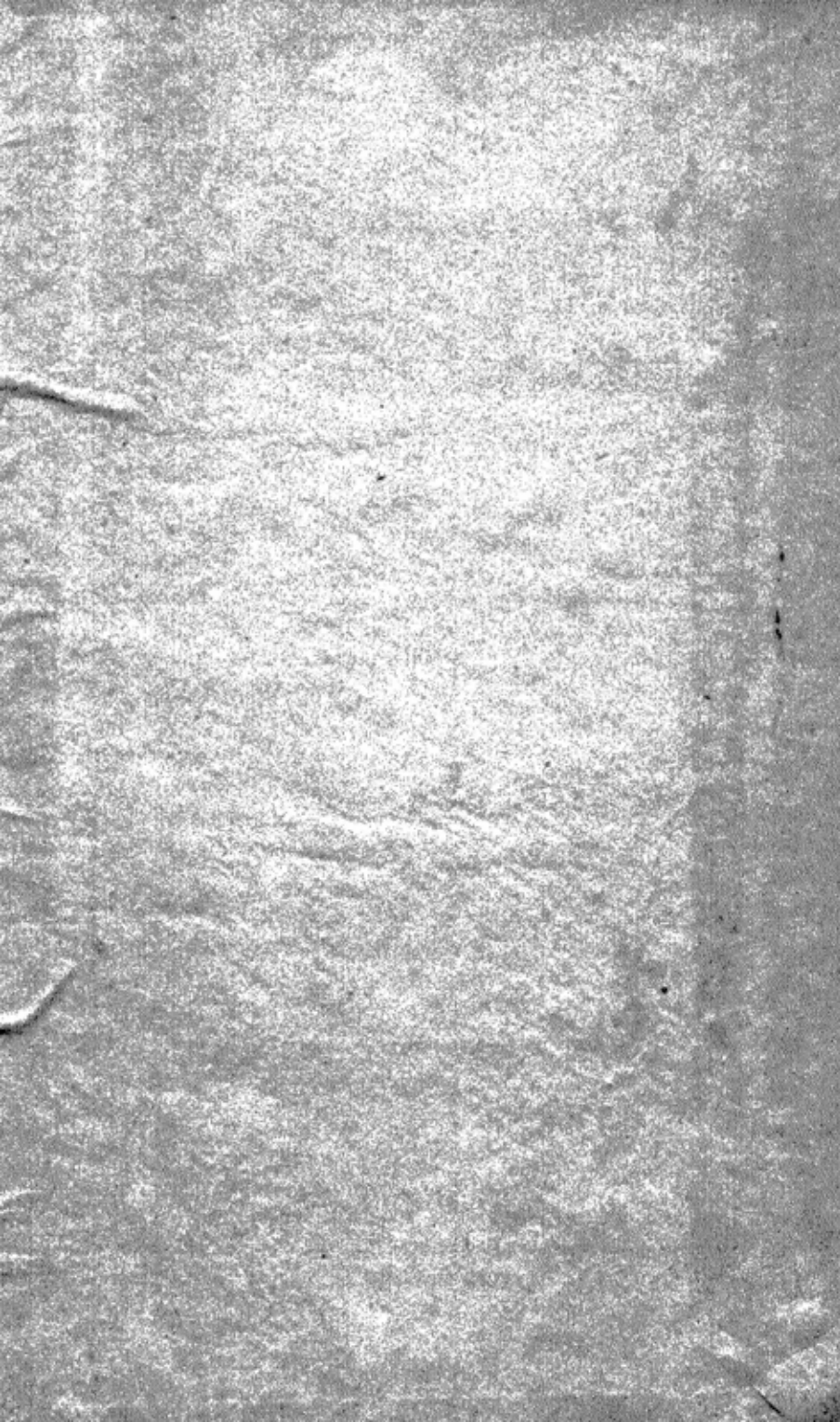


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