

Quest For Certainty

Dr. Paulose Mar Gregorios

Outstanding scholar, theologian, philosopher, polyglot and man of letters. Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios sought to bring together in a holistic vision, several unrelated disciplines like philosophy, economics, political science, medicine, education, physics and theology.

Born in 1922 at Tripunithura, Kerala, the great scholar-bishop had his earlier stints in his homestate as a journalist and postal service employee. He proceeded to Ethiopia in 1947 accepting the job of a teacher there and in course of time became the Special Secretary to Emperor Haillie Sellasi. He had an exceptional educational career in Yale, Princeton and Oxford Universities. Returning to Kerala, he was ordained as a priest of the Orthodox Church. In 1967 Fr. Paul Verghese became the Principal of the Orthodox Theological Seminary. In 1975, he was elevated as a bishop. Metropolitan Paulos Mar Gregorios took charge of the Delhi Diocese of the Orthodox Church in July 1975.

Honours came unsought to Mar Gregorios. He had the good fortune to be the President of the World Council of Churches and the Indian Philosophical Congress. In 1988, he received the Soviet Land Nehru Award. His Grace travelled widely and showed an unusual intellectual courage to explore new paradigms in human thinking. He was visiting professor in several universities like the J. N. U. in New Delhi. The philosopher-bishop passed away on 24th November 1996 and his mortal remains lie entombed in the Orthodox Seminary Chapel, Kottayam.

Mar Gregorios has authored more than 50 books. *The Joy of Freedom, Freedom of Man, The Cosmic Man, The Human Presence, Enlightenment East and West, A Light Too Bright* and the spiritual autobiography *Love's Freedom: The Grand Mystery* are some of the most remarkable among these. Hundreds of his articles and lectures have been published in leading newspapers, and international magazines.

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PHILOSOPHICAL TRENDS IN THE WEST

A SAMPLE SURVEY OF LATER TWENTIETH CENTURY
WESTERN THOUGHT FOR THE
AVERAGE INDIAN READER

Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios

MAR GREGORIOS FOUNDATION
ORTHODOX SEMINARY, KOTTAYAM

Quest For Certainty

(Philosophy)

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Preface

‘Quest for Certainty’ is one of the earliest writings of Dr. Paulos Mar Gregorios Metropolitan. In spite of the brevity of the work, it stands as a visible example on the clarity of the thought-world of Mar Gregorios. He has prepared this book as a prelude of Western Philosophy for the Indian readers. The lucidity of his perspective is making this text relevant even after four decades of its first publication. The publishers did not dare to touch on the original text hence this serves as a reprint and not a revised edition. However, you would see an additional section in this book with two relevant articles from Mar Gregorios. Those two articles reflect his appreciation on particular philosophical traditions of India. They were written after about two decades of the publishing of the ‘Quest for Certainty’. We have two reasons to include these articles. Firstly, the reader could analyze on how he is placing the two philosophical strands distinctively. Secondly, the reader could critically understand the possible progressive traits in the philosophical thoughts of Mar Gregorios.

As we all know Metropolitan Mar Gregorios was an out-standing and renowned theologian, a stimulus thinker and author. He was a sensible philosopher, an inspiring preacher and an effective teacher. He was unparalleled in many ways when compared to his contemporary scholars. Many scholars uncritically followed the Western Philosophy and Theology as it is. Mar Gregorios had a candid critical mind which made him accepting the goodness of East, West, North and South irrespective of religion, race or culture. Content of this work invariably proves this fact. His ultimate aim was to create a better world with justice and peace within the mould of the Kingdom of God about which our Lord Jesus Christ taught emphatically. With the decline of Soviet Communist regime many scholars have discarded communism as an outdated philosophy. However Mar Gregorios, in spite of his ideological differences, holds the view that the Marxian quest for a more humanitarian, egalitarian just society is still relevant as long as the disparity between the rich and the poor exists in the world.

Mar Gregorios Foundation working under the auspicious of the Orthodox Theological Seminary is committed to publish all the writings

and speeches of Mar Gregorios. MGF had already published a few books. Re-printing of this book has been entrusted to Sophia books, Kottayam. Mr. Joice Thottakkad, the Secretary of Sophia Books has got relentless commitment in bringing the Gregorian thoughts to the common people and he certainly deserves appreciation.

We hope to bring out all unpublished writings and speeches of Mar Gregorios in the future years, for which we certainly need your prayers and support.

Fr. Dr. O. Thomas
President,
Mar Gregorios Foundation

Nov. 20, 2015

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PHILOSOPHICAL TRENDS IN THE WEST

A Sample Survey Of Later Twentieth Century Western Thought For The Average Indian Reader

One way of looking at what is called modern philosophy in the West is to see it as an attempted **tour de force** in what we Indians call **pramanavicara**. They call it epistemology. In India we have traditionally, at least since the rise of Sankhya and probably well before it, operated with the three **pramanas** or measuring-sticks for our knowledge of truth - **pratyaksha** (sense-perception), **anumana** (inference or reason) and **sabda** (Scripture and tradition). Until the rise of the modern period, Western philosophy also operated with these three, though European philosophers may not have enumerated their canons as three.

Whether one takes Descartes or Kant as the starting point of modern Western philosophy, they are both characterized by a desire for certainty without using the third principle, ie., of **sabda** or revealed knowledge. It was the re-enthronement of Reason in the Enlightenment that ensued in the dethronement of Revelation, and Christian theologians have been hard at work seeking to reinstate Revelation on the throne of knowledge, without much success in convincing the unbeliever.

Philosophy, by dint of its very variety, calls for a test of certainty. When the Protestant Reformation succeeded in overthrowing the uneasy religious consensus based on authoritarian church dogmas, canon laws and moral rules laid down by an official magisterium, a wave of uncertainty swept over the European consciousness - voiced at least for the English-speaking world first and soon for the French and the Germans as well, by Locke and Hume. Bishop Berkeley sought hard to stem the tide of skepticism, but with only temporary success.

The Lockian question about the meaning of meaning remains still at the centre of the Western debate. This quest for knowledge of knowledge is in fact a search for a substitute for the **sadbapramana**, which was the basis of certainty in the authoritarian Church - dominated European mind of the pre-Enlightenment period. Only by an

analysis of the knowing process itself in modern philosophy we can know for certain that what we know is real knowledge. For Locke, “to attach meaning to an utterance is to make it ‘stand as a mark’ for one or more ‘internal conceptions’ or ‘ideas’ in one’s own mind, and language’s main task is to transfer ideas from one mind to another.”¹ With some significant differences, Locke, Berkeley and Hume shared this common ground. Locke further held that our ultimate evidence for the way the world is, consists in our own sensory states, or the state in which the perceiver is while perceiving an object. It is this way of arguing directly from our sensory states to the objective realm, or identifying or making the transition between ‘appearance and reality’ which constitutes the perennial problem for philosophy everywhere, in India as in the West.

This causal connection between object and mental state, or between reality and appearance was the nexus which Hume broke leading Anglo-Saxon philosophy into a basic skepticism from which Kant heroically sought to rescue it. For continental European philosophy at least Kant accomplished that double task of demonstrating the impossibility of a rationally constructed metaphysics and of providing a fairly interesting account of the rational knowing process as a synthetic judgement composed jointly by sense-data and by the a priori categories of the mind which belong to its structure. This Kantian starting-point, with necessary modifications provides the basis for more than one influential school of contemporary Western philosophy. Three of the most important of these are (a) Neo-Kantianism, (b) Phenomenological systems and (c) existence philosophies (often wrongly called Existentialism, though they are not systematic “isms”).

1. The philosophical errors in this theory are interestingly treated in Jonathan Bennett, *Locke, Berkeley, Hume: Central Themes*, New York, Oxford University Press, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971, see p. 1 ff.

1

Neo-Kantianism

Neo-Kantians accept the basic position of Kant that the judgments of pure reason are synthetic a priori, but try to keep their own systems free from superficial or unnecessary “metaphysical” and “pre-critical” elements which, according to them, abound in Kant. Ernst Cassirer, the most prominent of the neo-Kantians died at Princeton in 1945, though his three-volume *Philisophy of Symbolic Forms* (first published in German *Philosophie der Symbolischen Formen, 3 Bde 1923-29*) still remains influential. Kant did not have the advantage of knowing our exact sciences and the neo-Kantians (especially Cohen, Natorp and Cassirer of the Marburg School) sought to correlate their philosophical systems to current knowledge in the natural sciences. The other school (called the South-West German School) led by Windelband, Rickert and Lask concentrated on the development of a philosophy of values, Neo-Kantianism, temporarily suppressed by positivistic - analytic approaches on the one hand, and by Existenz philosophies on the other, may yet stage a come-back. Cassirer’s re-interpretation of Rousseau as a Renaissance humanist² who saw the need for a new science of man which had as its primary task that of changing society, and which would serve as a pre-condition for the natural sciences, is now receiving fresh attention³ Both Kant, who called Rousseau the “Newton of the moral world”⁴, and Marx who wanted to shift the task of philosophy from that of explaining the world to that of changing the world, owe their basic inspirations to

2. See E. Cassirer, *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*, Boston, Beacon Press, 1955, *Rousseau, Kant, Goethe*, Hamden, Conn. Archon Books, 1961, *The Question of Jean-Jacques Rousseau*, New York, Columbia Univ. Press. 1954.

3. See e.g. Pulitzer-Prize-Winning author Ernest Becker’s *The Structure of Evil. An Essay on the Unification of the Science of Man*, New York, The Free Press, London, Collier Macmillan publishers, 1976.

4. See Cassirer, 1955, p. 280.

Rousseau and to his demand for a science of the nature of man as a standard of criticism and the criterion of betterment. Even Levi-Strauss's Structuralism has this orientation.⁵

5. See C. Levi-Strauss, *A World on the Wane*, New York, Criterion Books, 1961, pp. 389-392.

Phenomenological Systems

Phenomenology is a much misunderstood word. Its founding father (beginning of the 20th century) was Edmund Husserl who sought to establish a pure transcendental idealism as a science of eidetic essences in consciousness. He pulled away all knowledge to the subjective pole and thereby sought to do away with the “thing-in-itself” which in Kant remained unknown. All knowledge is immanent in consciousness. There is nothing in the external world which is not already in the human mind; The *noema* of an object in consciousness with its nucleus *x* and the set of qualities or attributes around the nucleus, corresponds exactly with the object in the external world with its own nucleus *x* and adhering set of qualities. In the process of intentionality which is the thetic act of projecting the noema on to an object, the object with all its qualities is fully internalized, the noematic nucleus replacing the *reell* nucleus, but leaving no unintuited residuum.

Thus by a pure analysis of consciousness with its innate ideas or *noemata* and the noetic process of intentionality, we are able to know that our knowledge is true knowledge. After the fall of Hegelian idealism, Husserl, Brentano, Meinong and others made use of an introspective psychology, to build up a transcendental idealism without the aid of metaphysics, using the methods of mathematical science, to relate to the new world of *Naturwissenschaft*. Franz Brentano developed his *Evidenzlehre* as *Erkenntnistheorie*. A comprehensive classification of noetic-eidetic objects was sufficient ground for certainty about knowledge. Both Husserl and Brentano were concerned about certainty in knowledge.

Husserl sought to lay the foundations for a Philosophy of Science, freed from all psychological prejudices or preconditions as in Kant, freed from all relativism and skepticism. Logical analysis is not analysis of the knowing act, which would lead to psychologism, but the analysis of meaning. In this, Husserl's (1859-1938) phenomenology differs from Brentano's (1838-1917) for whom right judgment of the evidence was of the essence. Husserl's phenomenology, on the other

hand, by “bracketing out” the world in a temporary suspension of all judgment about its nature or existence concentrates on a pure mathematical analysis of subjective consciousness.

In phenomenology, besides the schools of Brentano and Husserl, perhaps the most influential is still that of Max Scheler (1874-1928) who refused to walk the way of Husserl, and insisted on an ontological understanding of the human person and human values and human relationships to beings. He brought into his phenomenology the growing body of thought on social and personal ethics, as well as his own vast erudition in biology, psychology and philosophy of religion. His was no mere intellectual quest, but a search for a way of life - a *Lebensphilosophie*. But he too had to ground it on an *Erkenntnislehre* or *pramanavicara*, based on an analysis of personhood, knowledge and values, on a striking phenomenological analysis of the feeling of sympathy, on a theory of the stages of life and on a philosophy of religion.

Scheler too could not use the *sabdapramana* in any explicit way, because the ‘scientific’ culture forbade it. He took over from Husserl the method of eidetic intuition or *Wesensschau*. He gave a central place to feeling again, in this reacting against the intellectualism of the Enlightenment. For Scheler the real was not the spiritual or the ideal, but rather the level of feeling and drive, out of which arises the creative power which propels the course of world and history, and which enables the inner centre of personhood to participate in a living way in the very substance of things. Knowledge itself is to be seen as part of this creativity. It is this creative urge that could be spoken of as the divine-in-the-world which enables the apprehension of substances, the emergence of values, the relation with the Absolute, and thus makes man the meaning-giver.

Scheler was deeply influenced by the personalism and individualism of his age. Here he smuggles in his *sabadapramana* from a particular Christian tradition of western individual personalism; his *individuelle Geistperson*, however, does not need to “love God” as much as to “love God” (*amare in Deo*, not *amare Deum*), since it is in the world-life of God that man participates. Denying the Hegelian

assumption that Geist or Spirit is the real, he had to see Man as *Geist-in-Trieb*, the Spirit in a creative drive. His inability to finally reconcile these two principles of Spirit and Drive is perhaps his Achilles' heel.

The feeling of sympathy is central for him; it is this that makes love possible and helps to see the centre of reality as a *universelle Liebesgemeinschaft aller individuellen Geistpersonen* (the universal love - community of all individual spirit - persons) in which all human beings are co-guilty and co-responsible. His philosophy thus becomes a phenomenology of feeling - of love and hate, of sympathy and empathy, of taking interest. There is no more reductionism as in the phenomenology of Husserl, Brentano and Meinong. It is a vast enterprise of seeing life whole.

Scheler's works still exercise a considerable amount of influence in philosophical circles concerned with the future of man⁶ who are worried about the hiatus between science and life, which makes man an alien without a sense of unity and participation in the universe. It is not merely the social scientist who today seeks for a science that transcends the subject-object polarity and allows for meaningful participation in the cosmic process. The physical scientists, at least the more thoughtful ones, are joining him in the quest. It was no cosmic mysticism for which Scheler yearned. For him "it seems to be more or less a rule (of which we have as yet no further understanding) that the actual realization of the capacity for cosmic identification cannot take place directly in relation to external Nature, but is mediated indirectly in that sense of unity between man and man."⁷ Scheler insisted that "man is point of entry into identification with the life of the cosmos lies where that life is nearest and in closest affinity to his own, namely *in another man*."

6. His two most important works are now available in good English translations: *On the Eternal in man* (trans. Bernard Noble) New York, Harper, 1960; *The Nature of Sympathy* (trans. Peter Heath) London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1954.

7. *The Nature of Sympathy*, p. 108.

Scheler accused “the Capitalistic social outlook of Western man” of being responsible for seeing the world as an aggregation of movable and immovable goods, and of suppressing the capacity of man to identify himself with the life of the universe. Max Scheler’s phenomenology, despite its philosophical problems bids fair to attract more study as time goes on and as the question about man begins to occupy the centre of the scientific quest. But there too, the methodology is the ground of certainty.

3

Existenz philosophies

One can hardly define a philosophical school called Existentialism, though many use that generic term to refer to the philosophies of Heidegger and Sartre, Marcel and Jaspers and many others of lesser importance. We will not tarry to discuss these non-systems in detail, except to indicate that though the tempo and tone of Existentialism is very much evident today among the young, as a way of philosophizing it is very much on the wane. Its basically individualistic and ahistoric frame of reference leaves too much out of account. It might have had a role to play in the milieu of the French Resistance of the war years and in the upswing of the so-called New Morality. Even the star of Heidegger seems to be setting, since he has been unable to provide answers to his own questions or to carry through his project of getting to the knowledge of *Sein* (being) through the analysis of man's existence (*Daseinsanalyse*).

Heidegger, however, remains an important thinker of the 20th century West. He radicalized Husserl's phenomenology, and went beyond Scheler's creative drive, to pose the question of Being in a comprehensive way. He could not be satisfied with the mathematical rationalism of Husserl or the comforting idea of Scheler that the human community of love was the heart of reality. Being was unlike beings and could not be grasped in terms of beings. Scheler's pantheistic Spirit-and-Person metaphysics was too naive and lazy, too sleepily giving an account of reality - an account which lulls you into thinking that you know it when you really don't.

Heidegger's was an appeal to the depths, to abandon the common-sense standpoint from which the mystery of Being must of necessity remain concealed. Truth needs unveiling, waking up, not just description. And that needs a startlingly new methodology. He creates this methodology by a radical twist of Husserl's phenomenological epoche. Man is a fallen being, forgetful of Being. Man is *ek-sistent*, standing out away from the Reality of Being. *Anamnesis* or waking up the memory is the way to certainty.

It is notorious that there are two Heideggers, the early and the late (though Heidegger himself denied this duality). The early (1927) Heidegger of *Sein und Zeit* (*Being and Time*) is related to the late Heidegger of the post-war years almost like the Wittgenstein of the *Tractatus* and the Wittgenstein of the *Philosophical Investigations*. Wittgenstein created two philosophies, while Heidegger came quite near to it, but his second one remains an unfinished task. Since 1950 he has published a series of profound essays: *Was heisst Denken?* (*What does it mean to think?*), *Was ist das-die Philosophie?* (*What is this thing - Philosophy?*), *Der Satz vom Grund* (*The proposition from its foundation*), *Die Frage nach dem Ding* (*The question of Thing*) - the very titles are intriguing. And then there is the two-volume work on Nietzsche.

It was Franz Wiedmann⁸ who suggested that the meditative, creative prose of Heidegger is better understood by Far Easterners (he meant people of Japan and Korea) than by the westerner used to cold, dissective, analytic language. He refers especially to German university professors and students having a lot of fun and mirth with Heidegger's sentences like "Let Being be what it is and leave it closed in" (*Das Sein zu lassen als das, was es ist, und sich einzulassen*).

Heidegger in fact invokes the ancient mystical principle that Being is *avachya* or ineffable. People must have expected from the early-Heidegger of *Being and Time* that he would lead us from his early analysis of human existence as floating jetsam caught in dread, anxiety and guilt, swept by the swift flow of death along the river of time, to an understanding of the Being which reveals itself through beings. They thought he was another existential philosopher like Sartre or Jaspers, using the phenomenological method to describe the human condition. But Heidegger forcefully and vigorously denied any relation to existential philosophy of that kind.⁹ His was a different quest.

8. *Philosophische Stroemungen der Gegenwart*, Benziger Verlag, Zurich, Einsiedeln, Koln, 1972, p. 24 ff.

9. See his letter on *Humanismus* addressed to Jean Beaufret, Paris, printed in M. Heidegger, *Platons Lehre von der Wahrheit*, Bern, Francke Verlag, zweite Auflage, 1954, pp. 71 ff.

But what was the difference? That is still a puzzle, not easy to solve verbally.

He denies that he had said anything in *Being and Time* about the relation between Being and Existence. Being is not there for talkative man to catch with his talk. Man must stand reverently before Being and let Being do the talking; and when he is able really to listen to this silent speaking of Being, there is not much left for man to say. This is why a Japanese mystic well versed in Zen Buddhism is better able to understand Heidegger than the ordinary German professor. Philosophy, at least the philosophy of the future, must deny itself the luxury of words - say less, but let what you say bring about the appeal for a return to Being, about which we have become forgetful.

I think (but I am not certain) that I understand Heidegger at this point, but here I go multiplying words about what he means. Isn't there something self-defeating about this literary-Philosophical enterprise, in which we try to explain at booklength what a man like Heidegger says in a sentence, while the whole point is that the less said the better, for words mislead?

Very few people seem to understand Heidegger. Many suspect that he is fooling them or trying to feel superior by not talking to them in language they can understand. Some accuse him of having been a nazi collaborator or being an anti-semitic thinker. But still he remains a topic of discussion in German and French Philosophical circles to this day.

Heidegger was also preoccupied with the problem of *pramanavicara*, which now-a-days for European philosophy means *Erkenntnistheorie* or theory of knowledge. His work on Kant was an attempt to focus on this problem by re-interpreting Kant's Philosophical effort as an attempt at fundamental ontology. Fundamental ontology means to Heidegger *Seinslehre*, a doctrine of Being; but that is precisely the problem - Being cannot be caught in doctrines.

Heidegger started out on the line shown by Max Scheler, that the way to the true interiorization of and participation in the cosmos is through the understanding of the other man. But Heidegger started not with the *other* man, but man as exemplified in myself, for it is

there that I have privileged access. Heidegger could not however make the transition from *daseinsanalyse* of oneself to either the neighbour or the cosmos, not to speak of Being itself. So he seems to abandon the earlier track, and resorts to a new way, which looks suspiciously like the mystical approach in a Philosophical garb. He cannot quite make it work. The later Heidegger is thus likely to remain an unfinished work, providing ample scope for future Ph.D. theses as to what Heidegger's true intentions were. He certainly did not get to any principle of certainty.

Karl Jaspers covers the same ground as the early Heidegger, but their programmes are quite different. Jaspers is more what ordinary people understand by the word Existentialist. How to live one's own life - that is the typical quest of the Existentialist, and that is what Jaspers tries to describe in philosophical language. No objective understanding of the nature of man is possible. Since humanity is not a frozen datum to be so objectively studied and described like other things. For I am the subject, not an object among other objects, but a subject who stands over against all objects. Unlike Kant, who sought to solve the problem of knowledge by analyzing the process of knowledge, Jaspers as a typical existentialist, following in the heritage of Phenomenology, tries to analyse the subjective consciousness in all its finitude and strife, disharmony and uncertainty, guilt, anxiety and dread, battered by time and change, groundless and tossed about.

The uncertainty about the world and my own standing in it is not resolved by any philosophical theory of knowledge; no amount of knowledge about knowledge can give me the stability and the ground to stand which I need. In fact, I cannot stand at all. I must glide, but glide without being carried away. Neither positivism nor idealism gives me the ground on which I can stand firm. They are rather prisons; the first would make everything into an object, myself included; I become merely a link in the chain of causality, bound by that chain. Idealism explains everything in a way which makes me an insignificant cog in the great wheel of Being or Spirit.

Existenz, for Jaspers at least at one point, seems to be the equivalent for soul; but then if you define Existenz you objectify it and de-

stroy it. It is exemplified as the irreducible core of man not to be grasped in concepts; it is life as a possibility; it can be affirmed or denied, but not defined. It functions through free decision; by its power to free itself from casuality and initiate other affects, by exercising its will in freedom and power. Of course, at least in Jaspers, man attains this core of this being or Existenz, only in communication with other Existences - thus individualism is slightly mitigated in the Jaspersian brand of Existentialism (Heidegger seems to have been less bothered with the social aspect of human *dasein*, unlike Max Scheler and Karl Jaspers).

Jaspers builds on Kant's work and is dependent on it. He builds also on the academic work of the neo-kantians, but what he builds on that academic foundation is itself not susceptible to rational demonstration to be checked by scientific criteria. This is a characteristic of all Existenz - philosophies, that they offer very little of a rational basis on which to evaluate their thought. Hence while Existentialism at one time enjoyed some prestige in academic circles, today its standing in the universities of Europe is very low. So long as philosophy remains a university - related academic discipline, it is unlikely that Existentialism can continue to claim any high *Wissenschaftliche* status, and this seems one good reason why it is now very much on the wane in Europe and the West in general. Even Sartre and Marcel exercise very little fascination in academic circles, though the latter remains a live option in Roman Catholic intellectual circles. The philosophical journals now-a-days carry very few articles on any of the Existentialists. For they give no objective ground for certainty.

The Structuralist Quest for Certainty

Structuralism as a scientific method of philosophy - anthropology, is inseparably linked with the name of Claude Levi - Strauss (born 1908), Professor for Social Anthropology in the College de France, who resuscitated the old quest made known by Sir James Frazer's *The Golden Bough* and Bronislaw Malinowski's popular works on the way primitive societies "functioned." Professor Edmund Leach has given us an admirably lucid but inconclusive account of structuralism in his brief book on *Claude Levi-Strauss*.¹⁰

In a sense Structuralism is a swing of the pendulum to the opposite pole from Existentialism. Today the fashionable words are "structural" and "systems-analysis", and the structuralists claim to have discovered the ideology for a technical age, the ideology to replace all ideologies. Its concern is with the systematic structure of human language and culture, and its methodology basically mathematical-cybernetic. Leave nothing to mere chance; compute accurately, taking into account all the quantifiable variables. Get the right signs to signify the right entities, find out their mathematical relations. That way comes certainty.

Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) laid the foundations for Structuralism, in the Geneva school of Linguistics. But it is only in the last 15 years or so that it has become a fashionable way of philosophising. The other great names in the Structuralist school are Lucien Goldmann (born 1913), Professor for the Sociology of Literature and Philosophy in Paris and Brussels, and Roland Barthes (born 1915) literary

10. In the series Fontana Modern Masters, edited by Frank Kermode, Wm Collins and Co. Ltd., London, 1970. See also H. W. Scheffer, *Structuralism in Anthropology* in the special number of *Yale French Studies* No 36/37 (1966) on *Structuralism*: Roland Barthes, *Elements of Semiology*, London, 1967. Much clearer is Philip Petit, *The Concept of Structuralism a Critical Analysis*, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin, 1975. His criticism is damaging though not very profound.

critic and semiologist at the *Ecole pratique des Hautes Etudes* in Paris. It would be a mistake to include the American Noam Chomsky (born 1928) whose constant use of the word “structure” (deep structure, surface structure) in his linguistic philosophy should not mislead people into clubbing him together with the three French Structuralists. Chomsky’s concern is with the structure of *language*, while the Structuralists seek to describe how *society* functions, language being but one aspect of social structure and communication. Semantics is not semiology. The first deals with meanings of words, the latter with signs and the signified.

Ferdinand de Saussure had already indicated that myths and rites are symbol-systems like language; also the patterns made by the lips for a deaf lip-reader, and the signals used by armies, boy-scouts, etc. The main thing is to distinguish between the two classes (a) the signifying (*le signifiant*) and (b) the signified (*le signifie*). To the first class belong all signs and markers, expressions, pictures, etc.; to the latter realities like meanings, ideas, thoughts, etc.

Claude Levi-Strauss¹¹ took de Saussure’s ideas and developed them in terms of human community, with Marx and Freud as his main signposts, with his vast anthropological erudition as material and of all things Geology as a type of reality-account with its own structure and movement - an enterprise that reminds one of the effort of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. Levi-Strauss wants to lay bare the ground-structure which regulates what we see as passing, random and accidental or contingent. In this the effort bears comparison to the effort of Heidegger to get to *sein* through the *Seiende*, an effort which has so far proved to be abortive. Just as in Freud the unconscious explained many conscious acts which otherwise remained unintelligible, Levi-Strauss seeks to make the accidental and the contingent comprehensible by making known the not-so-obvious structure which coordinates them.

11. The following works of Claude Levi-Strauss are now available in English: *Elementary Structures of Kinship*, Boston, Beacon, 1969. *The Savage Mind*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1966. *Structural Anthropology*, New York, Basic Books, 1963.

Lucien Goldmann tells us that all human data are comprehensible in two synchronous processes - one, destructuralisation of the structured; the second, structuration of the unstructured. Man initiates the two processes in his creative work. First he takes things apart, as children do instinctively, to see what the parts are. This is always necessary - to see individual parts in their detail and to know them as they are. But then he has to see their interrelations and put them together in some coherent order, so as to make "sense" of the details. Like a poet, who knows many words, if he puts down a lot of these words on a piece of paper, it makes no sense. But when he puts them together in a special way, they signify something which the words by themselves did not signify. It is his way of putting them together that has created this reality which did not exist before.

But the putting together was not according to some given rules consciously followed. It was more of an unconscious process. What the poet does, even the scientific researcher has to do. Knowing the individual elements in their detail, he puts them together in a specially structured way, and the individual elements are given by him a meaning and significance which they did not have before. Man is a meaning - creator by being a structure - maker.

Now do that same thing to the flow of history, to the river of time. Unveil the structure of the time process, which is a dynamic one. Not merely unveil, but break it up and build it up again. That is what the University Revolt of Paris 1968 meant. Daniel Cohn-Bendit who led that revolution explained what he was trying to do. The present structure of society does not bring out the true significance of man in the cosmos. A different rearrangement of the elements is necessary. Now, in the present structure of dehumanized, alienating, capitalist - industrialist, managerial society, the key element in the structure is the trained personnel who manage or man it. These are manufactured in the University. If you can break up the university, there will be no more technological - industrial society. If you can destroy the manipulative managerial system which runs industry and university for the benefit of the oppressors you can destroy the system. So use word and symbol and violence to destroy the system. So use word and symbol and violence to destroy the old system, so that a new

structure, which gives more meaning to all the elements, can be erected on its ruins.

The word, dominated by rhetoric and deceptive “missionary” talk - break it up. Capture the *parole* as once the revolutionaries captured the Bastille. Replace the word as a structural, functional agent.

The symbols, destroy them or capture them: The motorcar, symbol of privacy, individualism and property - destroy it. The barricades, revolutionary symbol - capture it or put it up. Clothes - abandon the styles which speak of middle-class bourgeois respectability, invent new styles fit for the revolution.

Violence - the expression of Will and spontaneity. Take to the streets, the symbols of unfettered space and language and contact - anti-institutional, unparliamentary, anti-intellectual space, the space of unmediated access. Express your violence in the streets and break up the structure.

That was how Roland Barthes¹² saw the 1968 May Revolution in Paris. It was a structuralist movement, structuralistically to be interpreted.

Creation is an unconscious process; but even an unconscious process, like painting good art, can be helped by some rules. We get these rules by analyzing different structures. Analyzing them without reducing or over simplifying, with full attention in details. Label and date each detail - don't say just “car”, but say “Fiat 1100D, 1974, blue, upholstery red, tyre-walls white, kilometers run up to 15th September 1976, 36,732, etc.” Always add etc. after saying the maximum you can of the details, because no reality is so closed. New aspects may later come to light. Then describe how it fits into the system, how it is used, who makes it, markets it, maintains it, how it is related to other realities like roads, spaces, houses, furniture, etc. Say how it differs from the bus, the lorry, the bullock-cart, the horse and carriage, etc.

12. Roland Barthes is a prolific writer. Some of his more important works, for our purpose, are *Critiques et verites*, Paris 1966, *Systeme de la Mode*, Paris 1967, *Introduction a l'analyse structurale des recits*, in *Communications*, 8/1966, pp. 1-27. *L'empire des signes*, Paris 1970.

Clarify all identities and non-identities. Man is part of nature. Man is different from the rest of nature. Wherein does the difference lie? In the fact that he uses fire to cook. He doesn't take 'nature' as it is given to him. He transforms it by cooking before he interiorizes it. Man is the animal who makes culture out of nature.

And if that is the identity of all men, it remains true that all men are not identical. They have names, their own non-identical identities. They have relations to each other: A is the sister of X, the wife of Y and the daughter of Z. Each one has such multiple relational identity which particularizes that person. All these relations must be labelled with appropriate signs - that is one of the things which Semiology (*semeion* (Greek) = sign) does. A whole algebra of relations, functional equations, begins to emerge.

To use this algebra of words, symbols, myths and poetry, to create a "poetic cosmography" which will liberate us from the tyranny of a monochromatic "scientific" world-view, this is what Levi-Strauss seeks to enable. He is not in any sense antisience. If anything, he becomes too scientific in his minute attention to detail, that it may be difficult for him to put it all together. And he has not yet shown us how he himself would put it all together again.

Structuralism as a quest for certainty is again a pains-taking philosophical enterprise that seeks to maintain the whole in relation to the parts and understand the parts in relation to the whole. It wants to keep all the details and yet allow the free play of creativity to put it together again. It can easily degenerate into the computerism or cybernetism which characterizes much that goes by the name of "Systems Analysis" today. The most glaring and widely noticed examples are the reports of the Club of Rome, about the Limits to Survival, which have recently stirred up so much debate.

Philosophical structuralism is, however, more than mere computerism or a simple reaction to Existentialism. It still remains an ambitious project to give new meaning to the manifold which one encounters as the world.

Structuralism, which deals with "systems analysis", should, how-

ever, not be mistaken for a philosophical system like Phenomenology or even Existenz philosophy. It is more of a way, a method, a technique, for getting at reality and doing it with some assurance of certainty. Not every structuralist follows the French school of Structuralism we have described above. The Marxist contribution to structuralism cannot be overlooked. Jan Brockman¹³ sees three way-stations along which Structuralism has developed: Moscow and St. Petersburg (together), Prague and Paris. He finds its roots in Russian Formalism of the Twenties, a time of great intellectual and spiritual stirring-up in the wake of the Revolution of 1917.

The Moscow Linguistic Circle was formed in 1915, with Roman Jakobson (born 1896) as its leading figure. His analysis of poetry as structure made a great impact on Russian intellectual circles¹⁴, and when he went to Prague in 1920 as cultural attache at the Russian Embassy, he began to influence Czech thinkers, thus leading to the formation of the Prague Circle in March 1925, in which both Husserl and Carnap gave talks in 1935. Jakobson with his colleague Tynjanov set forth in 1928 a programme for structural analysis and research in poetry and literature. In 1965, when the Paris Journal *Tel Quel* published an article on Roman Jakobson on the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Moscow Linguistic Circle, this was a stimulation for French Structuralist thought.

Particularly in France, Existentialism, Marxism and Structuralism have been conducting a three-cornered debate for some time now. When Sartre published his *Critique de la raison dialectique* in 1960¹⁵, it started off a debate which still goes on. The great Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget in his work on Structuralism¹⁶ examines the argu-

13. in his book *Strukturalismus*, Verlag Karl Alber, Freiburg/Munche 1971.

14. He is the theoretician of Russian Futurism through his two influential books on *Futurism* (in Russian, *Futurizm* - 1915) and *New Russian Poetry* (1921).

15. Paris 1960.

16. J. Piaget *Structuralism*, Eng. Tr. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971.

ments of Levi-Strauss in the last chapter of *La pensee sauvage* against Sartre's critique; Piaget comes to the conclusion that the difference between dialectical reason and the structuralist approach is not as great as the two protagonists make out. For Sartre the principal components of dialectical or Marxist thought are constructivism and its corollary historicism. We find Piaget affirming constructivism as an essential element in both structuralism and dialectical thinking. But Sartre claimed, now we can say wrongly, that constructivism was peculiar to philosophy and alien to science. Everybody, including Thomas Kuhn and Karl Popper, knows that science is a constructivistic and not a descriptive enterprise. But science itself requires the dialectical method and not merely the analytical reason. Construction itself begets the negations which lead to reconstruction, in science, in dialectical thought and in the structuralist method.

The other important protagonists who have entered the Marxist - Structuralist debate in France are the neo-Marxist or ex-Marxist ideologists L. Althusser¹⁷ Lucien Sebag¹⁸ and Henri Lefebvre.

Louis Althusser, one of the Black Sheep of the French Communist party, recommends a new reading of Marx himself in Structuralist terms. Insisting that Marx was at first a humanist committed to Man as Freedom and Reason, Althusser claims that he after 1848 became a scientific socialist. Humanism is an ideology, whereas Socialism is Science, according to Althusser's Structuralist thinking and the two cannot be identified or united. The early Marx was not scientific, but an ideologist who pursued the illusion of an "essence of Man." Ideology and science are both the effects of human knowledge, but in ideology the practical concern triumphs over the theoretical interest. Ideology is thus an unconsciously generated structure of a social totality, which imprisons man and dictates to him how he should see reality.

17. Althusser is the author of *Pour Marx*, Paris 1965 and *Lire le Capital* 2 vol. Paris, 1966 in both of which he makes references to the Marxism-Structuralism debate.

18. Lucien Sebag *Marxisme et Structuralisme*, Paris, 1964.

The later (post 1848) Marx, according to Althusser, abandoned the ideology of humanism and pursued the science of socialism, which takes observed details seriously in terms of how they relate to the totality of the structure and how they function within the structure. The mature Marx abandoned all concepts of *homo economicus* or *homo historicus* or *homo faber* as a definition of Man. We should also forget all pre-conceptions about Man as the centre or subject or object of world history. The true “subject” of economic activity is neither Man as Producer, nor Man as Consumer or Distributor; the true subject is the relations of Production, Distribution and Consumption. These relations build a complex system and scientific socialism, instead of being ideologically bound to some vague humanist theory of the past, should concern itself with the detailed and careful study of the economic relations, and on the basis of an accurate theory, developed by careful structuring and re-structuring of the details, should proceed to an adequate praxis.

No wonder Althusser’s re-reading of Marx has been furiously attacked by other Marxists as “the pseudo-structuralist re-reading of Marx.”¹⁹ This leads to the question “Is Structuralism ideology or science?” And here we find the neo-Marxists Levi-Strauss and Roland Barthes lining up on one side and the Marxists Jean-Paul Sartre and Lucien Goldmann on the other. While the Structuralists in general insist that Structuralism is a method and not an ideology, a method which provides for the possibility of pluralism in the construction and the reconstruction of structures or *Weltanschauungen*, their opponents want to dub them as ideologists with a pre-conceived or subconscious worldview. If Structuralism can be shown to be a closed system of ideas, like Empiricism or Rationalism, then it is practically difficult for it to claim to be a science.

It is understandable that French Marxists are provoked by Structuralism’s claims to be a scientific method and its attack on ideology. They are also fascinated by its scientific rigorism which lures away many Marxist theoreticians from their more dogmatically

19. See e.g. R. Aron, *Althusser ou la lecture pseudo-structuraliste de Marx* in *D’une sainte famille à Pautre*, Paris 1969, pp. 68-276.

ideological positions. Allhusser has quite a school of followers within the French Communist Party. Lucien Sebag in his 1964 work on *Marxisme et Structuralisme*, shows the limits and lacunae in traditional marxist theory, and seeks to fill up the blanks with the scientific knowledge of Man. Sebag has left the Party. He holds the view that the Marxist assumption of the primacy of the economic is an existential judgment and not a scientific one, based on no empirical deduction. Sebag is a disciple of Levi-Strauss.

Henry Lefebvre, member of the Party, mounts the attack on the Master himself. He accuses Levi-Strauss of trying to understand human society in terms of linguistic categories and system. Lefebvre's 1966 work on *Language and Society* and his article later in that year on *Claude Levi-Strauss and the New Eleatism*, was further developed in his 1967 polemic pamphlet, as an erudite attack on Structuralism. He locates Structuralism in the pre-Socratic hellenic tradition. Heraclitus (fl. ca 500 B.C.) and his school emphasized the common becoming of all things, Parmenides of Elea (born ca 515 B.C.) and his school regarded this understanding as deceptive and superficial, for it is the human mind that pulls all things together by thinking.

The strife between Heraclitans with their theory of the identity of all things and the Eleatics with their theory of the dialectic nature of all becoming, Lefebvre sees as a dispute between Immobilists and Dynamic Futurists, between counter-revolutionaries and revolutionaries. In the heart of the time-process the Scientist discovers discontinuity, analyses the stable parts, the chromosomes and the genes, the atoms and the elements, phonemes and morphemes. This scientific discovery of the discontinuity draws all domains into a common passion - Mathematics and Physics, Biology and Linguistics. And all sciences become seduced into this enterprise of taking things apart and putting them together in new combinations as it pleases them. This is the new game of Technology, which takes everything apart - universal time, world, life and even the future.²⁰ Thus the new Eleatics, the counter-revolutionaries, would seek to shut out every

20. Henri Lefebvre, in *L'homme et la societe*, No. 1, 1966, p. 26 cited by Gunther Schivy, *Der franzosische Strukturalismus* Rowolt Taschenbuch Verlag, 1969, p. 90.

element of surprise, of the accidental and the unpredictable, of the new and the revolutionary. They would like to build a world after the model of sub-human reality, to classify and label the individual participants of a society, and fit them as ‘functionaries’ into a bureaucratically controlled technocratic nationalized system, which needs and knows no future, but is sufficient unto itself. And all this in the name of Science! Perfection is defined as stability, uniformity, automation - in one word as the system. Structuralism is the ideology of the *status quo*, which wants to stabilize the present state of inequality between the rich and the poor, the industrially developed and the underdeveloped, between the mighty and the miserable. It is an ideology ‘of the fear of change, which, scared about the accelerated pace of change, wants to hold everything still by capturing it in their structuralist prison of a system.

Lefebvre’s polemic is echoed by Lucien Goldmann, who sees this Pan-structuralism as a reactionary sociological phenomenon: For Goldmann it is the philosophy of a society which seeks to assure for Man a set of relationships with a constantly improving minimum standard of life, but which in the process tends to relieve Man of all responsibility, of all concern about his own existence and the meaning of his life, of all need to reflect or be concerned about the problems of history and transcendence, even of meaning and significance. It is the basis for the development of a modern non-humanistic rationalism.²¹ Structuralism is not science, but ideology which falsifies science.

So much for the criticism of Structuralism which still goes on in France. The quest for certainty based on a method which sees the parts only in terms of the whole and the whole as more than the sum of the parts, despite all its painstaking earnestness is as yet far from the discovery of certainty. Small wonder then that a symposium on Structuralism²² had to say: “Let us say it frankly: when one asks us

21. Goldmann, *Structuralism, marxisme, existentialisme in l’homme et la societe*, No. 2, 1966, page 108.

22. Oswald Ducrot, Tzevetan Todorov; Dan Sperter, Moustafa Safouan, Francois Wahl - *Qu’est-ce que le Structuralisme?* Editions du Seuil. Paris, 1968.

about Structuralism, we do not know quite often what he is asking us about. First, there is a rumour running around among the frogs that Structuralism is something like a philosophy and that it would like to do away with many good things, among which is Man in particular. The fact is that one can count today two positivist Structuralisms (the second accusing the first of Empiricism); one Structuralism quite simply rationalist, two other structuralisms proclaiming the subversion of the subject (the second accusing the first of Reductionism); there is a philosophy in the classical sense which uses Structuralism, and many Structuralisms which claim to refute all philosophy, etc.”

The quest for certainty by a new method of knowing which would make knowledge quite certain has led only to the most amazing bewilderment and uncertainty. The clear logical mind of the Frenchman has produced a bewildering labyrinth of unclarity.

Modern Empiricism - Analytic Philosophy

To put all of that variety in one basket is dangerous, but inevitable in the brief compass of this paper. The Vienna circle and Rudolf Carnap, Bertrand Russell and Ludwig Wittgenstein, British ordinary language philosophy and Metaethics - they do make somewhat strange bed-fellows. Most Indian students of philosophy can be assumed to know enough about English philosophy after the war that I need only drop some names and make some references.

The original positivistic thesis of Auguste Comte that all human thinking goes through three necessary stages of development: first religious or theological thinking, second metaphysical or philosophical thinking, and then third and finally scientific and positive thinking, today stands largely discredited. Modern Empiricists are much more modest than to lay down such universal rules. They would like to confine their, remarks to what is observed and experienced. Philosophy cannot get to any general science of Reality. She must willingly abdicate her throne as the queen of sciences. The subject of philosophy is not Reality itself, but statements and ideas about reality that are made by the sciences. The analysis of language as the task of philosophy characterizes Linguistic Philosophy. And philosophy should use ordinary language for its philosophizing, without using abstract terms which cannot refer to anything in experience.

The Vienna Circle (in German *Wienerkreis*) played a key role in the development of modern Empiricism - a development which required the thought of the Austrian group to be transplanted in the soil of Oxford and Cambridge, there to be watered and nurtured by mathematical logic (Frege, Russell and Whitehead, etc.). The Vienna Circle was a study group of professors and scholars from the various scientific disciplines and they sought to explain to each other what they were doing in their various disciplines. They had to *justify* their methods to each other. The Circle soon disintegrated in the wake of the

Nazi annexation of Austria, and many of the scholars migrated to England and America.

Rudolf Carnap (1891-1970), for example, developed most of his thinking in Chicago, where he went in 1936, after having taught for five years in Prague, Czechoslovakia. His *Introduction to Semantics* published in 1942 and *Logical Foundations of Probability* (1951) had a great influence in the American development of Linguistic Analysis. Carnap tried to show: (1) what meaningful propositions in everyday language are; (2) how meaningless propositions can arise out of the meaningful in ordinary language; and (3) what logically correct language should look like. For example, you can ask the question: "What is out there?" The answer comes "outside it is rain." You can ask: "What does rain look like?" You can get a reasonable answer. But if you ask the same questions in a different context: "What is out there?"; answer: "nothing." Question: "What does nothing look like?" No reasonable answer can be given, for the question, legitimate in the first case, is not legitimate in the second, because though "nothing" is used as a subject, it refers to no thing and questions about what does not exist become meaningless. That is a "dirty trick" of language, which we must expose.

The exercise is by no means trivial. A lot of "nonsense" in everyday speech as well as in philosophy can be chased away if we can form adequate ground-rules for meaningful discourse. And this is basically the task of philosophy.

Where Kant sought to base certainty on the analysis of the knowing process, Carnap and the new Empiricists try to base their certainty on the right use of language. Kant began with the demonstration of the Synthetic a priori. The new Empiricist questioned the legitimacy of Kant's project and judged the synthetic a priori as meaningless. Empiricism thus becomes fiercely anti-metaphysical and radically anti-inductive. Philosophy now becomes a no-nonsense discipline; its subject-matter is the deliverances of the other sciences, their hypotheses and theories, their use of the evidence and so on. From his teacher (at Jena) Gottlob Frege, Carnap had learned his mathematical logic well. He asked questions like: Does proposition A

have the same meaning as the proposition B? Does A say the same thing as IV? Does B follow from A by logical necessity? Or by necessity of natural or physical law? What is a natural or physical law? What is its meaning?

Two ground rules for meaningful propositions:

- (1) A proposition in order to be true must be verifiable.
- (2) A proposition in order to be true must be statable clearly.

This “verification” demand soon became problematic, as the conviction grew that many of the deliverances of science were hypotheses which were not directly verifiable. Karl Popper came then to the rescue with his Falsification theory, without which so many so-called “natural laws” would have perished under the blight of the verification theory. “All copper conducts electricity” is a statement which is scientifically respectable, but can it be verified, until we have got all the copper in the world and checked to find out by “actual experience whether all copper conducted electricity or only some did? The very point of science is to enable us to predict what would happen according to natural laws - that is to say, to make the prediction that if an electric current is led into a copper wire, it will conduct it. This prediction is made only on the basis of repeated experiments, but not necessarily on the basis of an exhaustive experiment with all copper everywhere. In fact, most scientific knowledge is induced from partial experience. All inductive conclusions are only apparently certain. There is no guarantee that because in the past all copper has conducted electricity, it will do so always and everywhere. That is an assumption we make, and it works, at least until we run up against a copper wire that does not conduct electricity.

So Popper rescues science from becoming an inductive inference by proposing the falsification principle. That is, science says in fact, that it has not been the experience that in any given case copper does not conduct electricity. And the theory that copper conducts electricity is valid until experience shows that certain kinds of copper do not conduct electricity. The theory rests on the fact that it has not been falsified in experience.

But not all statements are of the same type as “copper conducts electricity” and some statements are more verifiable or falsifiable than others.

For example, a statement like “another planet with human beings does not exist” cannot be verified or falsified until the whole universe has been surveyed which in the nature of the case is not possible.

We can only mention here some of the problems of a thoroughgoing linguistic analysis as a basis for certainty or as criterion for truth in the briefest possible compass.

(a) All language is not scientific language. There are other languages, e.g. that of ethical exhortation or of poetic expression. Linguistic analysis has begun to work on the first, but not yet on the second in any substantial way.

(b) All truth is not necessarily statable. This is a controversial statement, but its verification or falsification can only be in experience, not necessarily in language. Ask any practitioner of Zen Buddhism.

(c) All scientific language is an artificial construction, a structure which we impose on reality as a hypothesis, and most of the data verify our hypothesis, but we tend often to ignore the data that falsify a hypothesis which we have found generally convenient. Science does not usually abandon one theory even when there are cases which falsify it, until it has found a better one. All science thus partakes of uncertainty, and the assumption that all reality will finally yield to our scientific method has no real basis in experience. The certainty of scientific knowledge is far from certain.

But linguistic philosophy has travelled a long way since the Logical Positivism of A. J. Ayer’s *Language, Truth and Logic* in 1936 with its debts to the Vienna Circle. Ayer’s easy phenomenalism (material-object statements are reducible to or translatable into statements about sense-data) has not stood the test very well. Continental philosophy usually uses analysis to go on to some synthesis. British philosophy seeks to stay with analysis out of a suspicion of construc-

tive systems. They fear, it seems, what man may put in into the construction while nobody is looking. With typical British modesty analytic philosophers make no claim to new knowledge, while the Structuralist for example would willingly admit that structure is a human creation, and that it is man's job to create structures in thought and culture.

But today even the term Analysis is going out of fashion in Linguistic philosophy. G. E. Moore had a clear theory of analysis - that analysis is a process in which a puzzling statement is replaced by another statement which gives the same meaning but is less puzzling. It seeks to clarify puzzling concepts (*analysandum* or the analyzed material) by providing an alternate and clearer formulation (*analysans*). So that we have the equation $analysandum = analysans$. But this sort of thing is no longer used by linguistic Philosophers. Bertrand Russell gave a different function to Analysis, namely that of breaking down a complex statement into its component parts. Russell also took care to sort out the confusion caused by the idiosyncrasies of the grammar of our languages. For example a supposedly true statement like "the average Indian family has 3.76 children" may logically lead to the conclusion that there is a family in India which has 3.76 children. The error can be eliminated by translating the first statement into what it really means: namely that the number of children in Indian families divided by the number of families yields the factor 3.76. This kind of clarification, by which we eliminate the mythical entity called "average Indian family" was very dear to Russell and the linguistic philosopher still delights in doing that sort of thing.

Logical positivism was an attempt not merely to eliminate puzzling or misleading statements by replacing them with clearer ones, but also an authoritarian ban on all "metaphysical" statements, to which *genre* belonged many of the statements of Russell. Metaphysical entities like "facts" or "concepts" are also eliminated. Thought equals statement or language. The new linguistic philosopher would be reluctant to make that identification.

The new Empiricism is much more modest and kind towards

metaphysics. They don't want to reinstate metaphysics as a means of knowing a reality which transcends experience, but to see metaphysical statements as attempts to carry out a high-level revision of concepts to redraw the map of thought.

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) born in Austria, a student of Frege and Russell, as has already been said, created two philosophies, which are still discussed in American and British philosophical circles.

His first pithy work, the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* published in Germany in 1921 and in England in 1922, still remains a classic, though repudiated by the author himself. It is consistently empiristic, except in its starting point, which in all Empirical Systems is usually metaphysical. The starting-point of the *Tractatus* is that the world consists entirely of simple facts, none of which is in any way dependent on any other, as 7 is not dependent on 17. These facts are the ultimate subject-matter of empirical science. Language has as its purpose the stating of facts. It pictures facts. It has thus a structural similarity to facts. But many facts are assemblages of other facts. And we have many silly linguistic conventions which makes many ordinary language statements mere nonsense. In fact even the statement that language pictures facts is nonsense, because it tries to give a picture of the pictorial relationship between language and fact. We need to construct an ideal language which is tidy and will not tempt anyone to talk non-sense. All philosophy is actually nonsense, and anyone who understood the *Tractatus* right will not be tempted to philosophize.

Well - Wittgenstein must have understood his own *Tractatus*; so he abandoned philosophy (they say the real reason is that he had a mystical experience while serving in the Austrian army in the first world war. He had already completed the work on the *Tractatus* before joining the army. It seems it was the reading of Tolstoy that triggered the mystical experience).

In 1929, he returned to Cambridge, this time permanently, living the life of an ascetic and almost a recluse. In 1933, the *Blue Book* came out, showing precisely why the *Tractatus* was nonsense, and

demolishing all traditional approaches to philosophy, his own included. He now thought it was impossible to construct the ideal language. Language was rather a social tool, there being an indefinite set of languages for differing social purposes, commanding, requesting, cursing, praying, joking, and so on. In fact all language is a game. And there are many games (don't you know Eric Berne's *The Games People Play?*). We learn these language games in childhood. One must not take anyone game to be all-important. We must understand which particular game we are playing. You must know the map, otherwise you may never be able to get out of the town and may be going round and round, like the fly inside a bottle, buzzing against the side instead of flying to the top. To learn the language games thoroughly is to have a proper map of thought and to find one's way around.

The Philosophical Investigations (2nd ed. Oxford 1958) is an attempt to get at these rules of the language game. Well, one game is trying to define a class of facts. Take the word game. How can you define what is common to cricket, bridge, and the language game. Is what is common that which makes it a game? Is it not neater to call these family resemblances rather than try to define what games are?

Philosophy does not explain anything. Everything lies open to view. Everything is on the surface. We make them unnecessarily complicated, because we overlook the simple and the familiar.

Now the present writer has a puzzlement. He has read Wittgenstein, both the former and the latter, several times. Why is he regarded as "a great and original philosophical genius"?²³ Somebody should unpuzzle me. I am not English. It is all too subtle for me.

* * *

Gilbert Ryle, whose lectures, at Oxford I have attended, continues to be more a luminary than the positivist Ayer, for linguistic philosophers. He has great affinity to Wittgenstein and was the first to clearly define the task of philosophy as "the detection of the sources

23. J. O. Urmson, Ed. *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Western Philosophy and Philosophers* (N. Y. 1960, *Sub voce Wittgenstein*, p. 411.

in linguistic idioms of recurrent misconceptions and absurd theories.”²⁴ Ryle’s *The Concept of Mind*²⁵ still plays an influential role in Anglo-Saxon circles. His strictures on the “ghost in the machine” concept of mind as an extra object inside the body are well taken. His notion that the University of Oxford does not exist apart from the colleges and that the mind is merely an ensemble of feeling, willing and thinking, and not an entity in itself has verisimilitude, and some people take that as the last word in describing the mind-body relationship. Again it puzzles me how people’s curiosity can be so quickly satisfied.

In the realm of ethics too linguistic philosophers like C. L. Stevenson and Hare have been doing some heroic plodding in the analysis of ethical language. The descriptive-prescriptive debate about the meaning and function of ethical language is not yet settled, and put in those terms is unlikely to be settled ever. The nature of the good is too deep to be grasped in the net of linguistic philosophy, woven with categories like descriptive-prescriptive or universalist and particular judgments (helping a blind man to cross a street when he wants and needs to do so, is *always* better than not helping him, says the universalist while the particularist refrains from making such a universalist judgment). Again the growing impression is that the point of diminishing returns has already been reached in the linguistic approach to ethical analysis.

Neither does one need to say much about Pragmatism which in some ways is related to Empiricism. The word *pragmatism* as a philosophical term comes from the American Professor C. S. Peirce (1878). William James and John Dewey used the word as a name for a way of thinking. The main point is of course to test the truth and untruth of a statement in terms of the experiential or practical consequences. Philosophy has thus to be expressed in the form: If A is done X will result and if B is done Y will result. Everything is to be

24. Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, 1931-32, developed further in G. Ryle, *Dilemmas*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1954.

25. London, Hutchinson, 1949. For a good summary of texts of Analytic philosophy see Robert R. Amrnerman, *Classics of Analytic Philosophy*, TMH Bombay-Delhi, 1965.

understood in terms of human purpose. For Peirce Pragmatism was a theory of meaning. John Dewey tried to make it a theory of Truth. Under Bertrand Russell's attack Dewey withdrew the claim to truth and was satisfied with looking for a criterion of "warranted assertibility." Pragmatism remains the major unsystematic and often concealed philosophical assumption behind a great deal of our current ordinary thinking, which is notoriously utilitarian. Everything is to be judged by its cash value in terms of experienced pleasure or utility. Somebody has yet to write a book on this common man's philosophy in our time. The most elaborate recent attempt to do so was a study undertaken and published by the Russell Sage Foundation in New York (1976) on *the Quality of Life, Perceptions, Evaluations and Satisfactions*.²⁶ The questionnaire used itself reveals the influence of pragmatism, which continues to be the most influential philosophy wherever American influence spreads.

26. Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse and Willard L. Rodgers (Editors) New York, 1976, 583 pp.

Marxism And The New Left

Karl Marx, though philosophically trained, was not a thinker who aimed at or achieved systematic philosophical consistency. Russian Marxism in the pre-revolutionary years of our century had to straighten out its ideas on philosophical issues without recourse to many answers in Marx himself. It is thus necessary to distinguish between Marxian thought, as reflected in Karl Marx's own writings, and Marxist thought, which developed on the basis of Marxian thought through many personal contributions from different writers in the period after Marx. One of the earliest of these 20th century ideological conflicts within Marxism seems to be coming back today in various West European Marxist parties.

Early Russian Marxism was opposed to the Slavophile or *Narodnik* point of view which espoused the subjective method in history and sociology, had a positive evaluation of the role of the individual, and believed in the special historical destiny of the Russian Nation and people. Orthodox Marxism claims to regard history and sociology as 'objective sciences', linked by necessity to the economic foundations of the relations of production and distribution by objective laws. This 'objectivism' which is a form of positivism or scientism, is today increasingly questioned in the Marxist world. Marx himself had explained that the 'historical necessity' of which he wrote in *Das Kapital* applied only to Western European societies, and was not meant as a universal law.²⁷ But G. V. Plekhanov (1856-1918), the systematizer of Russian philosophical Marxism, had ignored the Master's words, and had insisted on the total and universal objectivity of the laws of economic development.²⁸ It was also Plekhanov, who in his article *On Religion*, insisted on the incompatibility of Marxism with any religion. Though later he fell out with Lenin and became a Menshevik,

27. See Marx's Preface to Vera Zasulich's translation of the Communist Manifesto published in 1882, and Marx's letter to Vera on 8th March 1881.

28. See Plekhanov, *On The Question of the Development of the Monist View of History*, published (1895) under his pseudonym Bel'tov.

Lenin had endorsed his writings as the only consistent (from the point of view of Dialectical Materialism) critique of the theories of the revisionists. His philosophically most systematic work, *Fundamental Problems of Marxism* (1910, English Version, 1929) still remains a classic of Marxist philosophy. Lenin, who had high praise for Plekhanov's criticism of the critics, himself criticized Plekhanov for his too abstract and a historical approach to reality, for his non-materialist theory of knowledge, and for paying insufficient attention to the concept of 'the unity in conflict of opposites' in his understanding of dialectic; also for his over-emphasis on geographical determinism, for his failure to give a clear account of the dictatorship of the Proletariat in his theory of the State etc.

Philosophical discussion in Soviet Society is rather low-key at present. The most important discussion took place in June 1947. This was organized by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union on the book of Georgy Fedorovich Alexandrov (born: 1908): *A History of Western European Philosophy* (1946). The judgment of the Party on the book was harsh and severe, and has set the tone for the development of Soviet philosophy in the second half of the century. The principles emerging are:

a) Non-partisan objectivity has no place in Soviet philosophy. Philosophy itself is a tool in the hands of the proletariat, and when the academic philosopher carries on an elite discussion abstracted from the realities of the class-struggle, philosophy becomes seduced to serve bourgeois interests.

b) Soviet philosophy cannot remain the exclusive privilege of a small class of professional philosophers, it must be available to the entire Soviet intelligentsia and should be faithful to the interests of the working class; it must be powered by a militant zeal against the bourgeois-Capitalist ideology. It must therefore advance the progress of science for socialist construction and the anti-imperialist struggle. It must keep in touch with all other Institutes in the Academy of Sciences. It must be a *collective* and not an individual effort.

Thus was formed the new philosophical movement spearheaded

by the new journal, *Problems of Philosophy* (Voprosy filosofii), published by the Philosophical Institute of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR. Its objective is stated as:

“Carrying on an active and unrelenting struggle against the philosophy of bourgeois reaction and bourgeois objectivism, in the interests of the basic Leninist thesis of partisan spirit in philosophy and of a militant materialism The watchword of the journal is the wise saying of Stalin: to be master of Marxist - Leninist theory is to understand it, to develop it and to carry it further.”²⁹

From a bourgeois point of view, this control of academic research by the Party presidium in the Stalinist era, meant a stifling and retardation of genuine scientific research. Examples frequently given are the genetics debate about the Michurin-Lysenko theory of the transmission (non-genetic) of acquired characteristics, and the condemnation of the Marr School of linguistics which regarded language as an aspect of the super-structure produced by the fundamental structure of economic relations.

Stalin personally attacked the Western Mendel-Morgan theory of Genetics and the Soviet Marr³⁰ school of linguistics. He advanced his own theory of linguistics, which, strangely enough, asserts that there are certain social phenomena which belong neither to the basis (relations of production) nor to the super-structure, and that language is one of these elements not conditioned by class-structure, since it is created by not one class, but by the whole of society. Stalin wrote five articles on linguistics under his own name; his contribution has wide-ranging impact on the ideology of Marxism-Leninism, and has fundamentally altered it, in that it puts certain elements in culture outside the pale of the dialectic.

29. *Voprosy filosofii* 1949, 1, third end-paper, cited by Gustaf Wetter, *Dialectical Materialism*, New York, Frederick A. Baege, 1960 p. 188.

30. Professor Marr was the son of a Scottish father and a Georgian mother, converted to Marxism.

With Stalin's death on 5th March 1953 a new era begins in Soviet philosophy. De-stalinization and the attacks on the Cult of Personality were launched by Khrushchev in 1956, though the process had begun already soon after Stalin's death, but the Khrushchev era seems to have produced little original thinking. One major line followed by Khrushchev was a renewed attack on religion. 'Religious prejudice' is regarded as a remnant of the old order and should be resolutely fought against. This calls for an intensification of scientific atheistic propaganda, but this, intensification has been largely unproductive in philosophical terms.

Philosophy in the post-Stalinist Soviet Union seems to be centred around reaffirming the objectivity of the three laws of the materialist dialectic,³¹ especially the rehabilitation of the Law of the Negation of the Negation and in some minor changes in the theory of categories.³² An excellent summary of the developments is given in the American Loren Graham's work, *Science and Philosophy in the Soviet Union*.³³

The second chapter of the book is an interesting discussion of the *Soviet Marxist Philosophy of Science*, an account of how Soviet philosophy today explains the nature of reality. Dr. Graham makes the claim:

“Contemporary Soviet dialectical materialism is an impressive intellectual achievement. The elaboration and refinement of

31. The law of the transformation of quantity into quality and *vice versa*: the law of the mutual interpenetration of opposites; and the law of the Negation of the Negation; They are described in Engels' *Dialectic of Nature*. Stalin had discounted the Law of the Negation of the Negation.

32. On the categories see the collective volume: *The Categories of the Materialist Dialectic*, Yaroslavl, 1954.

33. Loren R. Graham, *Science and Philosophy in the Soviet Union*, A discipline-by-discipline account of the interaction of science and Marxist philosophy in the USSR, of the controversies in which Soviet scientists have been involved, and the relationship between Soviet Science and world science, Vintage Books, New York, 1974, pp. 584.

the early suggestions of Engels, Plekhanov, and Lenin into a systematic interpretation of nature is the most original creation of Soviet Marxism. In the hands of its most able advocates, there is no question but that dialectical materialism is a sincere and legitimate attempt to understand and explain nature. In terms of universality and degree of development, the dialectical materialist explanation of nature has no competitors among modern systems of thought. Indeed, one would have to jump centuries, to the Aristotelian Scheme of a natural order or to Cartesian mechanical philosophy, to find a system based on nature that could rival dialectical materialism in the refinement of its development and the wholeness of its fabric.”³⁴

Coming from an American philosopher of science who is not a Marxist, this should be regarded as very high praise indeed. The American learned journals have reviewed Graham’s book very favourably as an outstanding work of scholarship.

What then is the Dialectical Materialist view of nature according to Soviet Marxist philosophy? Perhaps Graham’s own summary expresses it more succinctly than what I can explain.

“All that exists is real; this real world consists of matter-energy; and this matter-energy develops in accordance with universal regularities or laws.”³⁵

Those are the three simple principles of Dialectical Materialist metaphysics. The first principle, (all that exists is real) agrees with the view of our Madhvacharya. The basic dualism of matter-energy reminds one of the Purushaprakrti dualism of Samkhya. The concept of universal laws or regularities has overtones of the Vedic concept of *rta*, as well as of modern scientific views about the regularity of natural laws.

Dialectical Materialism has thus managed to combine a realist epistemology (its *sabdapramana*), a matter-energy ontology and a

34. Loren R. Graham, op.cit., p. 430.

35. op.cit. p. 24.

process philosophy of change (Heraclitus) stated in terms of dialectical laws. It is true to say that while most modern Western philosophy fights shy of handling the fundamental metaphysical questions, Soviet dialectical materialism goes at these questions with confidence and simplicity. Soviet materialism does not encourage the purely humanist aberration or neglect of non-human nature. Man is part of nature, and the whole of nature, with man in it, is involved in the dialectical process of change. Dr. Graham cites Marx's doctoral dissertation written in 1839-41 entitled "The Difference between the Nature Philosophy of Democritus and the Nature Philosophy of Epicurus", to show that the young Marx long before the 1848 manuscripts, was really interested in the basic philosophical questions about physical nature and man's place in it. To Engels, the laws of history are parallel to the laws of nature, and both are involved in the self-same dialectical process. Marx never questioned Engels on this.

Lenin developed two further principles which stand basically discredited today - namely the "copy" theory of the relation between mental object and external object (Husserl?) the view that nature is infinite.³⁶ Neither of those can hold much water in the West today, though the latter is still a common view in the Soviet Union.

Much more important perhaps is the law of the dialectic as developed by later Soviet Marxists, especially among the younger ones today. They do not want to make the three laws of the dialectic into some kind of an iron frame into which all reality has to be fitted. Rather they look upon them as provisional statements, to be modified in the light of greater experience, but in their present form useful for explaining or understanding reality.

Engels had named three laws: the law of the Transformation of Quantity into Quality, the law of the Mutual Interpenetration of Opposites, and the Law of the Negation of the Negation. All these have their origin, in one form or another, in Hegel. But by selecting these three as the main laws, and adding the rather arbitrary but open list of "Categories" within which to analyse reality, and also affirming

36. Lenin, *Materialism & Empirio-criticism*, p. 271.

the methodological principle of the unity of theory and practice (from Marx's *Poverty of Philosophy*), Soviet Marxism developed its philosophical apparatus.

The difficulties begin only when they begin to apply these principles to an understanding of something like Quantum physics and mechanics, the corpuscle-wave nature of the micro-particle, or the influence of the measuring device on the behaviour of the micro-object. The attempt to explain the dual (corpuscular and undulatory) characteristics of sub-atomic particles in terms of dialectics cannot be said to have been totally successful. But then, what other philosophy has been successful in this regard? At least Soviet Philosophy has faced these problems. Reluctant at first to accept Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity (advocates in the Soviet Union of STR being branded as 'reactionary Einsteinists'), and concerned to defend absolute space, absolute motion and Absolute simultaneity as necessary concepts for the survival of Dialectical Materialism as a philosophy, scientists and philosophers in the Soviet Union have carried on a controversy on Quantum and Relativity which remains as yet unresolved. Only in the 1960's was Einstein's work published in the Soviet Union, but Academician A. D. Alexandrov (born: 1912) had to criticize him for not holding to the "objectivity of nature" and the material and causal-consequential structure of the world. Alexandrov holds to the absolute character of the space-time continuum, because its "objective nature" and "dialectical laws" are the corner-stones of Dialectical Materialism. For the same reason Academician Fock has challenged Einstein's General Theory of Relativity (GTR), though other Soviet scientists now accept GTR with qualifications.

Equally problematic in Soviet thought is the resolution of the conflict between various theories of the origin of the universe - 'Bing Bang' and 'Steady-state' theories are discussed philosophically in the Soviet Union. Great Soviet scientists like V. A. Ambartsumian have accepted the basic conclusions of science like the non-homogeneity of the universe, meta-galactic matter tending to the formation of irregular clusters and groups. He has also provisionally accepted the expanding model (big bang) of the universe, without accepting any hypothesis about the origin or birth of the universe. More

recently (in the late sixties) he has concentrated on the philosophical problem of forming a single naturalistic picture of how the universe began and evolved. He thinks it is premature to form such a picture, since our information about extra-galactic space is still limited. Super-novae, Pulsars and Qasars still remain inadequately explained.

Ambartsumian reaffirms the principle of the infinity of nature, and develops it into the hypothesis of double infinity - at the micro-level the sub-atomic particles are infinitely inexhaustible, and at the macro-level the universe is infinitely inexhaustible. He also concentrated on “unstable states” in the universe, which were the real motors of change and evolution, just as in society contradictions are the occasion for social change and evolution. This application of the principles of dialectical materialism to cosmic evolution constitutes a rather brilliant intellectual achievement. Problems remain unresolved, but only in a lesser degree than in Western cosmologies and cosmogonies. The final conclusion, of course comes from your ‘sabdapramana’, as Academician A. S. Arsen’ev wrote in *Voprosy Filosofii* in 1958: “The natural sciences cannot answer the question: Is the universe infinite or finite? This problem is decided by philosophy. The materialist philosophy comes to the conclusion that the universe is infinite in time and space.”³⁷

In cosmogony and cosmology, it is fair to say that Soviet science and philosophy, while willing to make use of the work of Western scientists and philosophers, has shown its own creativity in opposing some easily accepted conclusions of the West and in exploring their own independent avenues of exploration.

It is interesting to note that in Soviet Philosophy too, the final answers came from some form of *Smrti* or *Sruti*, i.e. from the *sabdapramana*, taken from the writings of Marx, Engels or Lenin.

37. *Voprosy filosofii* No. 8 (1958) p. 190. Cited by Loren Graham, op. cit. p. 179.

Marxism In The West

When one moves to the Capitalist bourgeois Western Europe one finds quite a good deal of intellectual activity among Western Marxists. Especially in France and Italy. In Germany the Frankfurt School of Social Research moved away from Orthodox Marxism long ago. The intellectual stimulation once provided by Adorno, Marcuse, Horkheimer and Jurgen Habermas is no longer forthcoming from Frankfurt. The flame there is flickering or perhaps already gone out.

France is in some sense the motherland of Socialist philosophy - one need only mention a few names: Babeuf, Saint-Simon, Fourier, Proudhon, and so on. But French socialist thought was never necessarily linked to the working-class. French Marxism today represents both the trends in Communist philosophy - a more Orthodox dogmatism and a less closed marxist liberalism. The dogmatists can be even more dogmatist than the ones in the Soviet Union; the liberals can be surprisingly in agreement with certain bourgeois thinkers. In fact French Marxist liberalism seems to be a product of a dialectic between Marxist humanism and bourgeois individualism. In individualism, the primary concern is with individual psychology, with the psychology of consciousness, with the individual existence, knowing process, sense-experience, imagination, etc. The question of psychogenesis as a social event thus focuses on the birth of the individual consciousness. Henri Wallon, President of the *Commission Scientifique du Cercle de la Russie neuve* in Paris, began in 1933 his work on the origins of thought from a Marxist or neo-Marxist perspective.³⁸ The socio-physical basis of language and thought when recognized, leads to certain basic modifications in Gallican-Marxist thought. Gaston Bachelard, starting from the perspective of a Marxist materialist dialectic, launched an attack on Empiricism, by charging that Empiricism deals with facts as they are evident, while science denounces this evidence to look for the laws hidden behind the

38. See his *Les origines de la pensee chez l'enfant* and his *Materialisme dialectique et psychologie*.

facts. Science is always thus knowledge of the hidden, not of the obvious. This is in agreement with Marx's own position in *The Capital* that if essence and appearance were the same, there would be no need for science as a discipline.

Roger Garaudy, building on the French tradition of a rationalism engaged in the fight against illusions and prejudices, sought to overcome the dogmatism of Orthodox Marxism, but the result was a complete break with the Communist Party, as was the case also with Herbert Marcuse in Germany. This is now a trend everywhere in bourgeois society - the development of a neo-Marxism or a new left which pays its tribute to Marx, but takes the liberty of forming an eclectic system which they call free and post-Marxist. Daniel Cohn-Bendit, the leader of the Paris Student Revolt of 1968, for example goes beyond Marxism with a superficiality that can only be characterized as adolescent, while Luis Althusser, without abandoning Marx, creates a neo-Marxism which the conventional Marxist has to abhor partly because of its seductive attractiveness. This is the state of French leftist thought today; starting with Marx they all go on to create their own systems - Cohn-Bendit with Marcusean liberalism, Althusser with the structuralism of Levi-Strauss, Sartre with his own kind of existentialism, Garaudy in a borrowing of transcendence from Christianity. The New Left in Western Europe and America seek short-cuts to Paradise which can attract only student radicals. It draws inspiration from China and the thought of Mao. Mao himself has just gone behind the screen of time. The immediate reaction in China seems to indicate an anti-Maoist seizure of power. A kind of pragmatism is taking over in China too. This must be disappointing to Western radicals who fondly hoped that China would open the doors of paradise for them.

In Marxism, one still has to wait for some upheaval like the Second Vatican Council in the Roman Catholic Church. If there is a reconciliation between China and Russia, as is quite possible, Marxism may prove again to be a vital force in world affairs capable of generating a powerful culture and with it a powerful philosophy. For the moment, not much seems to be happening, at least in the realm of philosophy.

Perception And Mind Games

Perhaps the most fashionable movement in Western thought is in the field of perception and consciousness studies. Satiety with the consumption-oriented personality model in Western Capitalist society is now sending people in quest of a new interiority, to a new frontier to be colonized, namely the human mind. One interesting consequence is a sudden collapse of the self-assurance of the scientific method as capable of unlocking all the doors to reality.

Science is now no longer regarded as objective in the old sense. Most philosophers of science would argue that science is a social construct, like art. Lawrence Foss has in periodical articles advanced the thesis that there are alternative theories of science which help us to pattern experience and reorganize the same phenomena, and we choose one theory rather than the Other because it is simpler or aesthetically more pleasing. This is also what art does. There are traditionalist scientists like Prof. Ronald Hoy of the University of Pittsburgh who have attacked Foss, but mainly with the charge that the latter is betraying Science and is not loyal to its tradition. Foss came back with a rejoinder in the *Philosophy of Science* 40, (June 1973) under the title: "Does Don Juan Really Fly?"

And that title brings us to Carlos Castaneda, the Brazilian-American anthropologist and his Guru, the Yaqui Indian medicine man Don Juan of Mexico. Castaneda's field notes of his apprenticeship to this American Indian practitioner of what we call witchcraft has raised a series of new questions for Western science. Castaneda's four books³⁹ document phenomena and experiences which cannot be explained by contemporary science. Laurence Foss takes Castaneda's work into account to assert that a social consensus is what shapes perception as time goes on, and cites as another example the scientifically

39. Carlos Castaneda. *The Teachings of Don Juan, A Yaqui Way of Knowledge*, Ballantine Books, New York, 1969. *A Separate Reality, Further Conversations with, Don Juan*, Pocket Books, New York, 1973. *Journey to Ixtlan Tales of Power*.

observed fire-walking ceremony among Sri Lanka Hindus. 80 tried; 68 succeeded, some of the remaining 12 were badly burn; one died.⁴⁰

The work of Castaneda has been adumbrated in J. C. Pearce's *The Crack in The Cosmic Egg: Challenging Constructs of Mind and Reality*.⁴¹ Pearce argues that the Western or so-called scientific cosmos is only one possible construct, and that others may be just as valid.

This same line is indicated by new developments in Brain Biology and the neurology of meditation techniques. The most important scientific workers in this field are Claudio Naranjo and Robert E. Ornstein, whose work *On the Psychology of Meditation*⁴² is well worth reading. Ornstein later published his own theoretical construct in a work edited by him and entitled: *The Nature of Human Consciousness*.⁴³ The same conclusions have been arrived at in the scientific work of J. E. Bogen and G. M. Bogen.⁴⁴ Several scientists has come to the conclusion that the Human Brain is at present the locus of evolution, which is not merely biological, but bio-cultural. The process has been going on for at least 10,000 years, but the process is accelerating. And we know now enough about how the brain functions, and can partly control and direct and manipulate the process of brain evolution.

Developments in Parapsychology, despite certain frauds and setbacks, are again being taken seriously. The October - December 1974 issue of the UNESCO Publication *Impact of Science on Society* is devoted to a study of the "Parasciences." New 'sciences' like Psychotronics, i.e. "the inter-disciplinary scientific investigation of the relationships among consciousness, energy and matter" are coming

40. Experiment reported in *Philosophy of Science* 10, pp. 73-76.

41. New York, Julian Press, 1971.

42. New York, The Viking Press, 1971.

43. New York, The Viking Press, 1973, see also his *The Psychology of Consciousness*, N. Y. The Viking Press, 1972.

44. The Other side of the Brain, III, *The Corpus Callosum and Creativity*. Bulletin of the Los Angeles Neurological societies 34 (1969) pp. 191-220.

into being.⁴⁵ Prof. John Beloff of the Department of Psychology of Edinburgh has edited *New Directions in Parapsychology*,⁴⁶ and Professor John Taylor, Hsad of the Dept. of Applied Mathematics at King's College, London, has published his serious work: *Superminds: An Enquiry into the para-normal*.⁴⁷ There is an abundant crop of books on altering consciousness, on exploring the mind and so on, which are of only partial scientific value, but are well worth examining.⁴⁸ If scientific perception gives access only to a fragment of the spectrum of reality, then other ways of gaining access to other aspects of reality will have to be examined. With the ecological crisis raising questions about the quality of life, with new discoveries in genetics and brain biology opening up new possibilities of shaping the human being, the question about the nature of the human being comes again to occupy the centre of the stage. Here we need the resources of all cultures to begin afresh to seek a more satisfactory, albeit provisional answer.

The quest for certainty by objective techniques was a fond hope of the West. It gave us a kind of science and a kind of technology. Now we must move back again to a new global effort to put our different *Sabdapramanas* together, to get all our *pratyaksa and anumana* to help in a critical evaluation of the various traditions, and perhaps to renew once again our varied approaches to reality. This is a global task for all the cultures to undertake together.

45. If interested write to The International Association for Psychotronic Research, Box 107, COTATI, Calif 94928, USA.

46. London, Elek Science, 1974, 174 pp.

47. The Viking Press, New York.

48. e.g. Marilyn Ferguson, *The Brain Revolution*, New York, Taplinger, 1974.

Lawrence Leshan, *The Medium, The Mystic and the Physicist*, Ballantine Books, New York, 1975.

Ira Progoff, *Depth Psychology and Modern Man*.

Barbara Brown. *New Mind, New Body*, Harper, 1974.

R. Masters and J. Houston, *Varieties of Psychodelic Experience*, New York, 1969.

do do *Mind Games*. New York, Delta, 1972.

Harold Saxton Burr. *The Fields of Life*, Ballantine, New York, 1972.

Developments In The Philosophy Of Science

There are two names that stand out in recent Western systematic thinking in the Philosophy of science: Thomas Kuhn and Karl Popper. They build on the work of others, like Georg Henrik von Wright, but in all cases the search is for a ‘methodological monism’, i.e. the effort is to reduce everything to one fundamental principle from which everything else follows by necessity. Especially among Empiricists there is the desire to reduce the laws of the natural sciences to a minimum possible, and then to bring every form of knowledge including the human sciences under the rule of the method of the physical sciences.

Wright calls it the “the subsumption theory of scientific explanation,⁴⁹ which follows the tradition of Galileo, in opposition to the Aristotelian tradition which emphasizes the intentional character of human purpose and therefore tends to a teleological theory of explanation. Science is basically explanation by bringing data under laws that relate them to each other, and therefore helps us to understand them. This is adequate for the natural sciences, but as Wright makes clear, this explanation is itself a human act and therefore purposive; can the act of understanding itself be subsumed under the laws of natural science?

Others would see ‘the Methods of Interpretation and Understanding’ themselves more as skills or art than as science, as for example in literary criticism or form criticism. If Hermeneutics or the art of interpretation is regarded as a science, it will be as difficult to subsume it under the laws of natural science as for example to bring painting and music under mathematical laws. Human purpose is some-

49. Wright’s important works are:

Norm and Action, London, 1963.

Explanation and Understanding, London, 1971.

Determinism and the Study of Man, London, 1975.

thing different than other kinds of causes. Is it also the effect of other causes, or does the human will intervene in the chain of causality to cause the cause-effect chain a rather than b?

Thomas Kuhn's *The Copernican Revolution*⁵⁰ has launched an interesting debate about the nature of science, which debate he has himself subsumed in his later work on the *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*.⁵¹ The debate itself can be followed in the symposium entitled *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*.⁵² It is an oversimplification perhaps to characterize the two sides in the debate as the normative view of science, and the 'cumulative' view of science. Karl Popper has come out definitely on the 'cumulative' side, in his *Objective Knowledge: An Evolutionary Approach*⁵³ while Thomas Kuhn adheres to the non-cumulative view of scientific knowledge.

The cumulative view holds that scientific advance is along two lines - the horizontal level of developing better instruments and techniques of empirical measurement and observation, and the theoretical or vertical level of making the theory better conform to larger and larger volumes of available data.

Kuhn says that this looks all right, but it also means that the ship of science has always been carrying a ballast of error, prejudice and myth which it only progressively discards. This jeopardizes scientific objectivity and certainty, according to Kuhn. Science, according to Kuhn, is the highest activity of the most evolved being on this planet. 'Scientific rationality', the highest form of activity, is exemplified in the exact sciences.

50. New York, 1957.

51. 2nd expanded edition, Chicago, 1970.

52. I. Lakatos and A. Musgrave, Ed. *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*, Cambridge, 1970.

53. Oxford, 1972. See also his earlier article in Lakatos and Musgrave: op. cit. pp, 51-58, entitled "Normal Science and Its Dangers."

The four positions about the nature of the Natural (or exact) sciences, has been characterized in the following way:

1) Hume's position: Natural Sciences proceed in an inductive and non-rational way.

2) Carnap's position: Natural Sciences proceed inductively and rationally.

3) Popper's line: Natural Sciences proceed non-inductively and rationally.

4) Kuhn's line: Natural Sciences proceed non-rationally and non-inductively.⁵⁴

Kuhnists and Popperians are still going hammer and tongs at each other. In science there is the evolutionary growth of knowledge, but also revolutionary leaps which fundamentally alter the very framework of understanding, such as in the shift from Newtonian to Modern Physics. When one looks at the Physics of Aristotle or the Astronomy of Ptolemy, what guarantee is there that some day in the future, our present Quantum Physics and Theories of Relativity, would have also been rendered laughably obsolete? We cannot simply assume that our present way of knowing with a few slight modifications *a la* Popper, will continue to do the trick for ever in science. Different scientific theories conceal different unproved assumptions as more recently demonstrated in works like Prof. Siegfried Muller-Markus' *Proto physik*⁵⁵ which elaborates the 'proto-physical (not

54. The summary is from Wolfgang Stegmüller, *Hauptströmungen der Gegenwartsphilosophie*. Band II, Alfred Kroener Verlag, Stuttgart, 1975, p. 490. Stegmüller admits that the characterisation of Kuhn's line is formulated in this way by his critics, and not by himself.

55. Part I, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1971, 427 pp. He has promised a second volume on The Protophysical assumptions behind the Quantum Theory. Protophysicals, according to the author is "the discipline which outlines, categorizes and examines the tacit assumptions and intellectual commitments which the acceptance of a theory like relativity entails." These are prior conditions to the possibility of the establishment of a mathematical theory.

meta-physical) implications of and assumptions behind Einstein's Relativity Hypothesis.

The idea that scientific knowledge is always based on certain *Glauben-Sactze* or faith-assumptions is gaining ground among scientists and philosophers of science, and quite often it is impossible to decide on rational grounds whether these assumptions are right or not. They are choices, commitments, decisions, rather than objectively demonstrable facts.

Kuhn would say that science does not advance by the normal or ordinary scientific research, but by some extraordinary leaps of research. Kuhn would follow Wittgenstein in saying that scientific research is also a game, a kind of human play. There are family resemblances between all games - the Aristotelian, the Newtonian and the Einsteinian, but they all have different rules and different equipment.

The vehemence with which British Empiricists like Popper and his disciples attack Kuhn's understanding of science comes from the underlying fear that this approach undermines the concept of scientific objectivity. If science is basically problem-solving as Popper says, every proposition P1 or P2 or P3, leading to problems of its own, then all scientific theories stand in need of revision and are not finally or objectively true. When two concurrent theories exist for explaining the same phenomena, it is not the case that simply another experiment will show which theory is more true. The corpuscular-undulatory debate about the nature of light is itself a case in point. There is experimental evidence for both theories. Only a scientific revolution will take us beyond. But when a new theory substitutes the old theories, the new theory (*Ersatztheorie*) will not be merely an improvement of the abandoned theory. The two are mutually incommensurable, according to Kuhn. The decision to abandon an old theory is the decision to adopt a new one. But the old is abandoned precisely because it is not fully rational. The new however, is not fully rational either, for it too stands in need of revision.

Kuhn's view is that all scientific development has an element of psychology, sociology and culture to it, not merely human rationality. There is always an irrational element in all science. Some theories

are practically immune from the in-roads of the falsification principle by empirical experiment. Revolutions in science are always to be anticipated and hence any sense of assurance about scientific objectivity is bound to be premature.

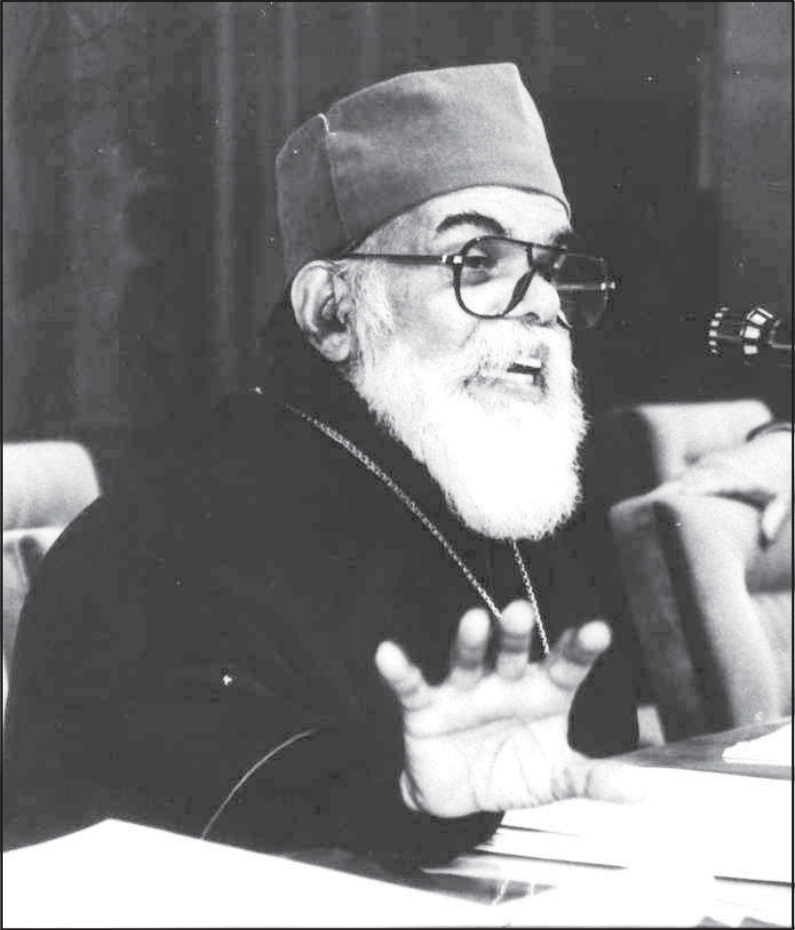
Concluding Remarks

Pure rationality remains a chimaera, not yet tracked down by science or philosophy. Man chooses and decides, sometimes without knowing what he does. Man shapes reality, not only by his technological manipulation of it, but also by his chosen method of looking at it.

And certainty of an objective nature comes easy only to the uninformed and the unreflective.

If decision is that important, which *sabdapramana* will give us a reliable criterion? The question seems worth pursuing. In any case, the question is not whether objective knowledge is possible. There seems to be no path to certainty through the analysis of the knowing process, or through seeking assurance about the infallibility of the process.

Ultimate knowledge seems to be both a decision and a gift. The questions that plague us today are not to be answered by rationality or science. What is my relation to other human beings? What is my relation to the rest of reality? And what is the relation of appearance to reality? These are three questions for which science is unable to find the answer. There are primordial answers offered in various cultures and religions. The best we can do is examine as many answers as possible, and then come to our own decision. Still we would have to wait for the gift, before certainty comes, it seems.



Part 2

Reflections on Indian Philosophical Traditions

Nagarjuna, Dignaga, And Dharmakirti

The Three Bright Stars In The Firmament Of Indian Thought

Anirodham anutpadam anucchedam asasvatam
 Anekartham ananartham anagamam anirgamam
 Yah prativityasamutpadam prapancopasamam Sivam
 Desayamasa Sambuddhah tam vande vadatam varam

Unextinct, Unoriginate, Unannihilate, uneternal
 Not Monistic, Not pluralistic, Not coming to be, Not going out of
 existence

Thus conditionally co-originate, Abater of the illusory manifold,
 Auspicious,

Great Teacher of the Nation, Well-Enlightened, Thee I salute, O
 noblest of speakers!

(Opening Invocation of *Madhyamakakarika*)

We as a people ought to be proud of all three: Nagarjuna (ca 150 - 250), who already in the second century of our era attained a level of astuteness of dialectical analysis, both unprecedented and also unsurpassed, before or after, not only in India, but in any of the cultures of the world as far as I know; Dignaga (480-540) the Master of Indian Logic and Epistemology, who took those disciplines to the highest conceptual formulation, still very relevant to us in the context of our cultural crisis in India; and Dharmakirti (ca 600-660), called by Prof. Stcherbatsky the “Kant of India” who took Dignaga’s thought to its high culmination.

At the outset I must express my regret that I myself had for many years failed to notice these three bright stars in the firmament of Indian thought. Only of late have I noticed them and come under their Charm. My education in India was not only inadequate, but also sadly misleading, covering up, or at least never drawing my attention to,

some of the noblest achievements of Indian thought and experience. More than half of my educated friends to whom I mentioned these three names, had never even heard of them before. Only some had just heard of Nagarjuna, but Dignaga and Dharmakirti were unknown names to many. Their education too was defective, like mine.

The reasons for this obscuring or ignoring of some of our great Masters of the Past, are not far to seek. Most educated Indians have heard about Sri Sankara, Ramanuja and Madhva who are regarded as teachers of the world - *lokacharyas*. Nagarjuna, Dignaga and Dharmakirti, the three that I am now introducing, have had a far greater role in teaching the world, and in teaching Indians as well. If the Indian memory has to be jagged into acknowledging these three who can be regarded as among the best India has ever produced, the reason is that we have been fed a very distorted and one-sided image of our own great *Bharatiya* heritage. I am, I think, justified in feeling rather proud of that heritage of ours, which, I am convinced, is second to none in the world. But I cannot be proud of that educational system and cultural ambiance which did not give me easy or early access to some of the most admirable aspects of that heritage, namely the great traditions that stem from Gautama Buddha and Jaina Mahavira.

In these days when narrow religious one-sidedness worsens into disturbingly distorted, dishonest, and fanatic if not Fascist, forms of totalitarian identity impositions, it may be useful to highlight some of the Buddhist thought and experience of the first seven centuries of this era.

I am not intending to add to the corpus of our knowledge of Buddhism. I am hardly competent to attempt anything like that.

When Pythagoras the ancient Greek sage, who was a contemporary of Sri Buddha, was honored by his admirers with the title *sophos* or "Wise One" he demurred with characteristic modesty by saying: "Please do not call me a Wise One or *Sophos*. I would much rather be known as a Friend of Wisdom: a *Philosophia*." Similarly, I must say that I am not a Buddhist, but only a Friend of Buddhism, a *Philobuddhadharma*, if you will forgive that uneasy mixture of Greek

and Sanskrit.

I wanted to say that I am a *Bodhisattva*, but I hesitate. Because that word sometimes denotes one who is close to Buddhahood; no, if I were to claim to be a Bodhisattva, it will be only in the sense that I am at the beginning of my pilgrimage to *bodhi* or *samyagsambodhi* which for me means true Enlightenment, so different from the Western Enlightenment which has so lamentably brainwashed our intellectual elite.

But I know that I have a long way to go yet. In my pilgrimage, the *Bodhisattva* ideal inspires me: filled with love and joy in the spirit, even in the midst of suffering; rejoicing when reviled; unresentful when ridiculed; blessing when cursed; bowing humbly to all, not puffed up with pride; compassionate to all, especially to the weak and the oppressed; desirous of giving freely and generously, even if not always succeeding; pursuing peace, eager for reconciliation, seeking the healing of nations and peoples as well as persons; striving to bring the body and the passions under control, intent on one-pointed meditation, making constant meditation and prayer a habit; wanting to be strong and kind enough to be a refuge to the weary and the lost, to comfort the broken hearted and the sorrowing; caring for all and willing to sacrifice oneself for the good of others; to seek a world with peace and justice where all can live a dignified life, searching and finding meaning and fulfillment. That is my *Bodhisattva* ideal; the present formulation of it is my own, an adaptation from the *Tathagataguhyasutra* (*sikshasamuccaya* of *Santideva*). To this *Bodhisattva* ideal I am committed, by virtue of seeking to follow my Master, Jesus Christ.

Nagarjuna followed that ideal resolutely and with determination. Centuries before Sankara, Nagarjuna showed us how intellectual vigor can be combined with spiritual depth. For me as a humble student of world philosophy, I think this is the distinctive feature of Indian philosophy and spirituality - the total integration of mind and spirit. I do not find this in a Hegel or a Kant, in a Descartes, or a Bacon, in a Rousseau or a Voltaire; I do find it in Plato and Plotinus, in Tao-Te and Hua-Yen, in Augustine and Jaspers, but definitely to a lesser de-

gree than in Nagarjuna. For me I notice more intellectual - spiritual consistency and astonishing contemporary relevance in Nagarjuna than in Plato or Sankara.

I do not think that the thought of Nagarjuna has been significantly superseded in terms of ontology and epistemology, throughout these 1800 years of history, in any of the cultures of the world. Not only is his vision still fresh as the dawn; most of the philosophical problematics of the world, except perhaps the philosophies of science/technology and political economy, have been already anticipated by him more than a thousand years before - the problems of epistemology and knowledge, of causality and time, just to mention a few of the more prominent problems. Human thought has not significantly advanced beyond where Nagarjuna left it, on these basic issues of ontology and epistemology. And even our modern science/technology and our understanding of the goal and orientation of life will be significantly and perhaps radically altered if our planners and thinkers and scientists will pay careful attention to what this great Indian mind can show us.

But Nagarjuna was more than an academic philosopher. Above all, like Sri Buddha, Nagarjuna was a great Spiritual Master. We cannot do justice to the range and depth of his teaching in this brief paper. I proceed therefore to sample two aspects of his spiritual and intellectual heritage. The first is from his friendly letter or *suhrllekha* addressed to his contemporary, the Satavahana King Gautamiputra, son of queen Balasri, the only Satavahana king known to have embraced *Buddhadharma*. Since the King was not a monk, we can take the *Suhrllekha* as an example of spiritual direction for the Buddhist lay people.

The Chinese pilgrim I-Tsing who visited India in the 7th century writes thus about the *Suhrllekha*: "In India students learn this epistle in verse early in the course of instruction, but the most devout make it their special object of study throughout their lives." Even today the Tibetans use it as a sort of standard manual of instruction. It is brief, but comprehensive. I can here only cite some excerpts, to whet your appetite. Unfortunately I have no access to a Sanskrit text of the *Suhrllekha*. The Tibetan text, with an English translation is available:

Nagarjuna's Letter to King Gautamiputra, (Motilal Banarsidass, 1978). The excerpts below are slightly adapted, and edited for style.

Six things remember and recollect always:
The Buddha, His Dharma, the Noble Sangha,
Generous giving, the Practice of Virtue, the Divine Beings. (4)

Practise the Ten Virtues of Body, Speech and Thought
(i.e. abstain from killing, stealing, and sexual immorality,
from lying, slander, malicious talk, and idle chatter,
from greed, bitterness and wrong belief)
Refrain from intoxicating drink,
Delight in a clean and wholesome way of living.” (5)

Look upon these as enemies: Miserliness, Pretension and Deceit
Attachment to Property, Laziness, and Pride
Lust and Amorous Liaisons, Hatred of enemies,
Haughtiness about one's caste or bodily appearance,
Conceit about one's learning, youthfulness and strength. (12)

Be alert, ever heedful, mindful; heedfulness brings liberation and life;

Heedlessness brings bondage and death;
If you have been heedless in the past, become heedful
And you shall shine like the moon in a cloud-free sky (13-14).

True penance lies in patience; give anger no chance to arise;
As the Buddha said, Give up Anger; thus you will enter the irreversible path of the *Bodhisattva*.

Do not complain: they abused me, they beat me up; they robbed me of my property;

If you harbour enmity or resentment, bitterness and quarrels alone result;

Give up harbouring enmity, and you will sleep more peacefully (15-16).

Rightly understand the nature of existents, no existent is Ultimate Truth

All is *sunya*; attach not yourself to the world of object and concepts.

Remain indifferent, O Knower of the World, to the Eight worldly dharmas

Gain and Loss, Happiness and Unhappiness,
Flattering words, Unpleasant words, Praise and Blame
They are all equal - equally unworthy of your mind (29).

The Preceptor of gods and men has said
Contentment is the greatest wealth
So be content, whether you possess wealth or not
Being content without worldly wealth makes you truly rich (34).

Zealously practise the five great virtues:
Attention of faith; Energy and effort;
Mindfulness and Meditation, and above all true Wisdom.
These shall be your true strength, your power,
Your true attainment (45).

Thus it has been said:
The form is not the Self; neither does a Self possess form;
Self dwells not in form; neither does form dwell in a Self;
Also empty are the four other *skandhas*:
(feeling, perception, predisposition and consciousness) (49).

O Noblest of Humans, all things are impermanent,
Without self, without refuge or protection, homeless;
Free your mind from *samsara*; it is like the pithless plantain tree
(58).

The Sage declared:
From *avidya* or non-wisdom arise *samskaras* or predispositions
From *samskaras* Consciousness or *vijnana* arises
From *vijnana*, comes *namarupa* or Name and Form
From *namarupa* come the six object-senses, the *shadayatana*
From the *shadayatanas* arise Contact or *Sparsa*
From *Sparsa* comes feeling or sensation or *Vedana*
On the ground of *vedana*, *trshna* or desire or craving arises
From *trshna* comes clinging or *upadana*
From this clinging *bhava* or existence or becoming arises
From this *bhava*, *jati* or birth arises.
Where there is birth, mountains of troubles arise

Duhkha or Distress, *Jara*, (disease) *nara* (old age)
 Frustration, Fear of death and all the rest.
 Put an end to *jati* or birth and all these will cease (109-11).

This teaching of *Pratityasamutpada* or Conditioned Co-origination
 Is the profound and precious treasure of the Teaching of the Great
 Victor;

One who sees this sees the most excellent Buddha, the Reality-
 Knower.

In order to attain peace, practice the Noble Eightfold Path:
Samyagdrshiti or All-fitting Vision, Right Way of Living,
 Right disciplined effort, Right Mindfulness, Right meditation
 Right speech, Right Action, and Right Thinking (113).

O fearless One, thus says the Blessed One:
 The Mind is the root of virtue, So discipline your mind.
 This is good and wise counsel
 No need to say any more (117).

There is a great deal in the present text of *Suhrillekha*, which I
 regard as later interpolations by lesser minds. A critical study of the
 text, with comparison of the Chinese, Sanskrit and Tibetan texts will
 help us along in this process. The discussion on heavens and hells, the
 passages about giving gifts to *Brahmins* and other points need no
 further examination.

The Dialectic Or *Prasangika* Method

We have time here only to illustrate briefly Nagarjuna's dialectic
 method, which he perfected. The *Prasangika* method, the main form
 of *Madhyamaka* argumentation, is to take your adversary's argu-
 ments and refute them by showing their weaknesses and inconsisten-
 cies - *reductio ad absurdum*. One's own thesis or *pratijna* which
 forms the *poorvapaksha* of a three-tier argument; the adversary's
 counter-argument is a *prasajyapratsedha* or negation of a proposi-
 tion. When that counter-argument is reduced to absurdity by a syllo-
 gism, the original *pratijna* stands established.

But Nagarjuna claimed that he has no *pratijna* or proposition to

offer; even his Statement that all is *sunya* is not to be taken as a proposition valid at all levels. His attack is directed against all forms of Realism - Samkhya, Vaibhasika (a Buddhist sect of the *Sarvastivada* tradition) or *Prachina-nyaya*.

For me personally it is Nagarjuna's refutation of Realism that makes him extremely relevant to our time. Realism can mean many things in western usage. To some it means the reality of universals, apart from the particulars. To the Machiavellians it means simply not being bound by ethical considerations in the exercise of power. In western philosophy it means the belief that matter, things, objects have "real" existence independent of our perception of them.

This view, that things are actually as they appear to us, objectively, independent of our subjective perception of them, was once the viewpoint of modern science. But quantum Physics clearly shows that the observing subject is inescapably a part of the observed object, and that "things in themselves" cannot be known by any mind. But most of us continue to be "Naive Realists" not finding any need to question the "reality" of the world of the objects of our perception. Immanuel Kant had sought to demonstrate already in the 18th century that the concept is a joint creation of certain effects created on us by the object and the structure of the knowing subject's mind.

"Realism" is a superstition; science does not claim any more that things are real. But ordinary people keep clinging to this superstition, without stopping to examine it. This is true also for Government thinking and planning as well. Our educational system also perpetuates the superstition and instils into children's minds. The end result is a consumerist civilisation and the commodity fetishism of our culture and our political economy. It is in the re-examination of this "naive realism" that Nagarjuna can help us, above all.

Let me now proceed to give a sample of Nagarjuna's basic affirmation about the nature of reality. It is not a positive proposition or *pratjna*; it is more of a negation or *pratishedha* of other peoples' propositions.

Nagarjuna: *Na svato napi parato na dvabhyam napi ahetutah*

utpanna jatu vidyante bhavah kvacana kecana

Neither of itself, nor of some other, neither from both nor uncaused
Nowhere is known any existent coming into being MadhKar 1.1

Adversary: *Sarvesam bhavanam Sarvatra na vidyate svabhavascet*

Tvadvacanam asvabhavam na nivartayitum svabhavamalam

If the intrinsic nature of existents everywhere does not exist
Then your statement has no intrinsic nature and cannot negate
intrinsic nature . VigrVyav 1.1

Nagarjuna: *Hetupratyayasamagryam ca prthak capi madvaco na yati*

Nanu sunyatvam siddham bhavanam asvabhavatvat

If my statement exist in the cause and conditions of it, or independently of them

Then the sunyata of existents is established by their not having intrinsic nature.

In other words, Nagarjuna negates all *svabhava* for the *bhavas* or existents. His adversary argues that if all is *sunya*, then the statement that all is *sunya* is also *nisvabhava* and therefore *sunya*. Nagarjuna rejoins that if his own statement were not *nihsvabhava* and therefore not *sunya*, then his statement that all is *sunya* would not be universally true, for the statement, if it were true would be a contradiction of itself. Therefore Nagarjuna says that his statement that all is sunya should not be taken as a truth with its own intrinsic nature.

He goes on to say: All existents are *sunya*, because they arise only under certain conditions, ie. *pratityasamutpanna*; they are all *hetupratyapeksha*, or dependent on causes; but existents have a function which they fulfil in the *samvrtisatya* or level of everyday reality. My statement also has the function of affirming the *nihsvabhavata* of all existents. Not in itself, my statement is also *sunya*, *nihsvabhava*.

In the *Vigrahavyavartani*, (31) Nagarjuna raises the first time in

human history the problem of all epistemology, or in our language, *pramanavicara*. It does not matter how many basic *pramanas* you hold to: just *pratyaksha* like the *carvaka*, or *Pratyaksha* and *Anumana* as in Dignaga, or adding *agama* as a third in many systems, or adding a fourth called *Upamana* in the *Naiyayika* system which Nagarjuna takes as his target; the question of Nagarjuna is the same: By what *pramanas* did you get your list of *pramanas*?

Yadi ca pramanatas te tesam prasiddhir arthanam
 Tesam punah prasiddhim bruhi katham te pramananam

If by such and such *pramanas* such and such objects are established for you

Please tell me by what *pramanas* these are established for you.

As Nagarjuna goes on to argue, if the *pramanas* are established through other *pramanas*, then the series can go on in infinite regression, which is absurd. If on the contrary you are trying to establish those *pramanas* without basing them on any other *pramanas*, then your *vada* is finished; it has no basis. If the *pramanas* are self-established, then your means of true cognition as you call them are independent of the objects of true cognition, then what relation can they have to those objects? (41)

My purpose was only to whet your appetite by sampling some of Nagarjuna's powerful *prasangika* logic.

(*One of the two Lectures at the Tushita Mahayana Meditation Centre, New Delhi, 16th and 19th September 1994*)

***Sabda/Sakti* And Word/Spirit**

A Surface Analysis Of Two Concept Systems

Scholars are sometimes besieged by an often unjustified desire to find too easy parallelisms between surface-similar concepts in two radically different thought systems. As an instance of the perils of this temptation, we shall look briefly at two such concept clusters in Ancient Indian and in Mediterranean Christian systems of perceiving and articulating the nature of Reality: *sabda/sakti* and *word/spirit*.

The concept of *Sakti* is definitely pre-Brahmin in its origin in India. Most of our very ancient systems of reality-perception in India are *sakti*-based in one way or another, parallel to *mana* and other similar notions in all ancient cultures. We see marks of this ancient concept of *Sakti* in current *Shaivite* as well as *Tantric* traditions. *Sakti* is the coiled serpent - the *kundali* or *Kundalini* - waiting in the lowest *chakra* of the *subtle body*, the *muladhara*, to be awakened, and once awakened, to pass through the various *chakras*, ultimately leading to self-realization and bliss.

Sabda on the other hand seems more distinctively Brahmanic, best exemplified in the concept of *nadabrahma*, the original cosmic vibration of sound that creates, holds up and guides the universe.

Both *sakti* and *sabda* have their parallels in the Judaeo-Christian tradition of West Asia. The *sakti* concept is central to that awesome name of God - Yahweh - *Tsebaoth*, often translated "Lord of the Hosts", but literally the "He - who - is of the powers." Sometimes these powers or *sakties* of Yahveh can be personalized, but in essence, the Powers are in plural, and always attached to the One God-creator. The powers, sometimes also called the principalities, can be opposed to the will of God and have in the end to be brought to subordination and control by Christ himself. If at times the Powers can revolt, in Judaism and Christianity, they are always subject to the authority and control of God. They have no independent existence as in some forms of Hinduism.

In the Indian tradition *Sakti* is a single power latent both in Nature and in the Human body-soul, the latter being a microcosm of the former. It is a goddess, the passive power, waiting for the union with the active power in the *Sivalinga*. For the Hebrews on the other hand, 'powers' are always multiple, and have no independent role or existence.

The concept of *sabda* however reveals more thorough - going parallels between the two traditions. *Sabda* is Brahman; *sabda* is with Brahman from the beginning; without the *sabda* nothing at all can come into existence. It is like the Hebrew *dabar* and the Greek *logos* in the Judaeo-Christian scriptures. It is God or *Brahman* giving birth to Himself, in order to create the universe; but even after giving birth to that which is perfect, the original begetter remains perfect and undiminished:

Poornamadah; poornamidam
 Poornad poornamudacyate
 Poornasya poornamadaya
 Poornamevavasishyate

Wholeness there; wholeness here
 This wholeness arises from that Wholeness
 Take away wholeness from Wholeness
 Wholeness alone remains.

In the Christian scriptures, the relation between *Theos* and *Logos* is largely analogous, though the terms used to denote that relation are noticeably different. The *logos* is *Theos* (*Theos en ho logos*); the *logos* is also ever existent face to face with *Theos*. The author of the Epistle to the Colossians (2:10) puts it this way:

In Him dwells the whole fullness of Godhead bodily
 En autoi katoikei pan to pleroma tes Theotetos somatikos.

We should not forget, however, that in the Indian traditions the word *sabda* is used in two different meanings. The technical meaning of *sabda*, apart from its ordinary meaning of just 'sound', is that of one of the four *pramanas* (*pratyaksha*, *anumana*, *upamana* and *sabda*), especially in the Navya Nyaya tradition. Here *Sabda* can mean the scriptures, the words of the Guru, and even a good

saying by any Sage (*Aptavacana*). In this usage *sabda* simply means spiritual testimony, wherever it comes from.

The more metaphysical sense of *Sabda* occurs in the concept of *nadabrahma*, which literally means ‘sound god.’ This need not mean sound made by the word; it could be, as in later iconography, simply the drum-beats of the *Siva-tandava*, the cosmos-creating dance of Siva. It could also explain the significance of the chanted Vedas and other mantras, which get part of their efficacy from being in consonance with the original sound-wave which constantly creates and sustains the universe.

Bhartrhari (d. 651) in his *Vakyapadiya* expounds this doctrine of *sabdadvaita*, and develops a new non-dualism based on the concept that the original creative resonance is the only reality, from which everything else has come to be. It is that same original resonance which then reverberated in the vedic chants, and would re-echo the original creative *sabda* if properly recited today.

The Tantric tradition also attaches great importance to various sounds, some of them somewhat rough and crude, as necessary for self-realisation. It seems thus that the concept of creative *sabda* is shared by both Vedic and Tantric traditions.

A surface-similar concept in the Judaeo-Christian tradition is Word, *logos* in Greek, *dabar* in Hebrew, as we have already noted above. *Dabar* in Hebrew, normally means both the word and the thing signified by the word. In Greek, *logos* becomes a term deeply philosophical in meaning. The Christians, in saying that *logos* is God, had to speak however of the Father as God, as distinct in Person from the *Logos* who was identified with the Son, with Jesus as the once-for-all incarnation of the Eternal Only-Begotten.

The Hindu tradition speaks of two aspects of the Brahman, the *Sagunabrahma as Iswara*, and the *Nirgunabrahman* as the predicateless Absolute who is conceptually beyond comprehension. But there is no possibility of two distinct persons, one *saguna* and the other *Nirguna*. Brahman is one without a second - *ekamadvitiam*. Nothing like the three-in-one God of Christianity, nor the concept of the once-for-all incarnation of the Only-Begotten Son, would be com-

patible with the Hindu tradition, or with most other religious traditions like Islam or Buddhism.

Attempts to paste over this unbridgeable gap between the two traditions have failed to withstand rigorous examination. One can find many parallelisms between the concept of Brahman and the concept of God the Father. Both are beyond being and beyond comprehension.

Christian Fathers put a high emphasis on the “incomprehensibility of God”, a somewhat central concept in Eastern Patristics. But then they went on, paradoxically enough, to talk about Three Persons in the Trinity, one in their is-ness or *ousia*, but distinct in their personhood. If they had not, we could at least have argued that since both Brahman and God are beyond being and beyond concept, they are in fact identical. Both Christians and Hindus, after having asserted the incomprehensibility and indescribability of the Absolute, go on to give conceptual qualifications to that Unqualified One. The differences begin to appear at this level of qualifications of the Unqualified One.

The same would apply to concepts like *sabda* and *logos*. One can find many parallelisms, but the concepts belong to two different worlds of discourse and should not be too easily identified with each other without reference to the world of discourse in which each concept receives its particular shade of meaning.

The situation is about the same if we try to compare the concepts of *sakti* and *pneuma* or spirit. The spirit in Hebrew is *ruach*, in Greek *pneuma*. Both literally mean breath or wind. The Spirit of God, *Ruach-Elohim*, which was brooding over the primordial waters of chaos in Genesis 1:2 is the same *Ruach-peh*, or the Breath of His Mouth which in Psalm 33:6 is the Creative Word. The *Pneuma Hagios*, or Holy Spirit is the same as the creative *logos Theou* or Word of God. While the Father, the Son or Word, and the Spirit are three distinct Persons, none of them exist or act without the others.

The teaching about the Trinity, and the teaching about the Incarnation or permanent Man-becoming of the Son of God are the two keys to the Christian world of discourse. When seeking parallelisms with concepts from other worlds of discourse, care should be taken

to see the extent to which these concepts fit into the Trinity-incarnation paradigm. Indian thought, on the other hand has many worlds of discourse: *samkhya*, *yoga*, *vedanta*, *visishtadvaita*, *dvaita* and so on in Hinduism alone. Buddhist thought is even more pluralist and diverse and developed many worlds of discourse, as is the case with Jaina thought.

Sometimes parallelisms are too *facilely* identified with each other, without taking into account the world of discourse from which the two surface-similar concepts have been taken. It seems wiser to leave these concepts as similar in some ways, but still radically different when one takes into account their respective paradigm structures. It does not take us very far if we keep on trying to prove the ancient false dictum that all religions teach the same thing in essence; the differences are vitally important sometimes. And it seems God has ordained it that way. The tragedy occurs when these differences are used by the religions to pillory and calumnify each other.

It is interesting however, to note that the differences always occur at the conceptual level, and not at the primordial, trans-conceptual. Even *sunya* becomes problematic when conceptualized, even in negative terms.

Differences arise from conceptualisation, and belong at that level. However since most of our discourse has to be at the conceptual level, it may be unwise to ignore them or wish them away in the interest of a false dictum about the essential identity of all religions. The conceptual differences not only divide people, but even become bitter bones of contention among rival factions of one and the same religion. Just ignoring them does not work. Once the sub-surface differences, as well as differences in the worlds of discourse are properly recognized, it should be possible to go beyond these differences, to find that abiding unity in the one who is beyond all form and concept.

Appendix

THE WORKS OF DR. PAULOS MAR GREGORIOS

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C. WEBSITE ON MAR GREGORIOS

www.paulosmargregorios.in