

WORLD VIEW;
EASTERN
AND
WESTERN

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ADVAITA, BUDDHIST, CARTESIAN
PHENOMENOLOGY AND QUANTUM THEORETICAL
PERSPECTIVE OF REALITY



Pradip K Gogoi
Rana Konwar
Malaya Borah

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CONTENTS

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Perspective of Reality

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| | |
|---------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Coordinator's Note | |
| Preface | |
| Chapter I: Introduction | 1-8 |
| Chapter II: Cartesian Phenomenological Standpoint | 9-23 |
| Chapter III: Buddhist Phenomenological View | 24-38 |
| Chapter IV: Advaitic Phenomenological View | 39-47 |
| Chapter V: Quantum Theoretical View of Reality | 48-67 |
| Chapter VI: Epilogue | 68-69 |
| References | 70-82 |
| Bibliography | 81-85 |
| Index | 86-87 |

Co-ordinator's Note

The present monograph entitled "World View: Eastern and Western- Comparative study of Advaita, Buddhist, Cartesian Phenomenology and Quantum Theoretical Perspective of Reality" is the published form of the focal research project on "An Introductory Review of the Comparative Study of Advaita and Buddhist Phenomenology in the Perspective of Cartesian Phenomenology and Quantum Theoretical View of Reality" carried out under the Buddha Study and Research Centre, Sonari. It focuses on the Buddhist and Advaitic phenomenological views ; and makes comparative study of these views with reference to Cartesian phenomenological standpoint as well as relations of these phenomenological views with the quantum theoretical view of reality.

The monograph offers important new contributions showing how a basic question of philosophy is inextricably linked to sciences or how eastern philosophy is related to the western philosophy.

The analysis and approaches of this monograph do not necessarily reflect the views of The Buddha Study and Research Centre or its Advisory Committee. The present monograph was a product of collaborative effort by the Centre's research team that includes Dr Rana Konwar and Malaya Borah under the guidance of Professor Dr P K Gogoi whose hard work, commitment and vision are commendable.

I acknowledge my sincere gratitude to the UGC, New Delhi for sponsoring the Centre and Dr R Tamuli, Principal, Sonari

College for his help in functioning of the Centre. I am indebted to all members of the Advisory Committee, such as, Dr P K Gogoi, Lalit Shyam, Dr R Tarnuli, Dr R Konwar and Raghunath Kagyung.

Preface

Sonari College
August, 2012.

Paranan Konwar

The present monograph is basically a review of the comparative studies of Buddhist (mainly Mahayana), Advaita and Cartesian phenomenological perspectives as well as their counterparts, if any, in the quantum theoretical view of reality. Various workers have done substantial and rigorous studies in the individual areas and we do not have any pretention of doing something very novel and unique. This work is an outcome of discussions made during meetings at the Buddha Study and Research Centre, Sonari College, Assam which is sponsored by University Grants Commission, New Delhi. Two of the authors were involved with the above Centre actively for last two years. What we want to show is the apparent unity at deeper level among all the perspectives discussed briefly in the monograph and hope it may inspire further in-depth studies by the scholars in this important area of knowledge. We also believe that this small monograph may be of interest not only to the persons trained in the discipline of philosophy, but also to a broader range of readers interested in both Western and Oriental ideas and those interested in the philosophy of quantum theoretical view. We thank Paranan Konwar, Co-ordinator of the Centre and Dr R Tarnuli, Principal, Sonari College for undertaking the publication of the work, although it is not a profitable venture. We also acknowledge our indebtedness to all the authors, whose work been generously cited in course of our studies. Thanks also go to Co-ordinator of the Centre for preparing the index and for bringing this project to completion.

PKG, RK and MB

Introduction

Philosophy etymologically means 'love of wisdom' or pursuit of knowledge. It is the rational attempt to have knowledge about reality as a whole. Rational thinking, logical thinking and systematic thinking are all important for a philosopher.¹ At various stages of civilization, every intelligent thinker or philosopher tries to solve the problem of existence, or the problem faced by the philosophers is that how our world of experience is intelligible to us.² Different systems or theories emphasize different aspects of reality. Some of them believe in the reality of the external objects independent of mind. On the other hand, some of them deny the reality of external objects independent of knowing mind.³ Regarding this aspect, phenomenology is considered as a school of philosophy, the basic aim of which is to investigate the phenomena or appearances on the basis of human experiences.⁴

Phenomenology directly investigates the phenomena which are consciously experienced without any causal connections and free from unexamined preconceptions and presuppositions. Though phenomenology has been analysed

differently by different philosophers, in the twentieth century, it becomes a philosophical movement for philosophical investigation mostly due to contribution of Edmund Husserl.⁵

In phenomenology, the words like Intentionality, Intuition and Evidence play an important role. The meaning of them are as follows -

Intentionality : Intentionality implies that consciousness is always some sense-data regarding something. This means that the object of consciousness doesn't have to be a physical object apprehended in perception. It can be a fantasy or a memory. These "structures" of consciousness, i.e., perception, memory, fantasy, etc., are called intentionalities.⁶ Husserl says that all psychical experiences, viz., in perceiving something, judging something and so on, is to be grasped with the intentionality (or object-directedness) of the experiences.⁷

From Brentanu,⁸ Husserl had absorbed this intentional theory of mind. According to it, intentionality characterizes mental acts like judgments, beliefs, meanings, valuations, desires, loves, hatreds etc. Brentanu said that an intentional act is always "about" or "of", I think of or about, I desire this or that etc. The objects of intentional acts do not have to exist. The idea of a mermaid is, being an idea, existentially mind-dependent. But the mermaid which is the intention of the idea is neither a physical thing nor is it existentially mind-dependent. On the other hand, no physical action requires an object that can be performed upon an intentionally in-existent entity. Touching or kicking something requires the existence of something but thinking that particular something does not require the existence of that something. When one desire the apple in front of him/her, the apple is the object of his/her desire in one sense of "object", namely, as the thing that could satisfy his/her desire; but there is also another object, the

intentionally in-existent apple which is the common and peculiar element in all desires of apples.

Intuition : Intuition is the feeling or understanding that makes someone believe or know something is true without being able to explain why.⁹ It is a mental faculty by which one can have a direct knowledge of things. Intellectual knowledge provides an external view of reality; it cannot give us the knowledge of the inner nature of reality. But only intuition is that which can give us knowledge of the inner nature of things.¹⁰ In phenomenology, when the intentional object is directly apprehended, then one can have an intuited object.¹¹ When someone perceive or imagine a flower, it is said that these are all intentional experiences and the object is intuited.

There are two stages in the development of Husserl's phenomenology. At the earlier stage, intuition is a direct inspection of the essence of the mental acts like seeing, imagining, believing etc. At this stage, phenomenology is described as "descriptive psychology". It is different from empirical psychology. Empirical psychology is concerned with causal explanation but not with describing the essence of types of psychological acts. On the other hand, phenomenology is not concerned with causal explanation but with describing types of psychological acts. There is no machinery of phenomenological and transcendental reduction. In the later stage of phenomenology, Intuition is to be understood as in the Cartesian sense of a direct awareness of what is given, but with important modifications in both method and application.¹²

Evidence : Evidence is the facts, signs etc. that make someone believe that something is true.¹³ In phenomenology, the concept of evidence means the "subjective achievement of truth." It is an attempt to describe the structure of having

something present in intuition with the addition of having it present as intelligible: "Evidence is the successful presentation of an intelligible object, the successful presentation of something whose truth becomes manifest in the evidencing itself."¹⁴ In other words, the evidence is considered as that which discloses itself to pure intuition and it consists of self-giveness.¹⁵

Phenomenology is to be distinguished from, and related to, the other main fields of philosophy like ontology (the study of being or what is), epistemology (the study of knowledge), logic (the study of valid reasoning), ethics (the study of right and wrong action), etc. Regarding epistemology, phenomenology helps to define the phenomena on which knowledge claims the rest. On the other hand, phenomenology itself claims to achieve knowledge about the nature of consciousness, a distinctive kind of first-person knowledge, through a form of intuition. Regarding logic, phenomenology explicates the intentional or semantic force of ideal meanings, and propositional meanings are central to logical theory. But logical structure is expressed in language, either ordinary language or symbolic languages like those of predicate logic or mathematics or computer systems. It remains an important issue of debate where and whether language shapes specific forms of experience (thought, perception, emotion) and their content or meaning. So there is an important (if disputed) relation between phenomenology and logico-linguistic theory, especially philosophical logic and philosophy of language. Regarding ontology, phenomenology studies (among other things) the nature of consciousness, which is a central issue in metaphysics or ontology, and one that leads to the traditional mind-body problem. Regarding ethics, phenomenology might play a role in ethics by offering analyses of the structure of

will, valuing, happiness, and care for others (in empathy and sympathy).¹⁶

There are different views regarding phenomenology. Johann Heinrich Lambert¹⁷ describes phenomenology as a theory of illusion. In his *Phenomenology of Spirit*¹⁸ Hegel holds that Phenomenology is a science in which we come to know mind as it is in itself through the study of the ways in which it appears to us. William Hamilton in *Lectures of Metaphysics*¹⁹ describes phenomenology as purely a descriptive study of mind. C.S. Pierce in *What is Phenomenology?*²⁰ uses it not only as a descriptive study of that which is observed to be real but also of whatever is before the mind - perceptions of the real, illusions, imagination and dreams.

George Berkeley²¹ accepts the existence of mind only and rejects the existence of external world. The idea of the world without the mind is an abstract idea. For him, matter is a cluster of qualities and all the qualities of matter, both primary (extension, shape, size etc.) and secondary (colour, smell, sound), are the subjective states of mind. According to Berkeley, existence means to be perceived: *esse is percipi* i.e., existence-perception). Berkeley was an extreme empiricist and he denied any idea of an imperceptible matter, an imperceptible God or of imperceptible finite spirits. For Berkeley, all objects of the mind are imaginable or sensible ideas. Matter is that which is not coloured, not warm or cold etc. The secondary qualities like colour, warmth, coldness cannot be seen in matter. So it is impossible to imagine matter because of this lack of secondary qualities. For instance, if one imagine himself/herself touching something it must feel hard or soft, and clearly the senses of hearing, taste and smell are concerned exclusively with secondary qualities.²²

According to Berkeley, to exist is either to perceive (percipere), which constitutes the existence of spirits, or to be perceived (percipi), which constitutes the existence of the inanimate, of ideas. He considered these perceived ideas as the objects of mind; so he said that these ideas have no existence independent of the mind. He contends that the world is ultimately spiritual and there is nothing beyond minds.²³

Berkeley regards thinking in ideas to consist in having mental images. A red and round image may become the thought of a tomato if one decides to treat this image as the general representative of all things having the characteristics of a tomato.²⁴

Berkeley says that ideas of imagination or dreaming or memory are less strong, lively and distinct than those of sense which constitute the real world. The ideas of imagination and memory are brought before one's mind by one's own decision; on the other hand, the ideas of sense are independent of one's will. In dream, imagination or illusion anything can happen, but in the real world ideas are determined by the laws of nature.²⁵

According to Berkeley, "The table I write on I say exists; that is, I see and feel it; and if I were out of my study I should say it existed; meaning thereby that if I were in my study I might perceive it, or that some other spirit actually does perceive it." It is stated that when not perceived by finite spirits, bodies, if they exist at all, must be in the mind of God.²⁶

Berkeley's view is similar to Yogācāra²⁷ school of Buddhist philosophy according to which things are clusters of sensations. External objects, not dependent of consciousness are not intelligible.

Immanuel Kant's transcendental philosophy is the

starting point of the knowing subject rather than that of the object known. Transcendental self or ego is the presupposition of the empirical ego. It is in itself unknown and unknowable.²⁸ In the philosophy of Kant, the transcendental ego was introduced to give consciousness a unity and identity. States of consciousness are concerned with momentary aspects. They are discrete and fragmentary. So man cannot have a unified knowledge of what he knows. Nor is this knowledge possible, unless man has an awareness of himself as a permanent ego. Transcendental ego. But Kant has shown that this permanent ego is unknown and unknowable and for attaining such knowledge, it requires the use of the forms of intuition, space and time, and the categories. The self is an empirical consciousness and not a transcendental self.²⁹ According to Kant, the synthetic unity of apperception is nothing but the self-conscious self. There can be no knowledge without a self-conscious, unifying self; but this self itself cannot be known in the sense of being perceived directly. For Kant, one cannot transcend their own experiences or cannot have a priori knowledge of the super sensible, of things-in-themselves or noumenon. Knowledge implies perception and things-in-themselves cannot be perceived by the senses. Things-in-themselves are unknown and unknowable. One can know only phenomena.³⁰

Georg Wilhelm Hegel³¹ does not mean that God exists as a self-conscious logical process before the creation of the world. God cannot be conscious without a world and becomes fully self-conscious only in the minds of human beings. Mind or spirit passes through dialectical stages of evolution, revealing itself as subjective mind, objective mind, and the absolute mind. Subjective mind expresses itself as soul, consciousness, and spirit. The soul, which has created an

organic body for itself, becomes conscious of itself, distinguishes itself from its body; consciousness is an evolution from the very principle of which the body is the expression. The function of consciousness is 'knowing'. It rises from a purely objective stage in which it regards the sensible object as the most real and truest thing, to a stage in which reason is conceived as the innermost essence of both self-consciousness and objective reality. Mind or spirit (*Geist*) in the highest sense unites both functions. The Absolute Mind becomes conscious of itself.

CHAPTER

2

Cartesian Phenomenological Standpoint

Cartesian thought is associated with the name of seventeenth-century philosopher scientist René Descartes. Cartesianism provides a significant role in twentieth century philosophic thought also. Cartesian thought is especially seen in the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl and Heidegger and in the existential philosophers like Jean-Paul-Sartre and others. Descartes is considered as the father of modern philosophy, mainly because he was the first man to distinguish the subjective from the objective, the inner from the outer, and the self from the body. His special consideration to the realm of self and consciousness was really novel and revolutionary in that period.²²

In his '*Principles of Philosophy*',²³ Part I, Principle XI, Descartes holds the statement – "How we may know our mind better than our body." In order to understand this statement he gives an example – "If I persuade myself that there is an earth because I touch or see it, by that very same fact, and by a far stronger reason, I should be persuaded that my thought exists; because it may be that I think I touch the earth even though there is possibly no earth existing at all, but it is not possible that I who form this judgement and my mind which

judges thus, should be non-existent.”

The statement – *Cogito, ergo sum* (I think, therefore I am) – is the starting point of the Cartesian philosophy. This starts from the clear and distinct fact that self-awareness is not only the basis of the entire Cartesian thought, but the dictum *Cogito, ergo sum* is the best mode of showing the nature of mind as essentially thought and its distinctness from body which has extension as its attribute. Most of the contemporary philosophers accept the significance of Cartesian *Cogito* principle and from the perspective of the development of the phenomenological and existential systems, the twentieth century thought may be described as the culmination of the Cartesian tendencies.³⁴

The inseparability of existence and thinking are stated by the *Cogito* principle. But it denies the absolute identity of one's existence with one's momentary consciousness and the convertibility of one's existence with that of consciousness. They are intimately connected. Therefore, existence is indubitably asserted by thinking. One's thinking reveals and guarantees one's existence.³⁵

In his '*Principles of Philosophy*',³⁶ Part I, Principle I, Descartes holds the statement – "That in order to examine into the truth, it is necessary once in one's life to doubt of all things, so far as this is possible."

Though Descartes accepted doubt as his method – yet he did not conceive it as his end. The Cartesian doubt did not practically destroy all our beliefs. It tried to regain such beliefs as certain and indubitable. Later on, Descartes deduced the conceptions of world, body etc. from the certainty of consciousness – which was achieved through the *Cogito* principle. Hence, the Cartesian doubt did not eliminate the conception of the phenomenal world. This Cartesian doubt only transformed our ordinary ways of thinking.³⁷

In his '*Principles of Philosophy*',³⁸ Part I, Principle XLV,

Descartes holds the statement – "What a clear and distinct perception is." Descartes holds that a clear perception is that which is present and apparent to an attentive mind. For example, we see objects clearly when, being present to the regarding eye, they operate upon it with sufficient strength. He considers distinct is that which is so precise and different from all other objects that it contains within itself nothing but what is clear." *Cogito, ergo sum* (I think, therefore I am) – this principle provides a criterion or test of truth. It is absolutely certain and true. It is clearly and distinctly perceived. All things which are clearly and distinctly perceived are true. One of the ideas one find in his/herself is the idea of God. As human beings are finite and imperfect, they cannot be the cause of the idea of God which is perfect and infinite being. This idea must have been placed in men by an infinite being, or God and God must exist. The idea of God is innate.³⁹ The idea of an all-perfect Being necessarily implies existence and this Being cannot will to deceive us. This can be apprehended innately.⁴⁰

In his '*Principles of Philosophy*',⁴¹ Part I, Principle LI, Descartes holds the statement – "What substance is, and that is a name which we cannot attribute in the same sense to God and to His creatures." He holds that substance can be understood as nothing else than a thing which so exists that it needs no other thing in order to exist. And God can be understood as a substance which clearly needs nothing else. "Other things can exist only by the help of the concurrence of God."

According to Descartes, God is the absolute substance and mind and body are two relative substances. Mind and body exist independently of one another, but both depend on God. Mind and body are fundamentally different from one another and they can be known only through their attributes. The attribute of body is extension and the attribute

of mind is thinking.⁴² There is no distinction between matter and space for they possess one and the same attribute, namely, extension, and the same extension in length, breadth, thickness, which constitutes space, also constitutes material body.⁴³ Descartes says that the same extension in length, breadth, and depth, which constitutes space, constitutes body; and the difference between them consists in the fact that in body, extension is considered as particular and conceived it to change just as body changes; on the other hand, in space, we attribute to extension a generic unity, so that after having removed from a certain space the body which occupied it, we do not suppose that we have also removed the extension of that space, because it appears to us that the same extension remains so long as it is of the same magnitude and figure, and preserves the same position in relation to certain other bodies, whereby we determine this space.⁴⁴ According to Descartes, cognition or thought is the essence of mind and perception, imagination, emotion etc. are the 'modes' of this thinking. The mind or soul has certain innate ideas. These ideas are present in mind as latent potentialities. Mind can possess also some 'adventitious' and 'fictitious' ideas. Adventitious ideas are dependent on certain external conditions and fictitious ideas are the ideas of imaginary objects. All these ideas are purely mental. There are some important activities like sensation, retention, imagination etc. can function through the interconnection of the body and the mind.⁴⁵ In other words, appetites of hunger and thirst; emotions and passions of mind which are not exclusively mental affections; sensations of pain, colour, light, sound, etc. are certain facts which imply an intimate connection between body and mind in man. We cannot refer them to the body alone or to the soul alone, but must explain by the close and intimate union of the two.⁴⁶ According to Descartes, "Because I know that all things which I apprehend clearly and distinctly can be created by

God as I apprehend them, it suffices that I am able to understand one thing apart from another clearly and distinctly in order to be certain that the one is different from the other, since there may be made to exist in separation at least by the omnipotence of God; and it does not signify by what power this separation is made in order to compel me to judge them to be different and, therefore, just because I know certainly that I exist and that meanwhile I do not remark that any other thing necessarily pertains to my nature or essence, excepting that I am a thinking thing, I rightly conclude that my essence necessarily solely in the fact that I am a thinking thing. And I cannot possibly possess a body with which I am very intimately conjoined, yet because, on the one side, I have a distinct and distinct idea of myself in as much as I am only a thinking and unextended thing, and as, on the other, I possess a distinct idea of body, in as much as it is only an extended and thinking thing, it is certain that this I is entirely and essentially distinct from my body, and can exist without it."⁴⁷

In his '*Principles of Philosophy*',⁴⁸ Part I, Principle XLIII, Descartes holds the statement — "That we cannot err if we give our assent only to things that we know clearly and distinctly." He explained it in this way — "But it is certain that we shall never take the false as the true if we only give our assent to things that we perceive clearly and distinctly. Because since God is no deceiver, the faculty of knowledge that he has given us cannot be fallacious, nor can the faculty of will, so long at least as we do not extend it beyond those things that we clearly perceive. And even if this truth could not be rationally demonstrated, we are by nature so disposed to give our assent to things that we clearly perceive, that we cannot possibly doubt of their truth."

Husserl was greatly influenced by Descartes in his account of subjectivity but he gave it a new and original turn. He treated it as something transcendental. By phenomenological

way Husserl described the concept of subjectivity. Descartes and Husserl, both of them wanted to employ subjectivity for explaining the objective, natural world. Unlike Descartes and Kant, Husserl conceived that this subjectivity is not separate from the world; rather it is involved in the world itself. So, Husserl conceived the nature as conditioned by 'our consciousness' or 'subjectivity'.⁴⁹

The phenomenological interpretation of consciousness was the very aim of Husserl and for him, the very nature of consciousness was only intentional, i.e. it had as its essential character the projective or directional activity; it was always 'consciousness of or about something'.⁵⁰

Husserl was greatly attracted by Franz Brentano. The so-called concept of intentionality, the directedness of the consciousness towards an object, which is a basic concept in Phenomenology, was already present in Brentano's *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkte*⁵¹ (1874): "And thus we can define psychic phenomena by saying that they are those phenomena which precisely as intentional, contain an object in themselves."

Husserl says that the notion of transcendental ego as the ground of all intentional acts. This transcendental ego, for Husserl, was consciousness, purged of all contingency by the method of epoche or Phenomenological reduction.⁵² Epoche means the suspension or bracketing of all judgments concerning the spatio-temporal existence or presuppositions.⁵³ In other words, epoche or Phenomenological reduction means suspending all beliefs characteristics of the "natural attitude", the attitude of common sense and science. One's perception of a chair involves the belief that a physical chair is present "out there". This belief is neither necessarily true nor necessarily false. Secondly, in eidetic reduction, one makes the pure essence of perception give itself to one's pure intuition. The phenomenologist must be in a position to "take a look" at what is going on when he is actually seeing

something. The third step is to discern the manner in which objects of cognition are constituted in cognition. It requires a very careful scrutiny of the manner in which, within cognition, objects are synthesized according to stable regularities that are not psychological laws of association but are rather the forms of cognitive acts. Transcendental reduction is that in which one not only holds in abeyance the range and features of things one posits through the "natural attitude" but also "bracket out" the phenomenal selves, including one's own self. The idea is to reduce the whole of reality to transcendently reduced data.⁵⁴

Husserl's transcendental and pure ego is distinct from the ordinary psychophysical organism and the ego is not included in the class of those physical objects. The 'I' in the phenomenological system implies pure consciousness, a transcendental ego. It is the phenomenological basis and nucleus of individual consciousness.⁵⁵ Husserl says that something can exist if it is not dependent for its existence on the transcendental self.⁵⁶

The objects of Phenomenology are "absolute data grasped in pure, immanent intuition," and its goal is to discover the essential structures of the acts (*noesis*) and the objective entities that correspond to them (*noema*).⁵⁷ Mainly Husserl's phenomenological method is concerned with the analysis of the structures of consciousness that constitute the world.⁵⁸

In his "The Idea of Phenomenology",⁵⁹ Lecture I, Husserl says that cognition in all its manifestations is a psychic act. It is the cognition of a cognizing subject. The objects cognized stand over and against the cognition. In perception the perceived thing is believed to be directly given. Husserl says that phenomenology denotes a science, a system of scientific disciplines. But it also and above all denotes a method and attitude of mind, the specifically philosophical attitude of

mind.

In his 'Our knowledge of the external world'⁶⁰ Russell says that in every philosophical problem investigation starts from 'data' or matters of common knowledge. Data are primarily the facts of sense, i.e. one's own sense-data and the laws of logic. Some recent memories have highest degree of certainty. Some introspective facts are as certain as any facts of sense.

In his "The Problems of Philosophy"⁶¹ Bertrand Russell shows the distinction between appearance and reality. Appearance is that which things seem to be. The painter wants to know what things to be. And reality is that which they are. The philosopher wants to know what they are. For Russell, if we are to know anything about the table we can only know sense-data such as brown colour, oblong shape etc., we cannot say that the table is the sense-data or the sense-data are directly properties of the table. If the real table exists, it is called as 'physical object'. The collection of all physical object is called matter.

It is possible to doubt the physical existence of the table, but it cannot be possible to doubt the existence of sense-data which made us think there was a table. When ten people are sitting round a dinner-table, they are not seeing the same table cloth, the same knives and forks and spoons and glasses. But the sense-data are private to each separate person; what is immediately present to the sight of one is not immediately present to the sight of another. Though different people may see the table differently, yet they see similar things when look at the table. Thus, it is easy to arrive at a permanent object underlying all the different people's sense-data.⁶² Similarly, when someone is walking round the table, it does not mean that walking round the table is not the only way of altering its appearance. One can shut one eye, or put on blue spectacles, or look through a microscope. All these appearances alter

the table appearance which one calls that of the table. More external objects will also alter their appearances if the state of appearance changes.⁶³

According to Russell, "I bought my table from the furniture department of my room; I could not buy his sense-data, but I could when he went away, but I could and did buy the table when his expectation of more or less similar sense-data. Thus the fact that different people have similar sense-data, and that the person in a given place at different times has similar sense-data which makes us suppose that over and above the sense-data there is a permanent public object which underlies the sense-data of various people at various times."⁶⁴

The sense-data, i.e. colour, hardness etc. which are associated with the table are really signs of the existence of something independent of one and their perceptions. So, it is not that there is something else of which these things are appearances. The colour ceases to exist if one shuts his/her eyes. But it cannot be believed that when colour ceases the table ceases.⁶⁵

For Russell, human beings have acquaintance with the table of which they are directly aware, without the intervention of any process of inference or any knowledge of matter. In the presence of the table of which he/she is acquainted with the sense-data that make up the appearance of the table - its colour, shape, hardness, smoothness etc.; all these are things of which he/she is immediately conscious when he/she is seeing and touching the table. So, the knowledge of the table as a physical object is not direct knowledge; it is obtained through acquaintance with the sense-data that make up the appearance of the table. It is possible to doubt whether there is a table at all, whereas it is not possible to doubt the sense-data. This kind of knowledge is known as 'knowledge by description'.⁶⁶

Russell in his 'Our knowledge of the External world'⁶⁷

says, "There is first our acquaintance with particular objects of daily life — furniture, houses, towns, other people, and so on. Then there is the extension of such particular knowledge to particular things outside our personal experience, through history and geography, newspapers, etc. And lastly, there is the systematization of all this knowledge of particulars by means of physical science, which derives immense persuasive force from its astonishing power of foretelling the future."

Heidegger⁶⁸ accepted Husserl's phenomenological method basically emphasizing human existence. In Heidegger's basic work, *Sein and Zeit* (1927)⁶⁹ phenomenology was understood as a methodological concept and for him, phenomenology is derived from the Greek concepts of *Phainomenon* and *logos*. The Greek term from which the word 'phenomenon' is derived is originally a verb which means 'to show itself' or which shows itself, the manifest. It means that wherein something can become manifest, visible in itself.⁷⁰ In other words, *Phainomenon* means 'that which shows itself from itself', and *logos* means 'to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself'.⁷¹

For Heidegger, Being is not a genus of entities, it applies to every entity. Heidegger points out that philosophy is a study of the problem of being and he rejects the phenomenological bracketing and in his opinion being cannot be bracketed. One's experience of entities cannot be bracketed. For Heidegger, phenomenological examination is not an examination of individual objects, but the examination of the phenomenon of Being as such. The world, in the opinion of Heidegger, is not simply a totality of objects, but a peculiarity independent object for examination apart from any and all entities in it. In Heidegger's opinion, there is no ego, there is only 'Being-in-the-world'.⁷² In *Sein and Zeit* there is not be seen a phenomenological reduction, a transcendental ego and intuition of essences. Heidegger is concerned mainly on the

meaning of Being. This can be defined as hermeneutical in that it proceeds from the interpretation of man's situation.⁷³ Heidegger understands Being as that in which one operates and which in the end belongs to the essential constitution of Being — human being in its existence in the world. Being is not beyond *Dasein*, but is a structure of *Dasein* as 'Being-in-the-world'. Heidegger holds that we experience our ordinary world of existence in which an object is called a being, as it is something that exists. Being is the totality of entities and beings and not many entities. Heidegger admits the inseparability of the human being and the outer world and therefore he understands man as Being-in-the-world. But man has to understand what he is, he has to make a distinction between subject and object. Man cannot understand his relation with the world, without knowing what he is and the objects. Even in his practical activity man has an awareness of what he is doing. Heidegger considers *Dasein* as a manifestation of Being. *Dasein* can have a meaning, because it has consciousness or because it is consciousness.⁷⁴

Sartre-Paul-Sartre's phenomenological method can be described with reference to his analysis of human experience. His analysis of imagination and emotion gives a better understanding of his phenomenological method. In *Existentialism of the Ego*⁷⁵ Sartre was trying to understand the nature of consciousness for the sake of ontological foundation. He accepts the theory of intentionality. He stresses that consciousness is experienced as nothing, for consciousness has no content. It is transparent. It directs us to objects. This directedness can be called as intentionality. Physical, psycho-physical and psychic objects, all truths, and values, are outside consciousness. So consciousness is nothing.⁷⁶

Sartre says that man is the being by whom nothingness comes into the world. Nothingness can be conceived neither

outside of being, nor as a complementary, abstract notion. It must be given at the heart of Being. But this intra-mundane nothingness cannot be produced by Being-in-itself. Because the notion of Being as full positivity does not contain nothingness as one of its structures. It cannot even be said that Being excludes it. Being lacks all relation with it.⁷⁷ Nothingness is the ground of the negation because it conceals the negation within itself, because it is the negation as being. Conscious being constitutes itself in relation to its past as separated from this past by nothingness. Freedom is the human being putting his past out of play by secreting his own nothingness. In freedom the human being is his own past (as also his own future) in the form of nihilation.⁷⁸

Sartre's philosophy is not idealism. He points out that Being does not create consciousness and not dependent on consciousness for its existence. Being is already there without any justification. Though it is fully there in each one of its appearances, it is not exhausted by any or by all of its appearances. Without consciousness there would not be anything like a world, rivers, tables etc.; but there would be only Being. Consciousness causes there to be things because it is itself nothingness. Only through consciousness differentiation, meaning and plurality for Being is possible.⁷⁹ The essence is not in the object; it is the meaning of the object, the principle of the series of appearances which disclose it. But being is neither one of the object's qualities, capable of being apprehended among others, nor a meaning of the object. Being is simply the condition of all revelation.⁸⁰

Sartre wants to accept only what is given in immediate experience. If Sartre wants to accept only the immediately given, then Husserlian notions like the transcendental ego cannot be accepted and belief in the existence of the world cannot be suspended. We not only experience the facts given to us, but we also experience them as existent in the external

world. For Sartre consciousness is not identical with material appearance. Consciousness is absolutely free. He eliminates ego from the realm of consciousness. Sartre makes a distinction between the pre-reflective *Cogito* and the Cartesian or the reflective *Cogito*. Sartre believes that all reflective consciousness cannot be self-consciousness without which knowledge of the object becomes impossible. To Sartre, pre-reflective *Cogito* is the most human consciousness. It is an immediate, non-reflective awareness and is the basis of all knowledge and phenomena. It also includes immediate sense-experience and intention. It is the 'consciousness of itself' or it knows itself without 'associate inwardness'. This pre-reflective *Cogito* always cannot be reflective consciousness. Pure subjectivity is *intentional* but it does not become impure and cease to be *intentional* as it encounters the objective world through choice and decision. There is a distinction between Being-for-itself and Being-in-itself in Sartre's philosophy. Here Sartre admits the difference between the consciousness and the objects of consciousness. The transcendent being or something of which one is conscious, is called by Sartre, the Being-in-itself; and the consciousness which becomes aware of something is the Being-for-itself. The Being-in-itself is the self-contained being of a thing. Being is in itself and Being is what it is. Though Sartre accepts the distinction between the consciousness and the objects of consciousness, yet he wants to avoid the Cartesian dualism. Descartes accepts mind and body or mind and matter as two different categories or as two different substances. Similarly, according to Sartre, the object or Being-in-itself is not constituted by consciousness; it is always outside and transcendent of consciousness. But for him, Being-in-itself, though different from consciousness, is not complete without consciousness. According to Sartre, consciousness is non-substantial and non-substantial. The conception of ego or self cannot be necessary at the reflective phase of consciousness;

but in its primary, non-reflective phase, consciousness does not require any such ego and is impersonal in nature. The famous Sartrean formula 'existence precedes essence' actually means that man first exists and then subsequently determines all his thoughts, actions and possibilities. Man's essences and capacities follow his existence. Descartes declared the principle — *Cogito ergo sum* (I think, therefore I am) and there he deduced the certainty of man's existence from his thought. But Sartre's formula is 'I am, therefore I think' and he believes that man cannot act or think if he does not exist beforehand.⁸²

In Merleau-Ponty's philosophy "the *epoche* or reduction is reinterpreted not as a 'bracketing' but as a re-examination of our experience of the world".⁸³ He points out the impossibility of a complete reduction. He accepts the phenomenological concept of intentionality; but that intentionness cannot be the nature of consciousness merely; it is also the very basis of our entire relation to this world. This world is present in any and every human experience as the ultimate horizon or field of experience, as the ultimate meaning-structure in which any given phenomenon is inserted. He holds that phenomenological technique should explain our consciousness and existence as essentially interwoven with the world. Both in his *Structure of Behavior*⁸⁴ and *Phenomenology of Perception*⁸⁵, Merleau-Ponty seeks to elaborate the role of body in our conscious experience. He holds that body is not merely as an object among other objects, the body plays as the role of the subject. The body gives form and significance, not merely to the objects, which it perceives, but also to the entire world in which it is involved. Through the intermediation of the body, perception is always essential in one's conscious experiences. Without it, one cannot be aware of the existence of the objects. To him, perception is not merely conscious, it is also pre-conscious and pre-personal too. In the pre-conscious level body is not supposed to be the conscious

conscious level forms the foundation of the conscious level, and perception is the way. He enlarges the sphere of subjectivity from the pre-conscious realm and includes both the body and the world in its range.⁸⁶

CHAPTER 3

Buddhist Phenomenological

View

Indian philosophy can be described as a descriptive phenomenology of consciousness. One example is the Buddhist classification of cognitions.⁸⁷

Gautama, the Buddha, flourished in northern India sometime between the 6th and the 4th century before the Christian era. His followers propagated the religion that is known as today Buddhism.⁸⁸ Subjectivity played an important role in Buddhist philosophy. This subjectivity was always linked with the concept of reality. Another important feature of the Buddhist philosophy is the realm of experience.⁸⁹ Experience, according to Buddha was the only substantial datum open to us, the real existence.⁹⁰

The doctrines of Dependent Origination, Impermanence and No-Self theory are all important in Buddhist philosophy. The doctrine of *Paticca-samuppāda* or dependent origination is the foundation of all the teachings of the Buddha. *Paticca* means 'because of' or 'dependent upon'; *samuppāda* means 'arising' or 'origination'. Hence, it is applied to the whole

of phenomena which consists of twelve interdependent causes and effects. According to *Paticca-samuppāda* or dependent origination in the empirical world everything is relative, interdependent, dependent, subject to birth and death and dependent impermanence. All phenomenal things hang between dependent reality and nothingness. In this sense Buddha calls the doctrine the Middle Path, *Madyama Pratipat*, which stands between sensualism and nihilism, self-indulgence and self-mortification. The theory of Momentariness or Impermanence (*Anicca*) and Dependent Origination are co-related phenomena. All things are relative, dependent, conditional and hence all things must be momentary or impermanent. The theory of No-Ego or No-Self (*Anattasmyavada* or *anatmanavada*) is an important Buddhist theory. According to this theory, the individual ego and matter are ultimately false. Because everything is momentary, the ego and matter are also momentary and therefore relative and false. The theory of causal efficiency is also related to the theory of Momentariness, because each preceding link is causally efficient to produce the succeeding link. It is the capacity to produce the succeeding link and hence the capacity to produce an effect becomes the criterion of momentariness. The chain of causation is known as *dvādashānukūla* or *dvādashākāra*, the wheel of re-birth. These twelve links are divided into three classes, viz. the past, the present, and the future. It may be represented in the following order,⁹²

- 1. Ignorance (*avijjā*)
- 2. Disposition (*saṃskāra*)
- 3. Consciousness (*viññāna*)
- 4. Name and form (*nāma and rūpa*)
- 5. The organs of cognition (*sadyatana*)
- 6. Sense object contact (*sparsa*)
- 7. Sense-experience (*vedanā*)
- 8. Thrust for objects (*trsnā*)

9. Clinging to objects (*upādāna*)
10. Will to be born (*bhāva*)
11. Birth (*jaṭṭh*)
12. Sufferings (*jarā-maraṇa*)

Out of these the first two are related to past life, the last two to future life and the rest to present life. This is the cycle of birth – and – death. This is the twelve-spoked wheel of Dependent Origination.⁹³

Buddhism is considered as separate from most other Indian school as it does not accept the existence of an eternal material or spiritual primary substance out of which the existing world evolved. It also does not explain the world-process by postulating interplay of a multitude of unchanging entities. The Buddha explains the phenomenal world as *dhammas*. *Dhammas* are colours, sounds, sense faculties, breath, feelings, states of consciousness, good and bad luck, birth, death and so on. A *dhamma* is defined as a 'carrier of its qualities', a 'factor of existence', a component of so-called reality. The human person is divisible into five groups of *dhammas*, called *skandhas* (bundles, aggregates),⁹⁴ namely:

1. *rūpa* : 'body'; all perceptible forms;
2. *vedanā* : 'feeling', all feelings of pleasure and pain;
3. *saṃjñā* : 'perception', all that can be perceived or imagined, including the faculty to discern perceived and imagined objects;
4. *sanskāra* : 'motive forces', the power that produces something as well as that which has been produced. The *sanskāras* are responsible for the formation of *karma*. They comprise attachment to (bodily) life, desire, delusion, aversion, volition;
5. *vijñāna* 'consciousness', the element that transmigrates in a new rebirth and is thus responsible for reincarnation.

Consciousness has been compared in the Milinda Pañha with a wheel running at the middle of the cross-roads beholding in all directions from any direction. Buddhaghosa in the *Abhidhamma* says that consciousness means that which illumines objects. The characteristics of consciousness are that it is indivisible, goes in advance (*pubbangama*), connects the past and the future stands on *nāmarūpa* (*nāmarūpapaḍaṭṭhanam*). Buddhaghosa also says that when states of consciousness rise one after the other, they leave no gap between the previous state and the later and consciousness therefore appears as continuous. As the sun shows itself with all its colours, etc., and is in all different from those in truth; and it is said that the wheel of the sun rises, its collected heat and yellow colour and the sun, but it does not mean that the sun is different from those. So the *viñā* or consciousness takes the phenomena of different states and cognizes them. So though it is the same in these different states it is different from them.⁹⁵

The above account of the process of Cognition or *viñāna* is as old as twenty-five hundred years, and the Western Phenomenology, which is of the twentieth century, does investigate the pure data of consciousness for the purpose of the phenomenon. A phenomenologist uses it in the field of Philosophy, Psychology, Sociology, Economics and so on; but a Buddhist monk uses the *viñāna* not only to derive pure knowledge for description but also for spiritual pursuit. In Buddhism life is compared with a river which keeps on flowing through processes of recurrent life continuum, cognitive course of consciousness, death and again a new birth and so on. The Buddhist cognitive process of consciousness (*Citta-Vitha*) is two-fold—

4. **Sensorial Cognitive Process:**⁹⁶ this process depends on the five senses, namely, eye, ear, nose, tongue and body. It is the cognition of their corresponding objects, namely, colour, sound, smell, taste, and touch. The stages which

are involved in this process are –

1. **Passive Mental State (*Bhauanga*):** In this stage, the mind is not conscious of any object. It is known as 'the sleeping stage of mind'.
2. **Adverting (*Avajjana*):** It is a mental act to respond to an object entering into the passive state of mind, the act which is traditionally compared with an act of alertness of soldiers upon hearing the sound of a danger signal in a battle field.
3. **Viewing (*Dassana*):** It accomplishes the function of seeing or viewing through the eye-door and has the eye sensibility as its physical basis.
4. **Hearing (*Savana*):** It accomplishes the function of hearing through the ear-door and has the ear-sensibility as its physical basis.
5. **Smell (*Ghāyana*):** It accomplishes the function of smelling in the nose-door and has the nose-sensibility as its physical basis.
6. **Taste (*Sāyana*):** It accomplishes the function of tasting in the tongue-door and has the tongue-sensibility as its physical basis.
7. **Contact (*Phisana*):** It accomplishes the function of touching through the body-door and has the body-sensibility as its physical basis.
8. **Apprehension (*Sampaticchana*):** It is an act of receiving the object by way of one of five sensations.
9. **Investigation (*Santirana*):** This is an act of investigation of an object received in course of cognition by way of comparison with past sense data and newly acquired or received data and their analysis. This act is similar to the Husserlian act of 'retention' (when comparing with the previous events) and 'protention' (when comparing with the anticipatory events).

Determining (*Voththapana*): This is an act to determine the nature of an object. The efforts of investigation of previous moments result in ascertaining or determining the characteristics of the object, by way of the previous cognitive act, which directed the mind to locate it as an independent unit of thing.

Apperception (*Javana*): The culmination of full process of cognition is *Javana*. According to Mahesh Tiwary⁹⁷ it is an act of utilisation or action of the object when it is agreeable or disagreeable, respectively.

Apprehending (*Tadalambana*): Literally, it means 'that-which-is', i.e., that apperceived object, which is presented before the mind in its entire vividness by attaining the final maturity of a course of cognition process. The consciousness which occurs at the conclusion of apperception is recording, because it makes the object of apperception its own object.

5. Ideational Cognitive Process of Consciousness

Recording (*Avajjana*): The process of cognition of an ideational object starts functioning from the stage of apperception and runs upto the stage of registration through the range of apperception. Here, the cognition depends on the ideational object after entering into the mind. There are two types of ideational objects which appear through the mental door. They are either clear or obscure. When the object enters the range of mind the process of cognition proceeds upto the stage of recording, completing the full process of cognition. In this case the cognition is vivid and clear. In the case of the occurrence of an obscure object within the range of mind this process can survive only upto the stage of registration, and cannot proceed beyond that. Therefore,

in this case the cognition is feeble.

Buddhist monks seek to achieve *Samatha* and *Vipassanā* with the help of the above process. *Samatha* is derived from *sam* (i.e., to hull), refers to the tranquillity of mind by way of overpowering all mental obstructions or hindrances of meditation. *Vipassanā* (derived from *vi* and *dis*, i.e., 'to see as it is') refers to perceive the things in diverse ways in light of transiency, sorrowfulness and soul-lessness. The popular renditions for this term are 'insight', 'contemplation', 'intuition', 'introspection', and so on. The main objective of *Vipassanā* is to see the things-as-they-truly-are with *Nibbāna* as the *summun bhavam* or the highest pleasure.⁹⁸

The first broad division of the later Buddhists is under two heads: the *Hinayāna* and the *Mahāyāna*. These two are further divided into four schools. The *Hinayāna* comprises the *Vaiśāhika* and *Sautrāntika*, and the *Mahāyāna*, *Mādhyamika* or *Mādhyamaka* and the *Yogācāra*.⁹⁹

The Buddhists say that the intellect is the self, on account of such Sruti passages as, "Different from and more internal than this is the Self which consists of consciousness" (Tait Up. 2. 4. 1), owing also to the fact that the instrument becomes powerless in the absence of the agent and from such experiences as, "I am the agent," "I am the enjoyer," etc. It is the doctrine of the Buddhist idealist, known as the *Yogācāra* who accepts a stream of ideas (*vijñāna*) alone to be real and rejects everything else as non-existent.¹⁰⁰

The school of *Yogācāra* deals with ideas, consciousness mind in a very extensive way. This school is generally known as idealism. According to this, all existence has its center and being in mind. According to idealism, the object is not as it appears. It is, therefore unreal, consciousness (*vijñapti*) is the sole reality. The object is only a mode of consciousness. The external appearance of the object is the transcendental illusion.¹⁰¹

The mind, consisting of a stream of different kinds of ideas, is the only reality. Just as in cases of dreams and hallucinations a man fancies to perceive things outside, though there are no really exist there, similarly the objects which appear to the senses are really ideas in the mind.¹⁰²

The Buddha scolded the erring Bhikkhu and the reiterated to him that consciousness is due to conditions. Without conditions there is no arising of consciousness. When six sense organs are contact with six worldly objects, there arise six consciousnesses—eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mental consciousness. Later, *Yogācāra* school of Asanga and Vasubandhu added two more—*Manas* (consciousness) and *Alaya-vijñāna*. So the total number is eight consciousness.

The *Yogācāra* analyses *Citta* (Consciousness) into 89 or 90 stages called *Bhūmi* (stage), it is of four kinds:

Sensuous Consciousness (*Kāma-vāra-Citta*) — it is that consciousness which moves in the world of desires.¹⁰³ As a battlefield called 'a battlefield' because it is essentially frequented by soldiers (though others may also visit it), therefore a consciousness which is essentially frequented by sensual objects is called 'sensuous' by way of attending to objects of sense. It is because it causes rebirths in a sensuous plane of existence.

Consciousness of Sphere of Form (*Rūpāvara-citta*): This consciousness which gets concentration on an object associated with one form and colour.

Consciousness of Formless Sphere (*Arūpāvara-citta*): This consciousness which develops concentration on an object having no form at all.

Transcendental or Supramundane Consciousness (*Arāya-Citta*): it is a consciousness of person who have got away from off one by one ten fetters (*samyojana*) which bind the men in the circle of existence.

The analysing *Citta* according to moral, immoral, *Citta* has

been divided into 89 or 121. If divided into stage, it is of four kinds:

Moral Consciousness (*Kusala-citta*) – this consciousness is associated with moral states.

Immoral Consciousness (*Akusala-citta*) – this consciousness is associated with immoral states.

Resultant Consciousness (*Vipāka-citta*) – it is the fruit of an active consciousness. The consciousness arises and sinks down. While sinking down it leaves impression on the surface of mind. Such impression is called *Vipāka-citta*.

Inoperative Consciousness (*Kiriyā-citta*) – it is the consciousness of an Arahant who has destroyed all worldly desires.¹⁰⁵

According to *Yogācāra*, our actual world is merely 'thought' or a representation produced by consciousness. Conscious experience may contain some shadowy reflection of extra-mental existences, but is conditioned by mental constructs that it is these that must be the focus of analysis and spiritual change. Supporting this view, meditative experience is appealed to. Concentration of an object can generate a mental image such as a coloured disk of light, which in time becomes more vivid and clear than objects seen with the open eyes. Asanga argues that, however real such images appear, they are clearly nothing apart from thought.¹⁰⁶

Thus in brief, the *Yogācāra* holds that consciousness is the only reality and the empirical world reduces itself to ideas. The independence of the external object confronting consciousness is only apparent. The blue and the consciousness of blue are identical. Consciousness is creative. The object has no separate existence of its own.¹⁰⁷

The concept of *ālayavijñāna* is the most important principle of the *Vijñānavādins*. This can be translated in *English* as store-consciousness. In this system there is the store-

consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*), thought consciousness (*manovijñāna*) and active-consciousness (*pravṛttivijñāna*). They represent the three stages in the development of consciousness, maturing, thinking and knowing the world. *ālayavijñāna* was sometimes used as an absolute world with the permanent background of the endless variety of resultant *saṃskāras*, common to all minds. It is the sole foundation of the false belief in the existence of the world. The images of the universe are in it.¹⁰⁸

Manovijñāna may be regarded as the potential mind and it is a state of continuously changing states. It can gradually turn the images of undesirable mental states and develop into the real world of *vijñāna*.¹¹⁰

Swami Suddhanta's view that the *ālabhana* (or 'objective-world') of perception is not the external reality, but an internal, cognisable form, so that the cognitive act has its own internal, objective form. A sensation of blue is 'blue'; that sensation is this sensation not as its colour but as its form.

The *ālabhana* self or the individual subject or the Ego is understood to be created by *Vijñānavāda*. The reality of Pure Consciousness alone, variously called as *Ālayavijñāna*, *Manovijñāna*, *Cittamātra*, *Vijñāpīmātra*, is emphatically maintained. The Pure Consciousness transcends the dualism of subject and the object as well as the plurality of objects. It is the same as the Self-luminous Self. Consciousness cannot be called subjectivism. It is not the dualistic consciousness (*klīṣṭa manovijñāna*) as associated with the external world. The external world is declared to be a modification or modification of Absolute Consciousness. The external world is declared to be unreal what is meant here is that it does not exist independently and outside of

consciousness. The objectivity of the external world is not denied. The objects appear as objects to the subject which perceives them. Only their objectivity does not fall outside of consciousness because the distinction of the subject and the object is within the Consciousness itself which ultimately transcends the subject-object duality. Consciousness is immanent in all phenomena and it is also the permanent transcendental background of all phenomena.¹¹²

The Mādhyamika philosophy rejected all the elements of existence (*dharmā*). The Mādhyamika system offered an analytical power by which every object could be reduced to a mere concept. The main functions of the Mādhyamika is to know the Reality. This system emphasised that every category of thought is infected with relativity and is therefore void or reality and as such it is purely imaginary, subjective. According to this school, subjectivity is another name of relativity. Relativity is the mark of unreal, of the subjective. The Mādhyamika concludes that our entire experience is purely subjective; things have only an apparent existence, in reality they are imaginary and subjective.¹¹³

Sūnya or *sūnyatā* is the most important concept of Mādhyamika philosophy. So the Mādhyamika philosophy is known as *Sūnyavāda*. According to *Sūnyavāda*, *sūnya* is the characterization of Reality. Buddha considered fourteen things to be inexpressible. They are –

- (1) Whether the world is (a) eternal, (b) or not, (c) or both (d) or neither.
- (2) Whether the world is (a) finite, (b) infinite, (c) or both, (d) or neither.
- (3) Whether the Tathāgata (a) exists after death, (b) or does not, (c) or both, (d) or neither.
- (4) Whether the soul is identical with the body or different from it.

Later on formulated them into the *catuṣkoṭi*, *tetralemma* or four-cornered and also called the four-cornered negation. The first sentence of the tetralemma consisted of (i) a positive thesis, the second of (ii) a negative counter-thesis, the third of (iii) a conjunctive affirmation of the first two, the fourth of (iv) a disjunctive denial of the first two. According to the *Sūnyavāda*, Reality is neither *sat* (existent) nor *asat* (non-existent). Only the Absolute is inaccessible to thought. In the same meanings – (a) from the point of view of the Absolute is empirical reality, it means *svabhāva-sūnya*, i.e., freedom of reality of independent, substantial reality, (b) from the point of view of the Absolute, it means *prapancha-sūnya*, i.e., freedom of thought-construct and plurality. *Pratyakṣa-sūnyatā* is similar to *sūnyatā* or relativity. The world is not independent of things. It is simply process. A thing by itself is nothing at all. So, there is seen *sūnyatā* or emptiness of the world. The Mādhyamika negates all the views about Reality. It does not negate Reality itself. So, it cannot be called as *śūnya*. *Sūnyatā* is not an end in itself. It is means to reach the *śūnyatā* to *prajñā* (transcendental insight).¹¹⁴

Later on used a highly sophisticated dialectic to show the interdependence of all concepts of reality. For him, reality, ultimately cannot be grasped with concepts and ideas. He calls *śūnyatā* as a void or emptiness. By this emptiness he means that there is a state of mere nothingness, but is the very source of all things and the essence of all forms.¹¹⁵

Later on the non-ultimacy of views and conditionedness of the reality of entities – this is borne out by *sūnyatā* in reference to the mundane nature of things. *Sūnyatā* is not limited to relativity and conditionedness. It is not a rejection of the world of becoming and the meaningfulness of life, but it is the way mundane existence is appreciated as a course of becoming becoming as well as the way the values of life

become possible of realization.¹¹⁶

For Nāgārjuna, the two most important conceptions are – “conditioned origination” and “the Middle Way”. The former emphasizes the import of relativity in regard to the entities or events that constitute the course of mundane existence. “This being, that becomes, and with the extinction of this, that ceases to be.” This is the truth of “conditioned origination”. The later emphasizes the import of relativity in regard to views concerning the mundane nature of things. The Middle Way is the way which is free from the extremes of “is” and “is not”. Actually nothing in the world exists absolutely and nothing perishes totally. It is the way to see things as they are, to recognize the possibility of determining things differently from different standpoints and to recognize that these determinations cannot be seized as absolute.¹¹⁷

Buddha says that all things have transient existence. He also says that all things are *śunya* or devoid of existence. By nature things are such that they are neither absolutely existent nor absolutely non-existent. They are relative, not absolute. The aspect of “is” and “is not” are distinguishable though not separable. There is no contradiction in making different statements about the same thing from different standpoints. That the self exists and that the self does not exist, both are true. Similarly, everything exists and all things are non-existent are equally true. For example, the ring finger is both long and short. From the standpoint of the middle finger it is short and from the standpoint of the little finger it is long. Both the statements are true.¹¹⁸

The primary meaning of *śunya* is devoidness which is direct reference to the truth of things, mundane and ultimate. *Śunya* as the mundane truth is relativity. It is brought to light by rejecting the supposed ultimacy and absoluteness of particular entities and specific concepts and conceptual systems.

Moreover, the ultimate truth is the unconditioned, undivided being which is the ultimate nature of the conditioned and the arrangement is brought to light by rejecting through criticism the ultimacy of the ultimacy of the conditionedness of the unconditioned. The first kind is called *śunya* and the second kind is called *śūnyatā* (*śunya-śūnyatā*).¹¹⁹

While *śunya* is the mundane truth means such natures of things as impermanence, relativity, non-substantiality, unreliability of sense, *taḥatā* as their ultimate nature means the unreliability upon *dharma*,¹²⁰ *Taḥatā* or the “true nature” is being of the different levels, mundane and transmundane, is and *śūnyatā*. *Dharmabhāva* is a reference to the ultimate nature. “*śūnyatā*” refers to *dharma*. *Bhūta* stands for unconditioned reality, *dharmabhāva*, and *koṭi* stands for condition.

The *śūnyatā* is admitted the reality of a moment in the sense that it is independent of our knowing. It is not a phenomenon or projection of consciousness or knowledge. From the series of moments are recognized as form (*rūpa*) and consciousness. They hold that we know a form by its appearance. We are never able to know the substratum of these appearances or properties (*dharmā*) by our senses. We know it directly perceive an object by our sense. In order to external object, the substratum of an appearance. *śūnyatā* and the external object and the consciousness of it are inseparably together. Thus the blue and the consciousness of the blue are identical. According to them the substratum of the external object are known indirectly or whose form is given in the awareness, is inferred only. In our perceptual awareness, the phenomenalistic form is given. They believe in the nature of representationalism. Representationalism is that

we do not directly perceive the object but are aware of our ideas only.¹²²

The Vaibhāsikas admit the reality of the external world including mind and matter. In other words, both mental and extra-mental things are real. They are directly known or perceived.¹²³ *Dharma* is used in Buddhist philosophy in the sense of the ultimate factor or elements of existence. The existence of things or *dharma*s remain during all the three periods of time, present, past and future. This school recognized 75 *dharma*s in all — 72 being the conditioned *dharma*s (*sanskṛta*) and 3 unconditioned *dharma*s (*asanskṛta*). The conditioned *dharma*s (*sanskṛta*) are those which are produced by other things. The unconditioned *dharma*s (*asanskṛta*) are not produced by other things. These elements of existence are impermanent, momentary and durationless. All these *dharma*s have been classified into aggregates (*skandha*) bases of knowledge (*āyatana*) and *dharma*. According to this classification the individuals can be analysed into a number of states without any soul or substance. The aggregates (*skandha*) are five: (1) form (*rūpa*), (2) feeling (*vedanā*), (3) name (*saṃjñā*), (4) impression (*saṃskāra*) and (5) consciousness (*vijñāna*).¹²⁴

Zen Buddhism, evolved in Japan, provides the correlation between subject and object (or ego and world). The structure of the subject determines the structure of the world of objective things. In Zen, the empirical subject or ego is not considered as a self subsisting entity. The empirical ego can be called selfhood because all its movements are actualizations of what is its real selfhood, i.e. pure perceptive consciousness. In the same way all objective correlations of subjectivity are actualizations of the Mind. This ultimate governing principle is something which runs through the subject-object relationship and which makes this very correlation become actualized.¹²⁵

CHAPTER

4

Advaitic Phenomenological View

Advaita is a systematic exposition of the fundamental structure of the Upanisads. The most prominent and the central concept of Vedānta is Advaita Vedānta (Absolute Monism). Among the Sankara, Gaudapāda is the only systematic exponent of Advaita philosophy. He was Sankara's teacher and a direct teacher and thus his grand-guru. Before Advaita Vedānta also, the Advaitic ideas were prevalent in the Upanisads. In the Bhagavadgītā, the Brahmasūtra, the Purānas, and the Upanisads etc. but they were there in seed-like form and not in a doctrinal manner. Gaudapāda is better known as the exponent of the concept of Ajāti (unbornness) which is the central concept of the worldly objects are unborn and therefore, they are not subject to birth and dream-object and the real is unborn. He argues that mind (*citā*) is the cause of the worldly objects. He used the words — *citā*, *manas* and *vijñāna* — in connection with explaining the objectivity of the worldly objects. For him, everything internal or external is born out of the mind or creation of mind and internal states are not external. *Citā* never touches the external objects. In the waking state, the *citā* takes the form of external objects

as it takes the form of objects in the dream state. But ultimately supporting his Advaitic standpoint Gaudapāda denies ever the state of mind (*citta*) and the mental objects.¹²⁶

The most powerful exponent of Advaitavāda is Śaṅkara (788-820 A.D.). He was one of the greatest philosophers of India. Śaṅkara emphasizes the monistic tendency in the Upanisads and develops it into a systematic Advaitavāda. He emphasizes the reality of the unconditioned and unqualified (*nirguna*) Brahman, and regards God, the individual souls and the world as appearances due to an indefinable principle called cosmic nescience (*Māyā*) which is neither real nor unreal, but indefinable. According to Śaṅkara, ultimate reality is Brahman which is Pure Consciousness. Brahman is *Sat-Cit-Ananda* (existence-consciousness-bliss). Brahman is eternal knowledge or consciousness devoid of subject and object. It is the eternal, transcendental consciousness devoid of the distinction of knowledge, known and knower. It is subject-objectless consciousness, which has no relation to empirical objects. It cannot be known by empirical selves. It can be known by superconscious intuition only.¹²⁷

Sat-Cit-Ananda (existence-consciousness-bliss) is not considered as the parts of Brahman, but they constitute its nature. *Sat* or existence is thought to pertain to the objects of the universe. It is the essential constitution of Reality and has neither external relations nor internal differentiations. Existence is constant in objects that are variable; and constitutes the essential nature of Reality. None doubts his own existence. One may not realize that the real is intelligence and bliss, but self-existence is experienced by all. The *sat* is persistent in earth, water, ether, air etc., is the substrate and not attribute and hence, constitutes the very essence of reality.¹²⁸

Just as the existence is the substrate of the external world, similarly the existence is the substrate of the internal world also.¹²⁹ In Advaita, three distinct stages of waking, dream and

are recognised. In the waking state, sensations directly refer to things or objects. In this state, the objects of experience vary and vanish; but pure intelligence as a unitary principle connects and controls them. In dream, all the objects are mainly copies of waking experience. Imaginative construction, though obscure, has a free play in dream. Śaṅkara points out that dream-phenomena lack the attributes of reality, i.e. spatiality, temporality, causality and non-contradiction; the pure intelligence does not undergo change which witnesses the dreams. The state of deep sleep is the state of complete rest for the individual mind without any intervention of dreams, psychic states and sense organs. It is a seeming witness in experience.¹³⁰ But, this blankness does not affect the witness-intelligence, since that intelligence is the witness even of the nescience of sleep. In these three states of experience intelligence is constantly present. So it is thought to be ever-existent.¹³¹

The self, which is the silent witness, eternal and ever-existing, is not affected by the presence or absence of body and mind. It does never cease even in the experience of sleep. The gross body or the sheath of food which plays its chief role in waking disappears in dream. The subtle body or the sheath of vital air, mind and intellect is manifest in dream states to exist in sleep. The causal body or the sheath of *ananda* (bliss) is attendant on the self in waking, dream and sleep. It shines in *Samadhi* (state of super-consciousness). In the state of super-consciousness, there is the manifestation of the self not that of nescience. The self is itself experience and it is not an object of experience. In self-consciousness, thought and existence cannot be separated. Self-existence is the basic foundation on which all knowledge and logic are grounded. Śaṅkara's Self-knowledge is inseparable from self-existence. It is beyond proof. If a person asserts that the self is unreal, then he is predicating his own unreality; for he is no other than the self. Regarding self-existence Śaṅkara's view is similar to

Descartes. According to Descartes, nobody doubts his own existence. He who began doubting everything could not doubt his own existence. *Cogito ergo sum* (I think, therefore I am) is the first postulate of his philosophy.¹³² Brahman or Reality is not only existence, it is intelligence as well. The experience of self-consciousness is undeniable. For the Advaitin, the self is of the nature of experience. The self, though of the nature of intelligence, does not shine of itself, like another person's consciousness, and that therefore the self is established only in dependence on experience. If experience be regarded as an inert light, then, there is the contingency of the blindness (unconsciousness) of the world. Hence, the self and experience are not different because both are considered as the light of intelligence.¹³³ Reality is not only existence and pure intelligence, it is also bliss. The happiness that we find in objects of sense is a reflection of Brahman-bliss.¹³⁴ The experience of sleep reveals the self to be non-dual and self luminous indicates that it is of the nature of bliss. From the non-existence of misery and pain in sleep one can conclude that there remains in that state only bliss. Scripture is not considered as the only testimony for the existence of happiness in sleep. There is also the evidence of the experience of all who say after waking up from sleep: "Happily did we sleep; we know nothing in our sleep." So, here one can find the reflective cognition of happiness and nescience which were experienced in sleep.¹³⁵

Some Advaitins hold that Jiva conditioned by nescience is itself the witness, because it is the direct seer. Some others maintain that the Jiva is the witness, not as conditioned by the omnipresent nescience, but as conditioned by the internal organ.¹³⁶

For Sankara, consciousness and object, self and not-self are opposed to each other like light and darkness. Consciousness is self-illuminating, object is not. Thus, according to Sankara, *intentionality* must be metaphysically false.

Consciousness and object have very different features. In the simple fact of consciousness, being of an object, one need not comprehend the possibility of ascribing to one the properties of the other.¹³⁷

The realization of self, which in essence is pure activity, is the avowed aim of Advaitic thought. And the way to such realization lies along inwardized reflection. Inwardized reflection is 'transcendental reflection'. A steady reflection into the presuppositional ground or structure of experience as may be brought through close scrutiny of the contents within the region of consciousness – not any external intuition of revelation – is what is generally meant by transcendental reflection. The threefold Vedantic discipline in the steps of hearing (*śravaṇa*), intellection (*manana*) and contemplation (*nidhidhyāsana*) can be understood in the light of this transcendental reflection. The chief stress in the tradition of Vedantic discipline is on the cultivation of that attitude of mind – at varying levels – in which the pure and essential structures of experience could become evident. Among these, *śravaṇa* signifies the terminating point of enlightenment; the stages of *manana* and *nidhidhyāsana* serve as the instrumental means. *Śravaṇa* would mean the reduction of intellectual truths to direct apprehension; but primarily it stands for the strictly intellectual level of acquaintance with Vedantic scriptural texts in their logical connexions. Intellection (*manana*) is supposed to reveal further the essential features behind the apparent truths of the scriptures; and through intense concentration (*nidhidhyāsana*), the whole mind is to be fixed on the essence or essences so discovered and get in tune therewith. According to Advaitin, real enlightenment can come only through concrete intuition and not through abstraction. For Sankara, all empirical and logical reasoning must be reduced to intuition; because through that alone we are presented with reality. The Advaitic intuition could more appropriately be understood in the perspective of

phenomenological intuition (i.e., essence-intuition).¹³⁸

In Advaita Vedānta, *cit* or consciousness can be considered as the presuppositional ground in the subjectively oriented interpretation of experience. In Advaita Vedānta *cit* indicates consciousness as transcendently substantive. Consciousness would mean phenomena which pertain to the subject (experiencer or knower). Consciousness in essence subjectivity implies two steps — (1) Consciousness is not appearing in the shape of conscious states in individual mind empirically determined. It presuppositionally stands behind such states. (2) Consciousness should subsist by itself independent of extrinsic factors — objective or psychological. This would signify its subsistence independent of empirical determination and objective reference. These two steps imply consciousness as a distinct principle. The possibility of self-subsisting consciousness would necessitate an analysis of knowledge-relation itself. Knowledge-relation is like objectively determined relation. It may prompt us to reversal of the attitude in which the object is cognised. It would mean stressing the subjective side rather than that of the object. Accordingly, the peculiar feature of 'reference' pertaining to knowledge has to be recognised. The simple proposition 'This is X' may give place to a more reflective proposition 'I have the knowledge of X'. And in the latter proposition, the 'of' — ness implies that there is a reference: X. To posit an object amounts invariably to directness towards something other than the knowing consciousness; itself is indicated by the reference character of knowledge. The phenomenologists would call it "intentionality".¹³⁹

In the Advaita Vedānta, consciousness simply manifests reveals, illuminates, or evidences. The domain of objects real or ideal, the mundane order is not created by a Godhead but *avidyā* or ignorance (or *Māyā*, in the standard usage, cosmological ignorance) is held responsible. In his commentary on the *Brahma-sūtras*,¹⁴⁰ Sankara raises a question regarding the

possibility of deciding whether a thing is possible or impossible. In Advaita Vedānta, the content of illusory experience has an 'empirically' status such that it cannot be subsumed under either of the concepts 'existent' and 'non-existent'.

The Advaitin describes the possibility of the empirical range and holds thatnescience is the cause of all empirical determinations. It obscures the omnipresent, intelligent self, and partitions itself in the form of the world of diverse kinds. In Advaita, *mitha* is the modification of the internal organ. It is the connection of the cognizer and the object cognized. The internal organ resides in the body, goes out through the channels of the senses, pervades the object and manifests as a part of the internal organ which is defined by the part which is called egoity; that part which connects egoity with the object is termed cognitive *mitha*; and that part which pervades the object, assumes the form of the object and invests it with the character of objectness is known as fitness for determination. 'This is a pot' and 'I know this pot' — the first indicates the activity of *ābhāsa*, and the second sentence indicates that Brahman is the basic intelligence which accounts for the known-ness of the object. Without the *ābhāsa* there cannot be the perception of the object, and without Brahman there cannot be the generation of the *ābhāsa* which leads to Brahman as a reflection to its image. The Advaitin speaks of six ways of knowing or the mode of knowing the object — perception, inference, analogy, verbal testimony, intuition and non-cognition. Perception is possible only in things which are present and are capable of being perceived. The events of yesterday are not objects of perception, because they are not facts of the present time. From the statements, 'I know the pot' and 'I do not know the pot' we have Brahman as their basis. Known-ness and unknown-ness of an object are attributes manifested by Brahman. The modes of reflection of intelligence is needed in order to enable

the *mithi* of the intellect to illumine the object. What is generated in the object of perception is a reflection of Brahman-intelligence which in turn illumines the objects. The *ābhāna* or reflection is an appearance of which Brahman is the reality.¹⁴²

Brahman is the eternal consciousness. The empirical self is the subject-consciousness. The eternal consciousness is determined by mental modes and it is called knowledge-consciousness. When it is determined by an empirical object it is called the object-consciousness. In external perception, the mind (*antahkaranam*) goes out to an empirical object through a sense-organ, and is modified into its form. This mental mode assuming the form of the object is called *mithi*.¹⁴²

The Buddhists describes ordinary perception as inferences, since all the parts of a physical object are not presented. According to the Buddhists, a physical object is an aggregate of parts and all the parts are not ever presented. Their aggregate is also not presented. We can perceive what is absolutely simple, the pure particular and hence true perception is an ineffable experience.¹⁴³

Inference is produced by the knowledge of invariable concomitance of the probans with the probandum. The cognition that there must be fire on the hill which has smoke is the classic example of inferential knowledge. *Vyapti-jhana* (knowledge of pervasion) is most important in inferential knowledge. *Vyapti* is the concomitance of the *probans* and the *probandum*. That which pervades is the *probandum* and is called the *vyapaka* (pervader); and that which is pervaded is the *probans* and is called *vyapya*. Fire is pervader and smoke is the pervaded. Comparison is the means of the knowledge of similarity. A person is told that the *ganyya*, bears a resemblance to the cow. He goes to the forest, finds the *ganyya* and notices its similarities to the cow. This knowledge of similarity of a cow with the *ganyya* is acquired by comparison. Advaita also admits non-cognition or *anupalabhi* as the valid means of knowledge.

Non-existence of something like a pot is known through non-cognition. Non-cognition can provide knowledge of the non-existence of something if that something must be capable of being cognized. A sentence is composed of words. Words are the vehicles of thought. According to Advaita, verbal testimony is a valid means of knowledge. The Advaitins regard 'Truth as revealed by Scripture is important. According to Advaitin, Brahman alone is real and it is made known by verbal testimony. They regard that all texts of Scripture are not equally authoritative. Only purportful Scripture is authoritative. Assumption or *arthāpati* is that process of knowledge which makes something intelligible by assuming something else. When a particular person is alive and he is not to be found in his house, it is assumed that he must be somewhere outside his house.¹⁴⁴ The Advaitins trace this method for explaining experienced facts in supposing some unperceived facts. In order to explain the memory we have on rising from a dreamless sleep when we say, 'I had a comfortable sleep; I did not know anything when I was sleeping' in supposing the existence of an objectless blissful consciousness.¹⁴⁵

In the Vedantic context, *Cit* presents not merely the highest level of possibility in transcendental reflexion, but also claims absolute reality. *Cit* is sought to be traced in and through the phenomenal states of experience. At no stage of reflection— even at the bodily level — is *cit* absent. Sankara contends that consciousness is found to persist in and through all the normal states of man — from waking to deep sleep. With each stage of reflection, *cit* as the 'possible' comes out in greater clarity of essence, progressively detached from the corresponding empirical implications. The import of 'thou' (*tvam*) in 'Tattam asi' declares the innermost self that comes out in stages of reflection from the bodily level and ultimately proves to be the possible pure consciousness itself.¹⁴⁶

CHAPTER

5

Quantum Theoretical View of Reality

Quantum theory is a revolutionary tool that allows us to calculate statistically a wide variety of atomic properties¹⁴⁷. It is a theory of microscopic world. The term 'quantum' represents the microscopic unit (especially of energy).

The development of quantum mechanics in the beginning of the twentieth century was a unique intellectual adventure, which changed radically the former concepts of classical mechanics used to describe the physical world¹⁴⁸.

The quantum mechanics was discovered as a result of the efforts of the scientists to explain the distribution of energy in black body (a hollow cavity whose inner walls are completely black) radiation. An ordinary body exposed to radiation absorbs some of it and reflects the rest. A black body is that perfectly absorbs, and then re-emits, all radiations falling on it. It can be shown that the way in which the radiant energy is distributed among its various frequencies (spectrum) is independent of the construction of the cavity and depends on the temperature only¹⁴⁹. Rayleigh and Jeans calculated the spectrum and the results were disastrous. The high frequency vibrations were associated with the infinite amount of energy which did not merely contradict the experiment, it made no

sense at all. The result was called the 'Ultraviolet Catastrophe'. About a year later a most peculiar way out of the difficulty was found by Max Planck. Rayleigh and Jeans, who did their calculations by different methods, had both supposed that the energy is seeped (entered) in and out of the black body in a perfectly continuous way. It was the natural assumption to make. Planck supposed that the emission and absorption of radiant energy could take place in the form of discrete portions, which he called 'quanta', the value of each quantum being $h\nu$ where ν is the frequency of radiation and ' h ' was a constant called as Planck's constant (6.63×10^{-34} Joule-sec) after the name of its discoverer. The high frequencies were tamed and a spectrum calculated which proved to be in perfect agreement with the experiment. By this daring stroke Planck would abolish the UV catastrophe.

The value of ' h ' is a very tiny quantity on the scale of everyday experience. That is why at the first sight there was uncertainty about the persistence of the quantum structure. However, later investigations showed that the quanta were indeed persistent. Einstein in 1905 used Planck's ideas to interpret the photoelectric effect which had proved inexplicable by classical wave nature of radiation. The effect concerned the way in which electrons were ejected from metals by an incident beam of light. Einstein explained the effect in quantum terms. He suggested that light is made up of lots of particles called 'photons', each having a quantum of energy $h\nu$. When a photon having a frequency above a critical value strikes on an electron, the electron gets excited and ejected from the metal surface. But Einstein's success put the scientists in apparent paradox. Because most of the outstanding achievements of the nineteenth century physics had admirably established the wave-like character of light and no one could understand how something could be both a wave and a particle. After twenty five years of this dilemma

Paul Dirac showed that quantum theory had the remedy for this discrepancy within itself. He consistently applied quantum mechanics to Maxwell's electromagnetic theory and derived a formalism which if interrogated in a particle-like way gave particle behavior and if interrogated in a wave-like way gave wave behavior. In his Ph.D. dissertation Prince Louis de Broglie proposed a way in which waves must be associated with micro objects such as electrons which had hitherto been thought to be of purely particle nature. For quantum physics both waves and particles are equally fundamental. Each is a way that matter can manifest itself. Since neither 'state' is complete in itself and both are necessary for a complete picture of reality, it turns out that we can never focus on both at the same moment. This is the nub of Heisenberg's Uncertainty Principle which states that either we can measure the exact position of something like an electron when it manifests itself as a particle, or we can measure its momentum when it expresses as a wave, but we can never exactly measure them at the same time.

Heisenberg's uncertainty principle at once demolished the two classical concepts: causality and objective description of reality. The first aspect of the principle is that the Newtonian laws of cause and effect are not applicable in the quantum world. The second aspect supporting the subjective reality states that we cannot observe anything without changing it. A purely objective description of the subatomic world is impossible.¹⁵⁰ According to Copenhagen interpretation, there is no reality independent of the observation of the observer. The quantum "reality" is altered by an observation and whatever appears as the reality is a product of the interaction of the observation with the system observed. The observer is, therefore, a part of the reality he is probing. The element of conscious choice in observing reality as X or not -X implies that any picture of an observed phenomenon must

include the observer's mind. In this connection, the Nobel-prize winning physicist Eugene Wigner deduced the following proposition "It was not possible to formulate the laws of quantum mechanics in a fully consistent way without reference to the consciousness (of the observer). The very study of the external world led to the conclusion that the content of the consciousness is the ultimate reality. According to physicist John A. Wheeler, an observer of classical physics can no more see himself detached from the system under observation; rather he is both the 'actor' and 'participator' in the quantum arena of existence. The objective reality must be complemented by subjective elements of the observer in the quantum world. This phenomenon has been described by Daniel Talbot in his book 'Mysticism and New Physics' as 'subjective' - that is the objective reality and the subjective consciousness of the scientist are intimately connected to each other.¹⁵⁰

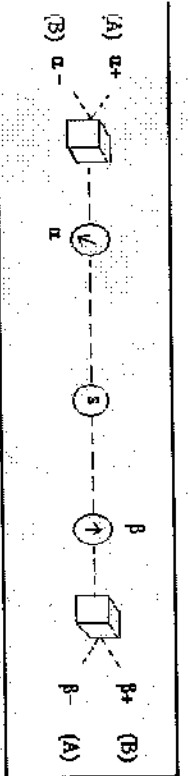
Einstein believed in an objective reality. He did recognize the appearance of uncertainty and unpredictability at the quantum level. He realized the statistical variations, the action fluctuations and the occurrences of chance events. But in his opinion, there is something below these superficial uncertainties, and that deeper 'something' keeps the universe meaningful.¹⁵¹ So he opposed tooth and nail the principle of uncertainty by Heisenberg. In 1933, Einstein propounded that there must be a 'hidden variable' somewhere which is responsible for this uncertainty. One of the interpretation problems¹⁵² in quantum mechanics is that the wave function describing a system changes with time according to the Schrödinger equation, but that description is not complete. For complete description of a system at a given time requires, in addition to the wave function, a set of parameters, so called hidden variables. However, until the time of Einstein's death, no such 'hidden variable' nullifying Heisenberg's uncertainty

principle was found. In 1935, Einstein, Podolsky and Rosen (EPR) in their paper entitled 'Can Quantum-Mechanical description of physical reality be considered complete?'¹⁵³, showed that the quantum formalism permitted the existence of certain two particle states for which one can predict strong correlations both in position and in velocity even when the two particles are widely separated and no longer interact. They showed that measurements of the positions would always give values symmetric about the origin, so that a measurement on one particle would give with certainty the position of the other one. Similarly measurements of the velocities of the two particles would always yield two opposite values so that a measurement on the first one would give an accurate measurement of the velocity of the other. But measurement on the first particle does not disturb the distant second particle and so the second particle must have had well determined values of position and velocity even before the measurement. Since quantum formalism cannot give simultaneous and precise values of these quantities, EPR concluded that quantum mechanics was not a complete theory. Einstein proposed that the theory should be supplemented by additional variables (Hidden Variable) which were to restore causality and locality to it¹⁵⁴. Neils Bohr contested the EPR reasoning¹⁵⁵ and claimed that in such a quantum state one could not speak about the individual properties of each of the particles, even they were distant from one another. According to Bohr till a measurement is made we can only talk of a total wave function for the system of two particles, no matter how far they are apart. This is the Quantum Entanglement as coined by E.Schrodinger. When we do a measurement, the measuring apparatus interacts with the whole system, even though we might think we are dealing with just one particle alone. Consequent to the measurement there is disentanglement, and the wave function of the system now

becomes a mere product of the separate wave functions of the two particles. Bohr objected the classical version of reality that a particle can have properties even though they have not been measured. He opined that if no observation is made, a particle cannot have physically real properties.

In 1952, David Bohm suggested¹⁵¹ that the EPR proposition might be verified by experimental measurement of spin, which was accordingly tried by John Stuart Bell in 1954. Bell carried out his test with the 'local realistic' view of the world. Bernard d' Espagnat, a theorist of university of Paris, defined this view on the basis of three fundamental assumptions, viz. a) things exist regardless of whether anybody observes them; b) consistent experimental observations lead to a general conclusion and c) no signal can propagate faster than the speed of light.

Bell derived a mathematical formula, an inequality, which could be checked experimentally. He considered the spin version of the EPR experiment, analyzed statistical correlations between observations of two particles and reduced the inequalities. Bell showed that the inequalities (relationships) hold between the joint probabilities of the different outcomes of spin measurements. Therefore, to have an idea of actual probability; a series of experiments with appropriate statistical analysis is necessary¹⁵⁶.



[Figure : Photons A and B are moving from the source 'S' and after passing through the analyzers their spin components α and β are detected on detectors as α_+ , α and β_+ , β respectively]

Bell considered a pair of spin $\frac{1}{2}$ particles in the singlet spin state and moving freely in opposite directions. We can illustrate the Bell's inequality described by Polkinghorne^{157, 158} as follows: We set up an apparatus in which a pair of protons, A and B, are produced in a singlet ($\uparrow\downarrow$) state. The protons separate and each passes through an analyzer which can determine its spin along one of the three directions labeled as α , β , and γ .

α_+ (β_+ , γ_+) for spin up; α_- (β_- , γ_-) for spin down.

The measurements on the spin components of A and B are made simultaneously and independently. At every measurement of the two α components, they were found to cancel each other. If A is α_+ then B is α_- , or vice versa. This indicates the existence of local reality; that is, α_+ is a real property of A and α_- is a real property of B. These will be their respective real properties even when we make no measurement of the α component. Similarly if we deduce physical reality for the other components, we will have eight possible states: (α_+ , β_+ , γ_+), (α_+ , β_+ , γ_-), (α_+ , β_- , γ_+), (α_+ , β_- , γ_-), (α_- , β_+ , γ_+), (α_- , β_+ , γ_-), (α_- , β_- , γ_+), (α_- , β_- , γ_-). We cannot determine experimentally all these quantities for a given proton but we can fix two of them simultaneously. Suppose we measure α for A and find it α_+ , and β for B and find β_+ . Because of the singlet condition we know that β_+ for B implies β_- for A, so that A certainly has α_+ , β_- and it must be in one of the two states: (α_+ , β_+ , γ_+) or (α_+ , β_+ , γ_-). From this sort of consideration, John Bell's test can be realized as follows:

Let $N(++++)$ be the number of particles in the test with (α_+ , β_+ , γ_+), etc. Let $N(\alpha_+, \beta_+)$ be the number of particles with α_+ , β_+ and γ unspecified; etc. Then

$$\begin{aligned} N(\alpha_+, \beta_+) &= N(+ - +) + N(+ - -) \quad \gamma \text{ is unspecified} \\ N(\alpha_+, \gamma) &= N(+ + -) + N(+ - -) \quad \beta \text{ is unspecified} \\ N(\beta_+, \gamma) &= N(- + +) + N(- - +) \quad \alpha \text{ is unspecified} \end{aligned}$$

Since all the N 's are non-negative, it follows that

$$N(\alpha_+, \beta_+) \leq N(\alpha_+, \gamma) + N(\beta_+, \gamma)$$

After a long series of such measurements with a large number of pairs of protons at random directions we add up the number of instances in which a particular combination of results has occurred. For example the number of times that the proton has α_+ and the other then has β_+ would be a number $N(\alpha_+, \beta_+)$; etc. Bell then showed that

$$N(\alpha_+, \beta_+) \leq N(\alpha_+, \gamma) + N(\beta_+, \gamma)$$

Repeated experiments consistently showed that Bell's inequalities were violated by quantum mechanics but expected by hidden-variables theories i.e. local realistic theories. In a local theory, experiments can be discussed in a small region of space and time without worrying about any distant occurring in other distant places. A non-localised theory has an alternative way of saying that anything we do here will have an effect at other places which will get with increasing distance, and will take time to reach other points of space.

The implication of the experimental violation of Bell's inequality was that the notion of objectivity and local causality could be rejected. Thus the local realistic view of the world was unacceptable to quantum physics. All the quantum phenomena, at a fundamental level, are in intimate and immediate correlation to one another. Since the theorem of John Bell and the subsequent experiments of Aspect and his group, it has been realized that the quantum world has curious non-local features. These non-localised features remain hidden in quantum mechanics and do not seem to allow us to send instantaneous signals. However, if quantum theory is to be modified for solving the measurement problem, this hidden non-locality must be introduced into the equation¹⁵⁷. In 1964, Nobel physicist Wigner¹⁵⁹ proposed that the consciousness of the observer plays the role of hidden variable in

determining the actual outcome out of various possibilities in an event. He asserts that a complete description of quantum mechanical process cannot be made by any observation without the intervention of human consciousness. Wigner also says that all possible knowledge concerning an object can be given as its wave function and the knowledge is based on the impression we receive. The impression which one gains as the result of an observation, modifies the wave function of the system. The modified wave function remains unpredictable till the impression enters our consciousness. When the impression enters our consciousness the wave function is altered¹⁶⁰. Wigner asserted that the consciousness of the observer is directly responsible for the ultimate knowledge of the external reality. Such assertions parallel the philosophy of *Vedānta* which points out that the illusionary phenomenal world is the result of mental objectification. Associated with illusionary *māyā*, the impersonal *Brahman* of *Vedānta* becomes an objectified 'personal God'¹⁶¹. Some scientists and philosophers appeared to believe that scientific thinking derived from quantum physics could provide an explanation of consciousness. The western thinkers believed that consciousness cannot exist without contents. They thought that there are some kind of distinctions between mind and matter, soul and body. David Bohm¹⁶² had an idea of an 'implicate order' in which both matter and consciousness manifest according to the same principle. He emphasized on a holistic understanding of reality- including both mind and matter. Descartes¹⁶³ also introduced the notion of 'dualism' by asserting that the reality consisted of two things: matter and soul. It was proposed that the existing objects in quantum world is not 'matter', rather it is somewhat an abstract notion of a wave function which evolves according to the Schrodinger wave equation. Our consciousness interacts with the wave function and it is through this interplay that what we

know as matter appears. This interplay takes place in human brain and the complexity and sensitivity of brain allow it to occur. This model suggests that all the physical systems are 'conscious' to varying degrees. The eastern thinkers thought that the consciousness is, ultimately, self sufficient and can exist in itself in state of perfect awareness. The non-subjective elements have been dissolved through deep and prolonged meditation, leading to eventual control and overcoming of the mind. There is a harmony between the intellectual processes of the rational mind and the inner structure of the physico-chemical world. The final goal of the eastern thinkers is the actual realization of the pure subject, that is, pure consciousness devoid of contents¹⁶⁴. Sankara¹⁶⁵, the non-dualist philosopher of India, has proposed that consciousness exists even in insentient objects. Evan H. Walker¹⁶⁶ speculated that consciousness may be associated with the quantum entities like photons. He remarked that an unlimited number of discrete, conscious, non-thinking entities are governing all the detailed working of the universe.

The Aspect experiment¹⁶⁷ and its predecessors provide sufficient clues to build up a holistic picture of the universe. They tell us that particles that they were once together in an interaction continue to remain parts of a single system even though they are separated by long distance at a later time. In the beginning, all particles were interacting in a single system. Hence theorist such as David Bohm and d'Espagnat¹⁶⁸ believe that everything is connected to everything else, and that only a holistic approach to the universe can explain the phenomena of the universe.

David Bohm¹⁶⁹ postulates sub quantum models in which pulses like shockwaves propagate superluminally in a kind of ether and establish correlations among separated systems. In order to explain the results of the experiments of Aspect et al., we have to take the help of *Advaita Vedānta*. The

multitridinous, separate and discrete particles are seemingly unconnected at the surface level which is the substratum of the apparent manifoldness. The substratum is a single one, homogenous, unbroken and all pervading. The unbroken whole is not matter, nor it is energy; it is not particulate; nor is it wavy. It is consciousness. It is not consciousness of somebody or something. It is consciousness itself. It cannot be described in language. It is what it is. It cannot be said what it is. It can be indicated in deep silence at THAT (TAT is Sanskrit).

Dalai Lama¹⁷⁰ mentioned two extreme stand-points in the philosophical theories to explain consciousness. In one extreme, there was 'behaviourism' which attempted to define consciousness in terms of external behavior that reduce mental phenomena to bodily action. At the other extreme end, stood the 'Cartesian dualism' which maintained that the world is composed of *matter* and *mind*. The question of consciousness has attracted a good deal of attention in the long history of Buddhist philosophical thinking. According to the earlier scriptures, Buddha saw consciousness as playing a key role in determining the cause of happiness and suffering. '*Dhamma padda*', the famous discourse of Buddha, stated that mind is primary and pervades all things.

In Buddhist philosophy of mind(*sem*), we find discussion of six types of mental phenomena: experiences of sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch and mental states. The first five are sensory experiences and the last one covers memory, will, volition, imagination etc. One division of *Yogācāra* school argued that the mental perception is too transient and contingent to account for the profound unity we observe both in our subjective experience and in our inherent sense of selfhood. They posit that, underlying all these fluctuations, contingent mental states, there exists a basic mind that retains its integrity and continuum throughout the life time of an individual. This is the 'foundational consciousness' which is

the basis of all mental states. However, the *Middle Way School* is uncomfortable with this implication of 'foundational consciousness'.

The definition of the mental is that which is luminous and knowing¹⁷¹ - is the common dictum recited by the monks to express consciousness in Tibetan monastic education. 'Luminosity'(clarity) refers to the ability of mental state to reflect and 'knowing'(cognizance) refers to mental states' faculty to perceive or apprehend what appears. All phenomena possessed of these two features count as mental. Many of the Buddhist texts explain the nature of consciousness in terms of metaphors such as light or a flowing river in order to allay the limits of language in dealing with the subjective. In consciousness, as in light, there is a quality of illumination. However, in talking about the mental phenomena having these two features of luminosity and knowing, one might assume Buddhism is proposing the version of Cartesian dualism that there are two independent substances- *matter* and *mind*. To believe from any possible confusion Dalai Lama made a slight digression on the basic classification of reality proposed in Buddhist Philosophy. Buddhism suggests¹⁷² that there are three distinct aspects of reality: 1) Matter (Physical objects), 2) Mind (Subjective experiences) and 3) Abstract composites (Mental formations). In defining material phenomena, there are broad consensus between Buddhist thoughts and modern science. As to what constitutes the world of matter, there is not much difference between these two investigative paths. In addition to the manifestly material objects- such as extension, spatiotemporal locality, from Buddhist point of view, the first realm of reality includes phenomena like subtle particles, the various fields (electromagnetic) and force of nature (gravity). The second realm is the subjective experience, such as our thought processes, sensory perceptions, emotions etc. From Buddhist perspective, this mental realm cannot be reduced

to the world of matter. The third realm of reality, the abstract composites, can be characterized neither as physical (first realm) nor mental (second realm). Phenomena such as time, concepts, logical principles, which are emergent features of our mind, belong to this third world. This taxonomy of reality is almost identical to that proposed as the first world, second world and third world by Karl Popper¹⁷².

Roger Penrose¹⁷³ had the opinion that the phenomenon of consciousness can arise only in the presence of some non-computational physical processes taking place in the brain. One must presume, however, that such non-computational processes would also have to be inherent in the action of inanimate matter, since living human brains are ultimately composed of the same material, as are the inanimate objects of the universe. Bohm¹⁷⁴ suggested that thought processes are like quantum processes and consciousness can be explained in terms of quantum mechanical features in the actual structure and functioning of the brain. At that time biophysicists working on the retina discovered that nerve cells in the human brain are very sensitive to register the absorption of a single photon and thus sensitive enough to be influenced by odd quantum level behavior, including indeterminism and non-local effects. Further experiments proved that quantum indeterminacy is built into the functioning of the brain, through random variations in the chemical concentrations surrounding nerve junctions (neuron synapse). These concentrations determine the level at which neurons 'fire' (to make electrical contact with other neurons). The levels at which neurons fire vary according to definite statistical laws, just like any other quantum process. Nirvan Marshall¹⁷⁵ argued that the determinist laws of classical mechanics left no room for the free play of thought processes, free will or intention - all of which are common features of consciousness. Yuti Orlov¹⁷⁶ opined that in any kind of creative thinking, quantum

indeterminism and superimposed probability states must be playing a role in the brain's openness to all the potentialities latent in consciousness - for examples our ability to see many possibilities all at once. However, out of a given set of quantum possibilities, only one can exist in the 'real world' which is materialized by our free play of thought.

The background state (steady state) of all consciousness has an orderly set up of various thoughts and perceptions. This orderliness gives our consciousness a character of unbroken wholeness. This kind of settled uniformity is rare amongst dynamic processes of nature, but occurs in condensed phases of materials such as superconductors, superfluids, laser light etc. The property that all these things have in common is some degree of coherence, such that many of the constituents of the substance behave as one. Various people suggested that consciousness might depend on the brain somehow taking on the characteristics of superconductor. However, superconductors exist only at very low temperatures, whereas brain functions at normal body temperature. If the physics of condensed phases is to prove relevant to consciousness, then there would have to be some such mechanism that functions at normal body temperature. And in fact, the 'pumped system' first described by Professor Herbert Frohlich¹⁷⁷ and known to exist in biological tissue, seems to satisfy all the necessary criteria. Frohlich's pumped system is a system of vibrating dipoles (molecules in the cell wall of living tissue) into which energy is pumped. The vibrating dipoles emit phorons as they jiggle. Beyond a certain threshold, any additional energy pumped into the system causes the molecules to vibrate in the same pitch. And finally put themselves into the most ordered condensed phase - a Bose-Einstein (BE) Condensate? In this BE condensate many parts of an ordered system merge in such a way that their individualities are lost making them 'whole'. It is certainly the

case that one person can possess two or more states of consciousness- for instance, the experience of carrying on a conversation while continuing to drive a car. To experience these mini conscious states by one integrated self, something must unite them all. In each one of these states at any moment, there are at least one hundred different bits of information. To bring all these together, it necessitates that the separate brain states become identical. All their properties and all their information must entirely overlap. This kind of unity is only found in BE condensate. And it is only in such condensates, where individuality breaks down, that we can find distinctively quantum mechanical effect in large-scale systems. Quantum mechanically one would say that wave functions of the previously individual bits have overlapped – they have become indeterminate in their spatial location such that each one spreads itself all over the whole, just as the alive/dead cat of Schrodinger spread its ambiguous being out to fill the entire box which enclosed its secret. The computer model of brain suggests that, consciousness arises from the brain's computation mechanism with a network of millions of neurons. Any damage in a certain part of the network causes interruption in certain specific functions of the brain – damage to the optic area destroys sight, the auditory area destroys hearing etc. But consciousness itself does not suffer in the same manner from such localized injuries. It is only after a massive brain injury, a large section of the brain is destroyed and consciousness is sufficiently affected to lose its holistic property. This we would expect, if consciousness is a non-local quantum phenomenon.

Pure consciousness is defined in *Advaita Vedānta* as 'Brahman'¹⁷⁸. *Brahman* is the 'akāśa' that is the unbroken wholeness and is the reality. According to *Advaita Vedānta*, everything in the universe emerges from and dissolves into space. Space is not a void; it is not inactive too. Space is equally

active as matter in determining reality. The presence of material body changes the shape and geometry of space. Space is the bee-hive of activity in the micro world and is actively involved in the process of evolution through the sequence 'Āpāb (primordial water) → *prāna* → *akāśa*' and in the process of involution through the reverse sequence. *Āpāb* is the first evolute and the last involute in the process of creation and dissolution respectively. *Āpāb* is manifested from the unmanifested *Māyā*. All the created things, whether micro or macro, gain consciousness through this *Māyā* or *mulaprakṛiti* 'primeval nature of *Māyā*'. *Māyā*, the source of the universe and the final recipient of the universe, is not real; it appears in creation and disappears in dissolution. What is real is *Brahman*, but we cannot trace it in matter or energy, particles or space. The multiple manifestations of the phenomenal world are waves, ripples and bubbles that are appearance on the surface only¹⁷⁹. The underlying principle, the support below and apparent phenomenal surface, the substratum is the deep sea-the *Brahman*, the Unbroken, the Pure Consciousness. There is no question of propagation of signal, transfer of information from particle p_1 in area A to particle p_2 in area B. There is no area which is beyond *Brahman*. All the areas in the empirical universe are connected at the deeper level since everything of the universe has got only one support, only one substratum which is unbroken whole.

We may correlate the concept of *Advaita Vedānta* with the idea of some modern physicists. David Bohm writes¹⁸⁰: "Parts are seen to be in immediate connection, in which their dynamical relationship depends, in an irreducible way, on the state of the whole system (and indeed, on that broader systems in which they are contained, extending ultimately and in principle to the entire universe). Thus one is led to a new unbroken wholeness which denies the chemical idea of 'analyzability of the world into separately and independently existing parts'".

The concept of 'quantum field' is seen as the fundamental physical entity; a continuous medium which is present everywhere in space. All physical things and phenomena are transient and illusionary manifestations of an underlying fundamental entity- this is the basic element of quantum field theory. The eastern thinkers consider this entity as the only reality. The *Brahman* of *Veāānta* and *Dharmakīyā* of Buddhism are considered as the ultimate unified field from which all the physical phenomena are sprung out. The reality underlying these phenomena is beyond all descriptions; it is often said to be *formless, empty or void*¹⁸¹. However, this *emptiness (śūnyatā)* in Buddhism, especially in Mahāyāna Buddhism, does not mean 'nonexistence' but rather that all entities, including ourselves, lack independent identity we tend to assume that they possess¹⁸². It is the essence of all life; it gives birth to all forms in the phenomenal world. This concept has been expressed in a Buddhist *sūtra* as — *Form is emptiness, and emptiness is indeed form*¹⁸³.

Emptiness (*śūnyatā*) is a key concept in Buddhism, especially in Mahāyāna Buddhism. Some of its *sūtras* expound emptiness in discursive ways which are being used in systematic argument by Mādhyamākā Philosophy¹⁸⁴. In quantum theory many of the properties of, for instance, an electron is not intrinsic to the electron itself. They depend not only on the electron itself but also on the type of experiment that is being performed. In Mādhyamākā too, attributes are relational and not intrinsic. In quantum theory, however, some of the properties of an electron, such as its rest mass etc., are intrinsic to it. In contrast, for Mādhyamākā all phenomena without exception are empty of intrinsic nature. In quantum theory, the observer does not play a purely passive role. Whether an electron behaves as a wave or a particle depends on the type of experiment which is being decided by the observer. The quantum theory seems to be describing a 'participatory

universe'¹⁸⁵. Wheeler puts it as 'No elementary phenomenon is a phenomenon until it is recorded'¹⁸⁶. Mādhyamākā has its own version of the 'participatory universe'. In line with the principle of dependent origination, observer and observed exist only in relation to each other. Both of them are empty of any self-contained intrinsic nature. Finally, Madhyaka is intended as a means to liberation. For this reason, it is considered necessary in Buddhism to experience ultimate truth personally rather than simply to understand it intellectually. However, in this regard, quantum theory follows more modest path¹⁸⁷.

Mind and consciousness are prime to both *Abhiāta* and Buddhist phenomenology as well as to modern quantum phenomenology. In the *Dhamma paā*¹⁸⁸, mind is given highest priority e.g. it is said,

"All experience is preceded by mind

Led by mind

Made by mind....."

David Bohm¹⁸⁹ has drawn a beautiful analogy between quantum nature of electron and the working of the mind. When one tries to measure the momentum of an electron, it changes due to interaction with the measuring device or when position is measured, the wave function does not remain same for similar interaction. Similarly if a person tries to observe his thinking process on a certain subject/matter, the original train of thought gets derailed without our deliberate effort "Thus, *thought processes and quantum systems are analogous in that they cannot be analyzed too much in terms of distinct elements, because the 'intrinsic' nature of each element is not a property existing separately from and independently of other elements but is, instead, a property that arises partially from its relation with other elements.*"

Another important concept developed by Bohm is the quantum properties of matter as potentialities, development of which depends on the systems/devices with which the

object interacts, and the object itself. The same electron, however, potentially capable of showing particle nature when it interacts with a position indicating device its wavelike character becomes trivial. Alternately, it has the potential to show wave like character, at the expense of particle like nature, by interacting with a device which detects particles. Therefore, the reality depends upon the observer i.e. the kind of device with which electron interacts determines which of these potential aspects is the outcome. Hence, the reality cannot be pin-pointed or compartmentalized, it has to be experienced holistically, and whole universe is entangled. It may be appropriate to quote Robert Oppenheimer¹⁹⁰ regarding the full description of electron “ *If we ask, for instance, whether the position of electron remains the same, we must say ‘no’, if we ask whether the electron’s position changes with time, we must say ‘no’; if we ask whether it is in motion, we must say ‘no’.*” Similar echo of idea is also available in describing Brahman, the ultimate reality behind the phenomenal world¹⁹¹

‘It moves. It moves not

It is far, and yet it is near

It is within all this

And it is outside all this.” (Isha Upanisad, 5)

Thus the reality is an entangled whole to be experienced. To quote another quantum physicist Erwin Schrödinger¹⁹² regarding the singular nature of ultimate reality “*The only possible alternative is simply to keep to the immediate experience that consciousness is singular of which plural is unknown; that there is only one thing and that what seems to be a plurality is merely a series of different aspects of this one thing, produced in a gallery of mirrors, and in the same way Garvisankar and Mt. Everest turned out to be the same peak seen from different valleys.*”

Similarly the Buddhist idea of ‘*Sunyata*’ is the planum of infinite potentiality, although, apparently it appears to be void. It describes the emptiness or non-existence of any intrinsic

capture of things, thoughts and objects. To quote David Bohm¹⁹³ “*In fact, quantum theory requires us to give up the idea that the electron, or any other object has, by itself, any intrinsic properties at all. Instead, each object should be regarded as something containing only completely defined potentialities that are developed when the object interacts with an appropriate system.*”

CHAPTER

6

Epilogue

but non-intentional. In Advaita Vedānta, the transcendental consciousness is non-temporal, contentless and over-individual; in Husserl it is temporal flux, full of content.¹⁹⁴

From the above discussion regarding phenomenology, especially from the Cartesian, Buddhist, Advaitin and Quantum theoretical views, we find that transcendental ego or pure consciousness is the essence of all things. Both in Indian and Western standpoint, even in physical science, *śūnyatā* or nothingness is not considered as mere nothingness, it is full of potentialities. But this *śūnyatā* is inexpressible.

We may say that phenomenological interpretation will lead a very significant area of philosophy. As philosophy consists of reflection on human being's experience in relation to himself, to other human beings and to the world; so phenomenology will give new and purely novel light to the philosophical problems both old and new regarding man's everyday experience of the world. And it may be the new philosophical basis for both science and man's life.

According to Husserl, *Intentionality* itself has two parts – that consciousness is always directed towards an object, and since the intentional object may or may not exist – that every conscious state has a co-relative sense or meaning. But, Yogācāra Buddhist view is that the *ālambana* (or 'the objective-causal support') of perception is not the external reality, but an internal, cognizable form. Though consciousness is essentially intentional in phenomenology, yet in Advaita Vedānta, consciousness is essentially non-intentional. In Advaita Vedānta, transcendence and intentionality of consciousness remain inexplicable facts, their metaphysical status rationally undetermined (*anirvachanyā*), their content not deducible from the content or form of consciousness. In Advaita Vedānta, Sankara admits that the external world is false and the real is Brahman. But he says that the external world is not mere an idea and the idea of the external world is based on the existence of the external world. The notion of ego is considered as the unity of the conscious life. Advaita Vedānta and Buddhism, in both systems the primitive notion is that of consciousness of subjectivity regarded as reflexive

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