

## Western Philosophy and Śāṅkara

CONTEMPORARY western philosophy wants to abandon all forms of 'traditionalism'; it boldly starts with a new point of view and a new method of interpretation of experience.<sup>1</sup>

The term 'experience' is ambiguous. Besides its different implications in different sciences, it has a very complex implication in philosophy. Experience in philosophy has to be understood from the particular point of view of a philosopher. We have to decide whether a particular point of view is the only point of view. Is not 'experience' subjective? Does not experience involve subjective and objective principles? Is there any 'continuity' between the subjective and the objective? These and others are the various problems raised by the contemporary thinkers like Bergson, James and Bradley, on the one hand, and Alexander, Morgan, Boodin, Santayana and Whitehead, on the other. Experience has to be viewed from all its phases and kinds.

Revolt against Hegelianism as marked in Bergson, James and Bradley, is chiefly against the 'intellectualistic' attitude of Hegel. Hegel's Absolute is a concrete whole. Hegelianism lies in understanding the logical continuity of thought, reconciling the opposites till one arrives at the concrete reality of the absolute spirit.<sup>2</sup> Experience, for Hegel, is a 'logical whole' where there is a relation among the parts, and there is a continuous union of all in a higher synthesis till the final synthesis is reached. The world-show becomes a whole, a continuity, no doubt, but this continuity, being logical, is purely of an eternal character without any reference to temporality. That is why Urquhart aptly says, in his comments on Hegel's philosophy, that it is after all abstract, for it fails to account for the real process or temporality.<sup>3</sup> In the analysis of experience, we find, eternity and temporality both. Logical continuity of Hegel is purely eternal. The 'succession' or 'process' is explained away or absorbed into the Absolute. The universe tends to shrink into a logical process of which the individuals are merely the foci.<sup>4</sup> Just as Hume fails to account for 'continuity' and 'unity' which presuppose certain logical and eternal principles, Hegel fails to account for 'succession' or 'process' in concrete experience.<sup>5</sup> Hegelianism is a perfection of Kantianism, for, in Kant, there remained a gulf between phenomena and noumena, between temporality and eternity. By totally absorbing phenomena into noumena, and temporality into eternity, Hegel gives us a cha-

1. Urban: *The Intelligible World*, Part I. Ch. I.

2. Cf. Stace: *The Philosophy of Hegel*. Mure: *An Introduction to Hegel*.

3. Urquhart: *The Vedānta and the Modern Thought*, pp. 204-206. Rogers: *Introduction to Modern Philosophy*, pp. 171-217.

4. Pringle-Pattison: *Hegelianism and Personality*, p. 218. Raju: *Thought and Reality*, Part I Chs. V-VII.

5. Royce: *Lectures on Modern Idealism*, pp. 213-231.

racter of wholeness or continuity of experience, but this continuity is essentially logical without any reference to temporality. Hume is not fully answered. Hegelianism is an eminent example of the confusion between Epistemology and Metaphysics.<sup>6</sup>

The Neo-Kantians, like Cohen, Lange and Vaihinger could not come to any kind of realism, in the contemporary sense of the term, though they were trying hard to find out a consistency in the Kantian way of thinking. The 'trans-subjective reality' was coming out of the grips inspite of their attempts to hold Kantianism by denying both the subject and the object in themselves. This new phenomenalism is a refined Humism or Illusionism, 'as Hartmann puts it.<sup>7</sup> In Hegelianism there is a tendency beyond Kant to a form of Absolutism, but the 'succession' or 'temporality' inside and outside mind, remains to be interpreted. The logical ways of mind can explain only an aspect of mind and nature, but they cannot account for the full experience. This denial of succession or process or psychological experience has led to the revolt against the intellectualistic attitude of Hegel. As Pringle-Pattison puts it: The metaphysical priority assigned to the logical system pales before the imperious reality of the senses.<sup>8</sup>

Bergson and James, the exponents of psychological experience, revolt against the logical, intellectualistic and abstract attitude in philosophy. They are not concerned with any concrete idea in philosophy, for to philosophise would be to fall into a form of intellectualism or dogmatism. There can be no 'ism,' for all 'isms' are intellectualistic. The character of experience is a perpetual succession, a ceaseless flow, a continuity. How can intellect grasp the flowing reality? If it tries to grasp it, it stops or cuts the flow into dead parts. Bergson's various books clarify his anti-intellectualistic tendency in this manner.<sup>9</sup> James, in his, "A Pluralistic Universe," vehemently protests against our intellectualistic way of understanding reality which is a flux.<sup>10</sup> For Bergson reality is revealed to our intuition, for James it is open to our preception. Bergson criticises both perception and intellect, but James criticises only intellect for its 'harmonising' or 'systematising' tendency, turning the flowing universe into a static whole. For Bergson the intuition reveals the integral experience which is a flow; the intellect dissects or cuts the flow into dead parts.<sup>11</sup>

6. Pringle-Pattison: *Balfour Lectures on Realism*, p. 181. Rogers: *Introduction to Modern Philosophy*, pp. 87-156.

7. Pringle-Pattison: *The Balfour Lectures on Realism*, pp. 232-37.

8. Pringle-Pattison: *Hegelianism and Personality*, p. 201.

9. Bergson: *Creative Evolution*, pp. 108, 186-188, 202-8, 219-20, 252, 282-5, 361-4.

10. James: *A Pluralistic Universe: Lecls. II, III, VI*. Chiefly pp. 34-36, 38, 40, 46, 55, 60, 69, 101, 107, 237, 240-44, 249, 252, 255, 263, 264, 267, 270.

11. Radhakrishnan: *The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy*, Chs. V, VI and IX. Also vide Raju: *Thought and Reality*, Part I, Chs. I and III.

A neo-Hegelian, like Bradley, is definitely anti-intellectualistic, when, in opposition to Hegel, he points out that the reality is 'sentient experience' and cannot be grasped by the intellectualistic categories, for they are riddled with contradictions. The whole Hegelian philosophy is but a system of 'bloodless categories.' The intellectualistic categories can never take us to a whole, they only suggest a whole. In his famous book, "Appearance and Reality," Bradley points out by taking up the pairs of categories used by the idealistic thinkers upto Hegel, that, one of the categories refers, in its turn, to the other, and cries for solution or reconciliation in the other, but failing each time to give the character of the whole which is beyond both. So he abandons the categories as failing to give us the idea of the whole. The categories aim at the whole, but fail to grasp the whole.<sup>12</sup> The whole, as supposed by Bradley, is not an intellectual whole of Hegel, which is an abstract whole without any life and vitality in it. In one sense, Bradley is more radical than James, for he doubts also the systematising or the harmonising character of the intellect. James holds that by systematising, the intellect makes the reality a static whole, which is really a flux, but Bradley holds that the intellect fails to grasp the whole on account of its inherent contradiction; it refers to something beyond, which is sentient experience, wherein the limitation of mentality has to be transcended.<sup>13</sup> Sentient experience is not a mere unanalysed feeling. It is beyond the crude feeling, intellect or will. It is a transcendence of all where all are harmonised or transmuted into a sentient whole. Bradley is craving for a whole; in spite of his anti-Hegelian tendencies, he remains a Hegelian. He only aims at a supra-logical and supra-psychological experience.<sup>14</sup>

Viewed, thus, the experience seems to slip from us. We find that experience becomes parted into two chief points of views—intellectualism (Hegelianism), on the one hand, and anti-intellectualism or anti-Hegelianism, on the other. In both, however, there is a demand of 'rationality,' if not a new logic. The whole force of rationality comes from the comprehension of the varied character of experience which is logical, psychological, supra-logical and supra-psychological. Experience has various characters, aspects or phases, and because the philosophers view it from different sides, they go to some form of intellectualism or anti-intellectualism. The purpose of this paper is not to go into the details of their various analysis of experience; it intends to show that the anti-intellectualistic criticisms of Hegelianism, render the study of experience more complex and difficult. Amidst the discrepancies among the chief anti-intellectualists, mentioned above, there is agreement in one point, *viz.*, any positivistic attitude which becomes patent in Hegelianism, is dogmatic. This becomes evident more in Bergson and James than in Bradley.

12. Bradley: *Appearance and Reality*, Bk. I. Chs. II-XII.

13. *Ibid.*, pp. 486-89, 531-35, 536-43.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 518-522, 550-2. Also, Bk. II. Chs. XII-XXVII. Also Vide Raju: *Thought and Reality*. Part I Ch. I Chiefly pp. 40-43.

It should be mentioned, however, that from a different point of view, both Bergson and James are dogmatic in spite of their anti-intellectualistic attitude. Will it not be equally dogmatic to hold that the reality is purely psychological? Reality is neither logical nor psychological purely, it is both and more. One has to study the character of experience as it is experienced without subscribing oneself to any definite attitude of the mind. This impersonal study of experience has been taken up by some of the contemporary realists, like Alexander and Whitehead. We shall try to clarify their views, pointing out that they only intend to study the characters of experience without bearing any intellectualistic or anti-intellectualistic attitude.

According to these thinkers, the experience is both intellectual and intuitional; it is a continuous flow. They believe in continuous evolution. In process of evolution there arise new 'qualities,' 'relatednesses,' 'activity-systems' or 'events.' One has to understand the 'events' or 'actual occasions' as having a dual aspect—basic or causal and apparent. The old theory of 'bifurcation' between mind and nature, mind and body, appearance and reality, must go now.<sup>15</sup> Since all are in flow, there is a perfect continuity of the one into the other, giving us only dynamic shapes or forms to realise. These shapes or forms pass into other shapes or forms, giving us the notion of feeling centres passing into further feeling centres, closing up gaps continuously, extending the feeling or prehension by ceaseless continuity. Each shape is a new vision, a new prehension. In each there is a 'passage' of the eternity into temporality, temporality into eternity, reality into appearance, appearance into reality, mind into body, body into mind, beginning into an end and end into beginning. The world-flow is tending towards a whole which is an 'appearance,' meeting the 'reality' when it is realised. Thus vanishes the idea of the 'block universe'—an abstract or eternal universe. The universe is dynamic, a feeling universe, a relative universe—the past meeting the present, and the present the future; there is only a rise in the intensity and standard of feeling; in such an idea there is no ideality, for the tendency is never towards an abstract eternal universe or an abstract temporal universe. Evolution is a continuous universe, there is no teleology in any idealistic sense of Aristotle, Hegel or Bradley, or teleology in the sense of a mere flow as in Bergson or James. Evolution is only a feeling of continuity. It is understanding the character of the present where all the rational principles, eternal and temporal, are realised. This is the natural and rational consequence of western thought, viewed specially after Whitehead.

For Whitehead, experience is neither logical nor psychological. It is neither supra-logical nor supra-psychical; it is evolutionary or dynamic, expressing rational principles which are logical, psychological, supra-logical,

15. Cf. Lovejoy: *Revolt against Dualism*. Dewey: *Experience and Nature*.

supra-psychological—but all understood from a new point of view<sup>16</sup>. Philosophy is not concerned with an experience which is ideally the beginning or the end or the present, but it is concerned with the experience of the present which is a complex whole having an eye before and behind. This anti-positivistic attitude, which we mark in western philosophy, can be equally marked in Śaṅkara's philosophy. But the anti-positivistic attitude in Śaṅkara is essentially Upaniṣadic. We shall come to this point after studying the philosophy of Whitehead in relation to other kindred thinkers. Their realism is nothing but a new insight into the character of experience.

What is common to all these thinkers, is the problem of continuous process. All are in process. In this process, there arise concrete characters or qualities. There are various grades or orders of these characters or qualities. So they distinguish between the mere process and the characters that emerge in the process. These characters are something 'new' in the process. These novel characters give *meaning* to the process. The whole world-show is a meaningful process. The process is not, therefore, merely 'temporal,' but it is a field where the 'eternal characters' are realised.<sup>17</sup> These eternal characters are the infinite possibilities, accounting for the values and the ideals that are realised. The whole universe can be viewed as a universe of values. There are orders and levels in the streaming universe. There is all-pervasive continuity, but between one and another kind of existential situation, there is a realisation of different grades of values. There is a general order of value-realizations, but the character of the realisation changes with the different orders of the process. A process appears to us as 'spatio-temporal,' but really it is a 'feeling-situation,' comprehending all the 'possibilities,' novelty and values within it. Thus process is a very complex situation. It has no purity in any abstract sense, it is a mixed situation, an actuality and possibility in one. It has a duality, having a physicality and a mentality. The world-process is towards infinite possibilities—towards mentality, transcending the immediate physicality. Consciousness is a late emergence in process. The vision of the streaming universe varies as one rises from the perceptual to the reflective and intuitional consciousness. There is no gulf among the various levels of consciousness, there is a continuity all-through. Besides the continuity, in the higher levels of the mind, there is perfect interpenetration of the different kinds and levels of consciousness, making the experience more varied, complex and novel. Early and contemporary thought, tending towards any definite 'ism', is an one-sided view of experience where the dynamic, continuous, complex and novel character of experience is neglected. Experience cannot be viewed from the intellectual point of view. It cannot be viewed from the point of view of intuition or perception as in Bergson or James, or from the

16. Process and Reality and Adventures of Ideas.

17. Cf. A.C. Garnett: Reality and Value, pp. 68-72. and also writer's. An Outline of Whitehead's Philosophy.

point of view of a transcendent consciousness as in Bradley. Experience in its dynamism, in its immediacy and transcendence, has to be analysed and intuited, so that there will remain no definite standpoint of idealism, empiricism, intellectualism or anti-intellectualism. All 'isms' will fuse into one study of dynamic experience in its direction towards the realisation of a final subjective form which is also dynamic, only relatively final.<sup>18</sup>

Alexander wants to account for process and realisation by his hypothesis of a spatio-temporal Matrix in which Time is directive.<sup>19</sup> But according to our understanding of Alexander, Time, if it is taken as a correlative of Space, cannot be taken as wholly directive, it is directive with Space. Space should have been taken as equally directive. Morgan has that in mind when he thinks of a separate directive principle in God, who is directive of the Matrix having a basic physicality. But Morgan seems to move half-way between idealism and realism when he says that evolution can be understood by acknowledging the directive principle in relation to an ultimate physical principle which is involved. Morgan is silent about the character of direction and physicality. The character of continuous emergence is not clearly shown. The 'background' of evolution is not clear; the boggy of idealism and realism haunts his mind.<sup>20</sup> So the natural choice goes to Boodin, who thinks of a principle of activity, which by controlling itself, realises the values and ideals continuously in the universe. The whole world, for him, is a vast realm of activity-systems, realising concrete characters as energy, space, time, form and awareness, closing up the old idealistic cleavage between mind and nature, thought and existence, eternity and temporality. His philosophy only speaks of 'activity' and its implication, driving towards the realisation of its ultimate genius in the highest reaches of the reflective consciousness and beyond.<sup>21</sup> Pure activity, for him, is a structural activity, where all are realised in order and in the form of a system. The guidance, control or direction in the activity, is possible on account of its self-activity. In such control its own *rationality* or *genius* is expressed. In Boodin, we find, a realisation of process; the manner of his consideration of direction of process suggests, that, it is abstract and idealistic—not different from Aristotelianism or Hegelianism. He speaks indirectly of an eternal process. Temporality is neglected, for his too much insistence on the rationality or the spirituality of the process.<sup>22</sup>

From the strict rationality of the process in Boodin, we may pass on to the flux or process of Santayana, which is a thoroughly irrational process without any control, guidance or direction. The nature of flux is its inherent irration-

18. Whitehead:—Adventures of Ideas, p. 381.

19. Alexander:—Space, Time and Deity, Vol. I, p. 44-48, 58.

20. Morgan: Emergent Evolution, pp. 1, 5, 20, 61, 62, 299, 301.

21. Boodin:—A Realistic Universe, pp. 37, 52.

22. Boodin: Three Interpretations of the Universe, p. 251.

ality. It does not tend towards rationality, but reflects rationality; that rationality is consciously intuited in the reflective level of the mind, when, in the psyche, there emerges a new form—the spirit.<sup>23</sup> The flux is spatio-temporal; the flux tends towards forms, but fails to grasp the form. The essences or the rational characters or the forms are never realised in the flux, they tempt the flux towards them. The whole process is a constant failure to realise the forms which guide the flux. These characters are never realised in the flux. There is a tendency towards 'unity,' but there is no unity. The forms are non-existential, purely rational or self-luminous in character<sup>24</sup>. A perfect idealism of these characters is well-established in '*The Realm of Essence*'. *The Realm of Matter* speaks of the continuous flow of matter or substantiality. The 'matter' of Santayana, is like the evolving 'Prakṛti' of the Sāṃkhya system having a tension within it.<sup>25</sup> Santayana speaks of the two unrelated principles, irrational matter or flux, and the luminous essences or pure rationalities. Just as the flux of Prakṛti only reflects the 'Puruṣa' or the luminous or rational principle without becoming the rational principle, the flux of matter tends to reflect the essences. Santayana does not believe in the original unity of these principles or their unity in the flux or process. He, like the Sāṃkhya, develops the doctrine of reflection, and not the doctrine of real connection. This is an anti-metaphysical tendency.

Santayana, thus, speaks of experience as such, and does not idealise in the traditional manner.<sup>26</sup> His idealism is of a different kind. Often he points out that this is the imagination of the 'spirit' of the 'psyche.' The culture of essences is only a culture of an otherworldliness, a culture of total dis-intoxication from the existential world of facts and values. The culture of values in Santayana, is more 'ideal' than in Alexander; in Alexander, the values emerge due to the interaction of the ideals as cherished by the individuals in society. Value depends on the human appreciation of the objects in accordance with the ideals of the existing society. It is mind's relation with other minds in their appreciation of values.<sup>27</sup> But Santayana gives us a purely ideal notion of values; it is a culture of the essential freedom that one can enjoy in the intuition of the pure rational character of the essences. This idealism with regard to the understanding of concrete experience and values, is more radical than Platonism.<sup>28</sup> The ideal realm of essence is non-existential in both the real and the

23. Santayana: *The Realm of Matter*, pp. 87, 88, 93, 94, 100, also vide my article, *Prabuddha Bharata* (March and June 1940), *An Advance Towards an Evolutionary Universe*.

24. *The Realm of Essence*, pp. 25, 29, 41, 42.

25. Radhakrishnan: *Indian Philosophy*, Vol. II. Ch. IV. Sec. VII-XII.

26. Santayana: *Contemporary American Philosophy*, Vol. II. A Brief History of My Opinions.

27. Alexander: *Space Time and Deity*, Vol. II. pp. 238-9.

28. Cf. Zeller: *Plato and Older Academy*.

ideal sense of the term. In Santayana there is no system-making tendency, but there is a constant fear of passing into idealism, therefore, he does not think of the initial unity of the principles. In Whitehead, the problem is different. According to him, 'unity' among the varied rational principles, is an experiential fact; we cannot deny the 'unity' in experience, though we may not start with an abstract unity of the principles. To deny the unity in concrete experience of the rational principles, will be dogmatic. Experience is a 'continuity' on account of the 'unity' of the principles. This is not the logical of *transcendental unity* of Kant or the *abstract ideal unity* of Hegel. It is a 'unity' where the continuity of experience can be felt. If Santayana denies this unity, he makes the flux an abstract flow. Merely the tendency to grasp the forms or essences, cannot give the 'continuous' character of experience. If Santayana is allowed to maintain his view of the unreality of 'unity' of the principles, there will be a return to Humism.<sup>29</sup> The experience will be discontinuous or atomic all-through. Progress or evolution or even emergence will never be understood. Philosophy will oscillate between the materialism of the 'Realm of Matter,' or the idealism of the 'Realm of Essence.'

The problem of the ultimate unity of any kind, may be rationally abandoned. But to abandon the 'unity' of the rational principles in concrete experience, would be dogmatic. So, for Whitehead, this is the initial rational or metaphysical demand. This can be clearly experienced in the analysis of a 'concrete occasion' which is a 'continuity' from the past to the future. This 'unity' of the rational principles, is consciously felt in the 'silence' of the reflective consciousness. This experience of the rational principles in the pure individuality of the silence, is the religious experience. It is the initial rational demand. It is the thought of God or the principle of concretion or limitation. Without this initial rationality, which may be human, the rationality that is demanded of the concrete experience, cannot be accounted for. This is not a dogmatic assumption of Whitehead. It is consciously and keenly felt in our reflective consciousness. It is a consciousness of the 'continuity' of experience and the rational principles, experienced in concrete experience, directed to the realisation of the final subjective form of Creativity, which is not an abstract principle, but understood in relation to the rational principles. It is the principle of direction, intuited in concrete experience and in the highest religious consciousness. It is one of the conditions accounting for the continuity and direction of experience. There is a continuity of experiences from the lowest to the highest order. The world-flow is towards the reflective consciousness, where the keenness and intensity of feeling is realised in the highest form.<sup>30</sup> The perceptual experience is continuous with the intellectual and the intuitional. We cannot start with any kind of experience in particular. To start with any

29. Cf. N.K. Smith: *The Philosophy of David Hume*.

30. *Process and Reality*, pp. 24-25, 29, 31, 71, 309-397.

particular experience would be to commit the fallacy of excluding other aspects of experience. In the supreme level of consciousness, all the rational principles operative in the universe, are focussed. In it there is no concrete experience of an object or reality, but there is a consciousness of a principle. It is the determination of the mere continuity of experience by the supposition of a *ground* which accounts for the realisation of the infinite possibilities in actualities. It is not the experience of a 'divine presence' as the idealistic thinkers hold, but it is supposition of the very principle which can account for the meaning and value of the flowing experience.

The universe is not an indeterminate flow, but a meaningful process. It is a realm of ideal possibilities. Both idealism and realism fall into an abstract and static view of reality, the moment they show a tendency to adore the eternal or the temporal principles. There is no such thing as a finally abstract personality in the form of God or reality, nor there is such a thing as merely an ultimate logical principle. It will be also dogmatic to deny the infinite personalities, realised in concrete process. Personality is not abstract, but concrete. Personality lies in continuity. In this dynamic universe, all are continuities or unities, realising higher and higher unities. The universe is a flowing universe, but that does not mean that it is vanishing, or passing into nothing. It is proceeding to realise higher and higher values or *unities* of feeling. The 'rationality' of all these values are determined by the ultimate rationality with which we have started, *viz.*, God. This God, also, is an experience realised in that supreme reflective consciousness. It is a concrete experience—not an abstract idea nor an abstract personality. It is the supposition of determining the rationality of all becoming. But this rationality, since it is an experience, is ultimately directed by creativity, which stands for indeterminate flow, directing all to a final experience or goal, which is also dynamic. It is a recognition of the *meaning* of experience by the principles which give us a background for determining the rationality of our experience. The realistic or the idealistic way of interpreting experience is not rational on account of the dynamic character of experience. In the rational principles, the human consciousness has come to the full front; the whole determination is from the point of view of the human experience; but since, the human experience is a *real* experience, the determination of concrete experience in general by the rational principles, is real. On account of the thought of the 'ground' of the rational principles, the concrete unities realised in each experiential situation, are realised in a rational form. Whitehead considers this principle in detail in several of his writings.<sup>31</sup> The God or the ground of rationality is not the thought of a personality; it is a principle, giving us a sense of personality, which is a general character of the universe. In it there is a grasp of the universe with its infinite possibilities, and of a vast realm of streaming actuality.

31. Cf. Science and the Modern World; Process and Reality; Adventures of Ideas; Religion in the Making.

Whitehead, thoroughly analyses, the different aspects of this experience, and wants to understand the unity of these aspects in concrete experience. He develops the view of a 'companion God,' raising the universe from perishing to ideal or immortal states, sharing his own 'subjective aim' with the occasions, elevating the occasions towards the realisation of the 'subjective aims' of God himself. All elevation of the lower is by the 'mentality' of the higher. As the whole realm of occasions tends to realise the 'subjective aims' of God, the occasions pass from their perishing states to immortal states. There is a continuous movement towards 'immortality.'

Personality is a general character of the universe; the attainment of immortality is also its general character. The rationality involved in the realisation of higher and higher personalities attaining immortal states, is to be found in the ultimate rationality or God. The notion of God, is the rational demand for the understanding of the infinite possibilities realised in the universe. But this demand at the same time frees us from all idealistic notion of God. It is a concrete experience, a metaphysical or rational demand, different from any such ideal demand of the idealists, for it is also the thought of a concrete dynamic experience, wherein there is the supposition of the ground of the eternal and actual entities, realised in concrete centres of experience. In this supposition of the ground of our rationality, there is a further supposition. God directs all to his 'subjective aims' or infinite possibilities, but God is not the principle of direction. Creativity is the principle of direction. It is not of course the ultimate principle of direction as the idealists suppose. It is the supposition of universal flow. It has to be understood with God, eternal objects and the actual occasions. As this principle directs all to the final subjective form, which is an ideal limit of the process, and not a final absolute limit, God and the world of possibilities and actualities, are ultimately directed to the realisation of the so-called final subjective form of Creativity. In this manner, the relativity of all the principles and the actual occasion, has been maintained. The problems of unity, continuity, personality, immortality and finally of reality, have been understood from the point of view of concrete experience in which all are focussed. The centre of interest should be turned to the analysis of the dynamic experience, and not to the abstract principles, tending towards one-sided 'isms.' The tendency of treating the abstract principles separately or together, should be abandoned in philosophy. The whole interest should be in concrete experience which expresses 'unity' and 'continuity' all-through. The principle and the experience, cannot be separated by a gulf. So 'unity' and 'continuity' are always concrete events and never abstract thoughts.

There is only a progressive understanding of the principles in unity and continuity. The universe is a realm of values, it is not an abstract or a merely logical universe. So to demand only logic from this universe would be dogmatic;

the universe is towards the realisation of all the values,—truth, beauty and goodness, not in their abstract character, but in their real, concrete and dynamic character. The 'final subjective form' of all is only a feeling of a final experience or appearance at a particular moment of the universe.<sup>32</sup> The problem of philosophy is all-through general, it cannot be defined by any 'ism'; all 'isms' are realised in the concrete centre of experience. Whitehead thus avoids all forms of positivism, for any positivistic notion is a limitation of the many-sided character of experience.

The anti-positivistic attitude of Whitehead is not a result of the revolt against the intellectualism or anti-intellectualism in philosophy; it is a consciousness of the highest principle of rationality,—the experience of the ground of all our rationality. The 'ground' of rationality is a human experience,—the highest human experience to which we can reach. It is the ground of both the eternal and the temporal aspects of our experience. This ground is both intuitional and intellectual. But this 'ground' rests on a higher ground, the principle of creativity. The creativity is not also an abstract reality, for it is experienced in the highest and lowest phase of our experience. It is that principle which directs all to a goal, and again redirects that goal to a higher goal. Experience is relative, and should be interpreted in terms of the highest expression of our rationality. It is the grasp of the *unity* of all rational principles operative in the universe and a denial of 'bifurcation' of any kind. So the contemporary tendency is towards 'human experience,'<sup>33</sup> but though human, it is 'real.' There is no longer any abstract metaphysics.

A revolt against abstract metaphysics may be marked in Indian philosophy in Śāṅkara. The thought of Śāṅkara is Upaniṣadic or rather it is a new interpretation of Upaniṣadic principles. Unlike western thought, Indian thought is not a continuous development from man to man; it is only a re-interpretation of the insights of the Upaniṣadic thinkers. The stamp of originality can be seen in the new experience of the persons interpreting the Upaniṣadic ideas. Indian thought is a continuous development of a culture, but that does not make it dogmatic. The rationality of Indian thought is evident from the series of anti-Upaniṣadic tendencies. In Śāṅkara we find a return to the Upaniṣadic thought by a new interpretation of the Upaniṣadic principles, meeting the objections raised by the anti-Upaniṣadic thinkers, like the Buddhists. This re-interpretation does not express any dogmatic tendency; rather, it expresses the highest rationality that mankind can attain to. In this article, we intend to show that an anti-positivistic attitude, in Śāṅkara is essentially different from that of Whitehead. In this attitude we find the expression of a 'rationality' which may be accepted with proper liberality of thought. This takes us at once to the philosophical attitude of Śāṅkara.

In Śāṅkara, there is a revolt against intellectualism, and also against intellectualistic intuition. From the standpoint of Śāṅkara (if we do not interpret him from an abstract point of view having a Hegelian bias)<sup>34</sup>, Hegelianism and the contemporary anti-intellectualism of Bergson, James and Bradley, may be viewed as dogmatic, for there is either a faith in the intellect or in the intellectualistic intuition.<sup>35</sup> Śāṅkara does not criticise intellect in the manner of Bergson, James and Bradley, pointing out the dissecting, harmonising or analytic character of it; he points out that the intellect has a limit. The intellect or the intellectual form of understanding which is essentially relational or dualistic in character, cannot reach the ultimate experience which is essentially non-relational in character. We are indebted to Radhakrishnan for this interpretation of Śāṅkara's philosophy.<sup>36</sup> This non-dualistic attitude is evidently anti-positivistic, and it has a different principle of 'rationality' from that of Whitehead. We shall try to determine the final character of reality in the light of this experience. Śāṅkara is not only an anti-positivist, but also a non-dualist.<sup>37</sup>

In both Śāṅkara and Whitehead, experience has to be interpreted from a rational background. The rational background, for Whitehead, is both intellectual and intuitional, in their relativity and transcendence; but it is never an abstract reality; it is always a dynamic reality. It is a human experience. The rational background, for Śāṅkara, is pure non-relational experience or consciousness or 'caitanya'—a self-shining consciousness without any dynamism or transition. It is a persistent unflinching light of consciousness. It is not a crude category of 'Being' or 'Substance,' or even a relative subject; it is a non-relational subject that never becomes an object, for *becoming* is a contradiction of a self by another self, or object by another object. It is the thought of a self or ātman that is identical all-through, for to admit of the difference or *becoming* in it, is a contradiction of its 'self.' Śāṅkara's principle is identity and non-contradiction.<sup>38</sup> So it can be known in a non-relational form. We have to *transcend* our relational way of understanding experience to know the

34. Urquhart: The Vedānta and The Modern Thought, Ch. VIII.

35. Vide my paper, Radical Anti-intellectualism of Śāṅkara, Indian Philosophical Congress Aligarh 1941.

36. Radhakrishnan: Indian Philosophy, Vol. II, Ch. VIII, Secs. XXXV and XXVI. Vide also Sircar: Comparative Studies in Vedāntism, p. 18.

37. Raju: Thought and Reality, Part I, Ch. I., Part II, Chs. I and III., Part III, Chs. I-III VI-VII, XII., Part IV, Chs. I-V. In all these chapters the non-dualistic attitude of Śāṅkara has been brought out by Raju. It is a defence of Śāṅkara's philosophy against the Hegelians. Cf. Also, Sircar: Comparative Studies in Vedāntism, Ch. I. Sircar defends Śāṅkara against the other Indian Vedāntins.

38. Raju: Thought and Reality, pp. 126-132; Sircar: Comparative Studies in Vedāntism, p. 24. Brahma Sūtras: 3. 2. 14-29; 4. 4. 2-4; 4. 4. 5. Vivaraṇa, pp. 55-56 (Benares Edition).

32. Whitehead: Adventures of Ideas, p. 381.

33. Boodin: Functional Realism. The Philosophical Review, March 1934.

character of experience. This non-relational experience is at the back of our relational experience. This non-relational experience is the basic or the foundational consciousness which is 'always as it is, and can never be contradicted; it is the unfailing light that shines or expresses by mere presence all other consciousnesses. This experience is also 'human,' for it can be realised by human beings; it is not 'relational' or 'dynamic' in the sense of Whitehead.

The problem for Śaṅkara, is to decide between the non-relational experience and relational experience. Which is ultimate? Both cannot be real, but both have to be interpreted. Our relational experience cannot be brushed aside as illusory. We have only to choose a rational background, and see whether that background can be experienced or not. Śaṅkara tries to account for all kinds of experience, and takes us to a rational background of them all. Viewed from this standpoint, we find in him, the same type of 'rationality' as in Whitehead. Only we shall choose between their attitudes towards experience and find out which is more comprehensive and less dogmatic.

According to contemporary western thought, experience is dynamic or evolutionary in character. It has to be explained by means of certain rational principles, operative in the universe. So passing into intellectualism or intuitionism, would be dogmatic, for both intellect and intuition are found in concrete experience. But this is an examination of experience from our reflective waking consciousness. It is logical and psychological, human and normal. There is no effort to transcend this consciousness. Even in Bradley, the logical and psychological experience is dominant though he wants to transcend the ordinary intellectual experience.<sup>39</sup> But Indian philosophy is not merely concerned with an analysis of waking reflective consciousness, it is concerned with the dream experience, deep-sleep experience, and other super-conscious experiences. In western psychology there is a belief in the un-conscious, and the psycho-analysts explain the various consciousnesses in relation to the deep unconscious.<sup>40</sup> The dream and the so-called super-conscious states, are the expressions of the subliminal consciousness.<sup>41</sup> We are not going to consider in this paper the psychological explanation of various consciousnesses or experiences from the hypothesis of the unconscious, which will lead us to unnecessary complications. Our point of view lies in interpreting experience as a whole, and psychological experience is only a kind of experience. To

39. Appearance and Reality, pp. 535-43. Cf. Raju: Thought and Reality, p. 41.

40. Cf. Works of Freud, Jung and Adler.

41. Cf. Morton Prince: The Unconscious. Garnett: Reality and Value, pp. 94-95. Garnett, however, gives us a view of a will that exists even in deep-sleep, connecting the unconscious with the conscious states of the mind. There is a 'unity of purpose' which accounts for personal identity. Garnett's answer to the problem of continuity between the unconscious and conscious mental life, is bio-psychological. Śaṅkara's basic consciousness is a philosophical principle—a self-existent principle.

begin with a common man's experience, we find, three broad kinds—waking, dream and deep-sleep experience. There is a 'continuity' among all these experiences. Continuity gives us the idea of a relational experience, but Śaṅkara points out that it is essentially non-relational.

According to western philosophy and psychology, our experience is a 'continuity.' We have seen how a Hume or a Hegel, tries to account for continuity, and how at last the failure to solve the problem leads us to the criticism of the contemporary thinkers. A Kant starts with the supposition of an original or transcendental principle of unity determining the 'given.' A Whitehead starts with a ground of experience which is essentially dynamic in character. Śaṅkara neither starts with an intellectual 'bifurcation' between the *original principle* and the *given*, nor with a *dynamic ground* to account for the 'transition' in experience. Both kinds of experience, according to Śaṅkara, will be intellectual and relational. But if it can be shown by a study of the character of waking, dream and deep-sleep experience, that the relational or the intellectual experience has a limit, then the 'continuity' cannot be explained by a presupposition of a duality, or by the supposition of a basic change-principle.<sup>42</sup>

The waking and dream experiences are relational or intellectualistic. The analysis of deep-sleep experience shows that there is no experience of an object, but there is some consciousness which is manifested in our waking state when one says that one had a good sleep. We cannot say that this knowledge is a later judgment or an inference, or memory, for all such knowledge depends on a previous actual or perceptual experience. But in that state there cannot be any perceptual experience, for the basis of perceptual experience is duality between the subject and the object. It is a different kind of experience, non-relational in character. It is really 'immediate.'<sup>43</sup> We cannot argue like a sceptic and say that there was no experience, it was an unconscious state of mind. But logically this is unjustifiable, for, how can there be a connection between the unconscious and the conscious mind? The so-called connection between the two, presupposes a consciousness at the back of both. So logically we cannot dispense with the basic consciousness, which is self-shining, without any duality, difference and transition. It is a purely non-relational experience, which cannot be doubted or contradicted. All other modes of experience—perception, inference, comparison or testimony—can be doubted. But this experience, which is non-relational and self-shining can never be doubted. Datta, in his. "The Six Ways of Knowing," very nicely

42. Raju: Thought and Reality, pp. 77, 88, 91, 102, 103, 134, 143, Sircar: Comparative Studies in Vedāntism, pp. 19-21., Chatterjee and Datta: Introduction To Indian Philosophy, pp. 420-470. Advaitasiddhi and Brahmanandi pp. 558-559 (Jāvaji's Edition).

43. Sircar: Comparative Studies in Vedāntism, pp. 22-24.

concludes that according to the non-dualism of Śaṅkara, this foundational experience is the self-shining immediate experience, and it cannot be doubted, for it can never be contradicted; all other forms of knowledge, through the different sources, are open to doubts.<sup>44</sup> All relational consciousness can be explained through this foundational consciousness. But the relational consciousness has a limit; when it ends, there is not merely 'ignorance'; for, in that case, 'ignorance' itself could not have been known; there is a persistent consciousness which accounts for the ignorance itself. Only pure knowledge can transcend 'ignorance,' but not 'ignorance,' knowledge. This foundational consciousness, therefore, is neither subjective nor objective; nor can it become subjective or objective. The notion of *becoming* is conspicuous in the thought of the contemporary realistic thinkers like James, Russell, Broad and Whitehead. But Śaṅkara excludes from the mind, completely, the notion of 'becoming,' from this foundational consciousness. To believe in 'becoming' or 'transition,' would be to believe in infinite contradictions, a continuous denial of identity. How can the reality be contradicted by some other thing or how can it *become* some other thing?—for, in each case, there is limitation of the reality by something other than itself.

The self-shining consciousness is 'present' in all the different states; while the relational consciousness is cancelled in deep-sleep state, this non-relational consciousness is not cancelled.<sup>45</sup> The original consciousness, which is 'blissfulness,' or 'pure existence' without any relation, form, difference or transition, is not an abstract and crude category before 'difference' and transition, but it is a self-shining experience which accounts for all other experiences. Some of the western interpreters of Śaṅkara have misinterpreted his conception of reality, and they think that Hegel's interpretation of reality is more comprehensive and convincing. But, according to us, as already noted, this experience is the foundational experience, and is the support of all relational experience. It is not a crude intellectual category, or a primary stage in experience. It is the basic experience, and all other experiences, seem to contradict it. We shall have to free ourselves from the relational experience which seems to contradict the non-relational experience.

But this raises a further question, *viz.*, can reality be contradicted? It cannot be contradicted, for to suppose so, would be to introduce another reality. That is again a contradiction in terms. Śaṅkara recognises both the non-relational experience and the relational experiences. By his hard or stringent

44. The Six Ways of Knowing, pp. 328-41. Sircar: Comparative Studies in Vedāntism, pp. 25-27. Nikhilananda: Vedāntasāra. Paras: 135; 137; 138; 142; 196-199; 225. Brahma-Sūtra, 2. 1. 26-28. Bhādarāyaka: 4. 3. 10.

45. Indian Philosophy, Vol. II. pp. 513, 515-6, 532, 523-7. Also Sircar: Comparative Studies in Vedāntism, Ch. I. Also pp. 74, 76-77.

logic,<sup>46</sup> Śaṅkara goes to the non-relational experience advocating non-dualism or advaitism. He is not speaking of any 'ism,' for that is intellectualistic. Śaṅkara points out that logically there cannot be any relation between the purely formless or non-relational principle, and the forms or states or the relational principle. But 'somehow' the 'relational' is experienced. The relation is a 'fact,' but fact is not real. Thereby he does not say that the fact is an illusion. This leads us to his famous doctrine of 'Māyā' or 'Avidyā.' Relational experience lasts till the final experience is not known. The perception of the snake is real till the rope is not known. So when the relational knowledge vanishes, the non-relational consciousness shines by itself as it is the foundational consciousness. Māyā, or relational consciousness, for Śaṅkara, is not a dogmatic supposition, for it is a fact, but not finally real. It *is* and it *is not*. It is therefore, ineffable or 'anirvachaniya.' Māyā has a place in this universe, it can be explained, but it is not ultimately real. There is no dogmatism here on the part of Śaṅkara to assume this principle. It is the foundation of our relational experience, but since it is not an ultimate experience, it can be contradicted by another experience, which cannot be contradicted.<sup>47</sup>

Assuming the relational experience as our ordinary experience, Śaṅkara wants to account for it by his famous doctrine of 'vivartavāda,' which implies that change is *apparent* or *phenomenal* and not *real*. This 'vivartavāda' of Śaṅkara is opposed to the 'parināmavāda' of the Sāṅkhya philosophy. The conception of 'first cause,' found in Sāṅkhya philosophy, and also in Western philosophy, is not admitted by Śaṅkara. Māyā which accounts for the phenomenal experience, is not the thought of a first cause. Māyā is beginningless. It is an *assumption* for explanation of the real character of the universe. Why the real is not experienced *as it is*, is accounted for by Māyā.<sup>48</sup> Śaṅkara does not admit the theistic interpretation of Māyā which is found in the Upaniṣads. It is not the real power of God. Śaṅkara does not believe in a personal God. His reality is thoroughly impersonal in character, viewed as Atman or Brahman. Atman (pure consciousness) and Brahman (pure existence) are identical. While following the main principles of the Upaniṣads, he introduces his own principles to find out more consistency in the Upaniṣadic concept of reality. While Śaṅkara develops what is known as non-dualism, Rāmānuja develops 'qualified non-dualism' from the same Upaniṣadic principles. So the concept of Māyā, though it has a reference to the Upaniṣadic principle, is a contribution of Śaṅkara, and it shows clearly his definite philosophic insight.<sup>49</sup> The western philosophers by a hasty interpretation of this doctrine of māyā

46. Radhakrishnan: Indian Philosophy, Vol. II, pp. 656-658.

47. Radhakrishnan: Indian Philosophy, Vol. II., pp. 583-584.

48. *Ibid.*, Vol. II. pp. 581-583.

49. Chatterjee and Datta: An Introduction to Indian Philosophy, pp. 443-444.

cannot undermine the highest insight he had of reality. He by his doctrine of *Māyā* or *Avidyā*, wants to be true to his logic of identity and non-contradiction.<sup>50</sup> It is not an abstract concept, but a concrete experience. By the doctrine of *Māyā* he accounts for his respect for the ordinary relational experience of this universe. He teaches us to understand the value of this relational experience, but at the sametime, points out that there is a higher experience basic to all our experiences which are phenomenal. With the dawn of that consciousness, the phenomenal consciousness vanishes. This phenomenal consciousness is positive till that supreme consciousness dawns in us.<sup>51</sup>

Śaṅkara's philosophy is a great effort to understand that 'intellectualism' of any kind, has to be abandoned to know the real nature of reality. The problems of God, karma and liberation are intellectualistic problems which can satisfy a lower form of mind, but not the higher mind.<sup>52</sup> The foundational consciousness has its own logic. It cancels all dualism, change and multiplicity. If we want to understand Śaṅkara we are to transcend our ingrained intellectualism. Śaṅkara's position is not only anti-intellectualistic, but it is anti-intuitionistic, for, though the basic consciousness is intuited, it is not intuited as an object. It is essentially non-relational in character. That is why Śaṅkara does not speak like Santayana that he has intuition of certain rational principles as the essences or forms. The foundational consciousness is the only luminous consciousness at the basis of all.<sup>53</sup> In this thought, there is a supposition of other experiences in relation to the foundational experience. Really this expression is defective from the highest point of view. But it cannot be helped, for, we are still within the bounds of the relational consciousness. Śaṅkara admits only one principle, *viz.*, the relational consciousness or *Māyā* or *avidyā*, to account for our phenomenal experience; Whitehead assumes several rational principles, to account for the rationality of our experience. Whitehead cannot take us to the non-relational experience of Śaṅkara. He ends with an initial contradiction, *viz.*, all our experience is dynamic; Śaṅkara cannot accept with his 'rationality' and logic, the truth of that principle. Whitehead confines himself to the relativity of human experience, and so contradiction and limitation are real to him. Śaṅkara points out that this relational

50. Raju: *Thought and Reality*, pp. 154-160; Sircar: *Comparative Studies in Vedāntism*, pp. 105-106, 131-132, 135-136; *Śaṅkasepaśārirakam*, p. 40. Ch. II. *Chāndogya*: 6. 2-1.

51. Raju: *Thought and Reality*, pp. 178-180; Sircar: *Comparative Studies in Vedāntism*, pp. 77-78.

52. Chatterjee and Datta: *An Introduction To Indian Philosophy*, pp. 452-455.

53. Raju: *Thought and Reality*, pp. 204-219; Deussen: *The System of Vedānta*, pp. 261-272.

experience can be wholly contradicted and cancelled, by a non-relational experience. This new metaphysics of Śaṅkara will surely appeal to a logical mind who wants to approach philosophical problems from a non-dualistic standpoint. As this experience is foundational consciousness, it is known immediately and directly, but here all intellectualism has to be abandoned. Śaṅkara points out both the negative and the positive ways of approaching this experience. In both ways, he wants to re-interpret the Upaniṣadic insight in a new and novel manner.

Sircar in his, 'Comparative Studies in Vedāntism,' clarifies the non-intellectualistic attitude of Śaṅkara, showing that the logic of Śaṅkara has a higher appeal to us than the logic of other Vedāntins,—Rāmānuja, Vallabha Mādhva, Nīmvārka, Jīva Gosvāmi and others.<sup>54</sup>

Raju in his, "Thought and Reality" (Hegelianism and Advaita), is equally cogent in supporting the non-dualistic logic of Śaṅkara, criticising the less rational views of Hegel and the contemporary Hegelians. According to the logic of identity and non-contradiction of Śaṅkara, the thought of 'difference' or 'negation' cannot be ultimately supported.<sup>55</sup> There cannot be any place for the idealistic theory of coherence or correspondence,<sup>56</sup> nor can there be a 'transmutation' of our present experience into the 'harmony' of the higher experience as we find in Bradley.<sup>57</sup> Śaṅkara's philosophy is never a drive towards a system or harmony. Only an assumption of 'avidyā' or 'Māyā' and a theory of 'vivarta' or 'apparent transformation,'<sup>58</sup> can account for the apparent duality and change in the universe which has its support in the foundational consciousness—Ātman or Brahman. Raju suspends all his opinions about Whitehead. In Whitehead, he finds the influx of the western thoughts in a new or novel form, but he is not sure whether he is a Hegelian. That is why he does not want to criticise Whitehead as he is concerned with the strict Hegelians.<sup>59</sup>

We have, however, tried to clarify the non-positivistic attitude of Whitehead, with the same attitude found in Śaṅkara. This non-positivistic attitude of Whitehead, which rests on a belief in the character of dynamic experience, is untenable from the non-dualistic and non-positivistic logic of Śaṅkara. Our belief in this non-dualistic logic of Śaṅkara, does not necessarily carry us to any form of mysticism in Śaṅkara's philosophy, alining Śaṅkara, as

54. *Comparative Studies in Vedāntism*, cf. Preface and Ch. I.

55. Raju: *Thought and Reality*, Part. II.

56. *Ibid.*, Part. III.

57. *Ibid.*, pp. 40-42.

58. *Ibid.*, p. 88.

59. *Ibid.*, pp. 258-259.

## UNIVERSITY OF CEYLON REVIEW

Kirtikar does, with the mystic thinkers of the west—Plotinus, Eckhart, Tuler, Suso and Spinoza.<sup>60</sup>—A mystic interpretation, however, of Śaṅkara's philosophy, is possible.<sup>61</sup> This paper is only an examination of the non-dualistic and non-positivistic attitude of Śaṅkara from the intellectualistic aspects as far as possible, without shutting out the possibility of a mystic interpretation of it.

A. K. SARKAR.

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60. Cf. *Studies in Vedanta*.

61. Cf. *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*. Ranade: *The Evolution of my own Thought*.