V. S. SOLOVYOV'S PHILOSOPHICAL PRINCIPLE OF INTEGRAL KNOWLEDGE[1]

Solovyov's interest in epistemological problems dates back to his first major work, *The Crisis of Western Philosophy* (1874). Solovyov's philosophical system is a synthesis of ideas drawn from Plato, Plotinus, Spinoza and the German idealists. In his early work Solovyov accepts Spinoza's types of knowledge, i.e., sense data, intellectual knowledge and reason. He also accepts Schopenhauer's view that the world is "idea" (Vorstellung) as well as his "ideas of ideas" (Vorstellingen von Vorstellingen). These "ideas" are the general concepts whereby we can classify phenomena according to the common features that are of interest to us and which give us a conceptual structure of the phenomenal world.

Solovyov is also indebted to Schelling's *System des tranzendentlen Idealismus* in which a theory of knowledge is constructed consisting of three stages which progress from sensation to perception, from perception to reflection and from reflection to will. According to this theory, the separation of knowledge from its object occurs only in abstraction. In actuality concepts have no existence apart from their object, since knowledge implies the meeting of object, and the Self. The Self is not merely one of the objects of knowledge but is the *condition* of all knowledge.

Solovyov's mysticism which is central to his epistemology is rooted in the doctrine of Total-Unity — a doctrine whose antecedents are the Stoics, Plotinus, Proclus, Nicholas of Cusa, Philo and the German mystics Franz Baader and Jacob Boehme, all of whom sought to construct a metaphysics of Total-Unity. Solovyov "resurrected" this doctrine. The central idea underlying this doctrine is that the phenomenal world is absolute being in the process of becoming. Let us note two points regarding Solovyov's mysticism. (a) He firmly believed in the existence of mystical perception, and (b) that at the basis of his *Weltanschauung*

there is the object of mystical perception, which he terms God, Deity, Absolute spiritual Principle, Truth-bearer, Truth, but the most important term is the Totally-one Subsistence. According to Solovyov, God contains within himself all things, including man. God is not merely the sum of its parts but differs at the same time from each of the parts. Solovyov terms this *Total-Unity* rather than *Unity*. The Absolute and the Cosmos are for Solovyov *consubstantial*.

Solovyov was fully aware of the radical dualism inherent in the doctrine of Total-Unity. He also realized that it would be difficult to prove the existence of mystical perception without offering some proof for its existence. The first proof for the existence of mystical perception, according to Solovyov, is to be found in the doctrine of the Totally-One Being which contains within itself everything including man. From this he concludes that it is possible to know God within one's own spirit without having to resort to sense data or concepts. Mystical perception, says Solovyov, can only be explained when we admit that in perceiving ourselves in God we at the same time perceive all other objects or beings. He calls this apprehension "faith," which is one of the elements of mystical perception, which gives us the certainty of the existence of objects outside ourselves.

The second proof for the existence of mystical perception is based on our belief in the empirical world by means of the senses, which entails our admission that these qualities belong to the external objects themselves. But, says Solovyov, we also know that these senses are subjective states of consciousness. Hence, we cannot prove the existence of the empirical world by means of sense data alone. Solvyov realized that these 'proofs' cannot be 'demonstrated' without mystical perception since we would have two series of subjective states of consciousness. He therefore insists that we cannot have an objectified image of the empirical world without mystical perception, for knowledge requires a synthesis of the senses with *a priori* ideas; mystical knowledge alone makes such synthesis possible. This is obviously a *petitio principii* argument. What Solovyov was trying to

do is to relate the empirical world to the Absolute. In other words, he was faced with the problem of having to deduce the conditional from the unconditional.

It should be stated here that Solovyov's metaphysics contains two Absolutes. The first Absolute is the super-Subsistence given to us directly by means of mystical perception. The second Absolute, or the "other," is mediated through reason. Zenkovsky points out that the second Absolute is basically Plato's "intelligible world (*kosmos noetos*), the principle or the productive force of being, i.e., the plurality of forms of the idea."[2]

Solovyov was painfully aware of the fact that the idea of two Absolutes was incompatible with the Christian religion which he was eager to defend. He therefore tried to circumvent the problem by relating the second Absolute to the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation. This idea is developed in his *Lectures on Godmanhood* where he tries to provide a philosophical explanation for man's religious development which he regards as a divine-human process. Solovyov identified God with the Absolute First Principle which, in his view, reveals itself in Triunity. Since Triunity precludes a pure monism, Solovyov is forced to resort to the "other" in which the Absolute must manifest itself, thus making it possible for the Absolute to emerge from Unity into Total-Unity.

There are three fundamental principles in Solovyov's philosophical system which provide the clue to his theory of knowledge and the nature of his mysticism. These principles are: (a) the inner spirituality of all being; (b) the doctrine of Total-Unity, and (c) the concept of Godmanhood. Solovyov maintains that at the root of all spiritual activity there is an intuition of a religious nature. Religious intuition manifests itself in the unity of consciousness in which all symbols are related, and in the consciousness of the unity of all being in the Absolute.

Solovyov discusses the general characteristics of mystical knowledge in his three works.[3] He distinguishes between "mistika" (the mystical) and "mistitsizm" (mysticism).

The "mystical" is "the direct, and immediate relation of our spirit to the transcendental world."[4] "Mysticism" is "the reflection of our intellect on this relation, constituting a particular direction in philosophy."[5] The mystical corresponds epistemologically to art, while "mysticism" has to do with "the intuitions which recognize a supra-cosmic and supra-human principle as the true being, not only in the form of an abstract principle, but also with the entire richness of the being's actual life, such intuitions transcend the limits of institutional philosophy with its two types by adding a special third type of intellectual intuition, usually called 'mysticism.'[6] Solovyov maintains that mystical knowledge is the foundation of true philosophy, just as sense experience is the foundation of empirical philosophy and logical thought of rationalistic philosophy. Solovyov cautions us that mystical knowledge *per se* does not however give us integral knowledge, which is a synthesis of philosophy, science and religion. According to Solovyov, integral knowledge alone, which he terms "free scientific theosophy," is capable of apprehending reality both in the ideas of reason and in the ideas of nature. "Free theosophy or integral knowledge... must represent the highest condition of the whole of philosophy... Knowledge in its unity is theosophy."[7] The material of philosophy as integral knowledge consists of psychic, mystical and physical phenomena. Theosophy as defined above is at the very heart of his epistemology.

The phenomenal world for Solovyov is a continuous process — it is *my* idea, but at the basis of this empirical world there is *real* being which manifests itself as the totality of elemental substances endowed with desire and ideas. Solovyov calls these substances monads which represent an organized unity or cosmos at whose centre is the idea of love. "Absolute love is precisely that ideal *all*, that fulness... which constitutes the actual content of the divine principle."[8] Solovyov's epistemological and metaphysical conception presupposes the world both as *will* and *idea* as the object of the philosophy of integral knowledge, which is central to his theory of knowledge.

Solovyov differentiates between absolute knowledge and knowledge of the Absolute. The former is inaccessible to man and the latter is man's chief task. Intellectual intuition or mysticism is the basis of both types of knowledge. Mystical perception requires special subjective grounds which are peculiar for the most part to prophets and mystics, while apprehension of an object is not peculiar to the human species alone but includes animals as well.

The cognitive process involves mystical perception, imagination, and creativity. Solovyov speaks of intellectual contemplation in a dual sense. Intellectual contemplation in the first sense is a necessary element in the composition of perception and is unconscious and common to everybody. Intellectual contemplation in the second sense is a conscious state of inspiration and ecstasy influenced by the transcendent world. Solovyov always regarded the mystical element as caused by the transcendent influence on man, hence man is able to cognize the transcendent world by means of mystical perception which plays a dual role, first in perception and second in philosophical construction.

Solovyov's epistemology is primarily concerned with integral knowledge which differs from abstract knowledge in that it regards reason and logic as means of verifying intuitive knowledge. We cognize an object sensually, intellectually and absolutely. Sensual and intellectual cognition of an object is based on the certainty of its independent existence which presupposes an internal relation between subject and object, vital to a true knowledge of reality. Since the prime purpose of such knowledge is the absolute essence of the object, it necessarily presupposes an interrelation between object and subject where the subject apprehends the true essence of the object. The interrelation between substances is defined by Solovyov as 'imagination.'

Solovyov differentiates between objective and rational knowledge. Objective knowledge contains only the basis for cognizing the truth.

> By truth we generally mean that which is, hence, we call true knowledge that which is... if by the word

> 'is' is meant being in general... But since we differentiate between true knowledge and imaginary knowledge, and truth from falsehood, then the very question of truth and true knowledge depends on such a distinction between truth and falsehood. Hence, it is not sufficient for an object to exist in general. It must exist in some other quality which we call truth... The difference between the true and the false is to be seen in the difference between subjective consciousness and that which exists outside the subject, which we call the *real* object or thing. True knowledge must be an experience not merely an idea.[9]

The three elements in the cognitive process, namely, intuition, imagination and creativity, correspond to the three definitions of the object itself, its absolute being and its appearance. In examining the vaious alternatives to a theory of knowledge Solovyov came to the conclusion that real metaphysical truth cannot be found in either abstract rationalism or in abstract realism. Solovyov maintains that any real knowledge of an object has something more than is given by our sensations and concepts concerning that object. What is this 'more'? Solovyov states that there are three aspects to be considered in every object: first, the inner reality of its essence; second, its common essence, and third, its visible reality. He insists that neither realism nor rationalism is genuinely concerned with these aspects of an object. He maintains that true objective knowledge presupposes such a relationship between subject and object which unites them internally by what is absolute to both of them. This 'absolute' element is not reducible to either sensations or concepts, but necessarily exists in both the object of knowledge and the knowing subject.

Every object of knowledge, according to Solovyov, is in itself an 'invisible object'[10] What we 'see' in an object is our sensations and their logical relations, but an object in its absolute existence is just as 'invisible' to our reason as it is to our physical sight. Knowledge of an object is possible because subject and object are rooted in the same absolute being. Hence an object is known from two aspects:

externally from the point of view of our separateness, which is relative knowledge and internally from the point of view of absolute being, which is mystical knowledge. Mystical knowledge reveals to us the absolute essence of an object.

The chief goal of knowledge is to bring man to an inner union with reality. Solovyov develops this idea in his *Critique of Abstract Princples* where he tries to show that mystical intuition is very important in the cognitive process. For at the basis of true knowledge there is mystical perception. His earlier ideas are elaborated in *Foundations of Theoretical Philosophy*. The following is a brief summary of the salient points of *Foundations*.

> There is a threefold certainty for the principle of philosophy. First, the subjective states of consciousness as such, i.e., the psychic material of every philosophy. Second, the certainty of the general logical form of thought as such (independent of content). Third, the certainty of the philosophical activity, as a definite form which contains the embryo or seed of its absolute content. The unity of this threefold certainty is to be found in the fact that its first form is inherent in the other two, since both thought in general and purpose of absolute thought are first of all facts of consciousness. But logical thought introduces into this subjective certainty a universal and objective significance for all its manifestations. The philosophical task is to unite that subjective certainty and logical significance with that determination which is the actual principle of movement and which converts thought into the reason for truth.[11]

The difference between his earlier views and those found in *Foundations* lies in his attempt to define the significance which must be attached to truth, but there is no essential difference between his earlier and later views on the nature of mysticism in his theory of knowledge. In his later works Solovyov rejcets the Cartesian view that in subjective experience we have to do with reality and not with appearance. This change in no way alters his views

on mystical knowledge and its relation to sense experience and reason.

The mystical principle in the cognitive process, according to Solovyov, is a fact established by an analysis of perception, but this principle is not exhausted by perception. In perception this principle manifests itself in a more elemental form, unconscious and common to all living beings. But its highest manifestation is in the recognition of unity of the world of appearance with the absolute principle. This mystical principle which Solovyov calls faith, testifies to the connection of the part with the whole, of man with God, of heaven and earth. Faith gives us with full certainty what neither experience nor reason can give, namely, the transition from the subjective to the objective world in its unity. To demand logical proof for the existence of this principle, is in Solovyov's opinion a complete misunderstanding of the nature of logical proof. Solovyov accepts the existence of God as an axiom of faith (*axiome de la foi*), which may however be confirmed by philosophical arguments as well as by experience.

Some scholars contend (as for example A. I. Vvedensky does), that Solovyov's earlier views of the nature and function of mysticism in his epistemology have undergone a radical change in his later works. This is not however the case. For example, Solovyov's division of all phenomena into physical and mystical is also found in his *Justification of the Good* where he constructs the moral world on the three principles of shame, compassion and reverence, i.e., the three feelings which correspond to the physical, psychic and mystical phenomena. Solovyov insists that the mystical principle enables us to recognize ourselves to be different in essence from what we appear to be empirically; it enables us to transcend the empirical self, thereby realizing our inner freedom.[12]

We thus have three concepts: the mystical, as the particular sphere of man's creative relationship which transcends the realm of cognition, mysticism, as a one-sided philosophical position which assumes true meaning only in integral

knowledge, and mystical knowledge. As indicated earlier, Solovyov identifies mystical knowledge with faith which testifies to the inner freedom from everything and at the same time it testifies to the inner connection with everything. The object of mystical knowledge is neither a sensation nor a concept, but a testimony to the absolute existence of the unity of everything.

Solovyov cautions us that mystical knowledge does not yet tell us what the object of knowledge is and that the answer to this important question cannot be given by thought which attributes to the object only general categories characteristic of any other object, nor by sensations which apprehend only indefinite sensuous qualities. To find the answer to this question we must presuppose such an interrelation between object and subject which enables the subject to apprehend its essence or idea. This is possible because the subject itself is a certain idea and is therefore in a certain correlation with ideal substances.

It should be evident by now that Solovyov's theory of knowledge is fully rooted in the concept of Total-Unity. This means that everything that exists in the universe is interrelated and interconnected and that the living centre of this unity is manifested in *love*. Solovyov maintains that man does not know the truth because he does not live in the truth. The task of creative thought is the true organization of knowledge.[13] Love is the absolute principle in the world; it is that living force which enables man to transcend his false egoism. True love is based on faith which enables man to recognize that behind every being there is absolute being. Solovyov offers two meanings of "absolute being." "The first meaning defines the absolute itself in its being for itself... The second meaning defines the absolute *positively* in its relation to another being, as something that possesses everything, that can have nothing outside itself... Together the two meanings define the *absolute* as *hen kai pan*."[14] This conception of the "absolute being" is totally different from the "absolute" of rationalistic philosophy of the West, according to Solovyov, and is the underlying principle of his system of integral knowledge.

We can now sum up the salient features of Solovyov's theory of knowledge. The central idea in Solovyov's philosophical system in general and his theory of knowledge in particular is *mysticism* which is peculiar to both his early and later works. Solovyov distinguishes two elements in mysticism, the subjective and the objective. The subjective element is more akin to religious faith whereas the objective element is closer to philosophy. Solovyov regards union with God as the main task of mystical perception. He states that,

> There is a connection and influence of the transcendent world on the empirical world. Man occupies a special place in the world of appearance; he was destined to unite the heavenly with the earthly. The possibility for this union is given in the natural affinity of man with the divine.[15]

To recognize God's influence in the empirical world is not some quality of mysticism, but the positive content of religion. When mysticism seeks to justify the content of its faith by reason without relying on personal experience, then it is more akin to philosophy than to religion. Religion is a synthesis of the natural with the mystical which Solovyov terms "free scientific theosophy."

> Religion is reunion of man and of the world with the absolute and integral principle. This principle, as integral and all-inclusive does not exclude anything, and therefore the true union with it cannot exclude, suppress, or forcibly subdue to itself, any element whatever, any living power, either in man or in his universe. Reunion or religion, consists in bringing all elements of human existence, all particular principles and powers of humanity, into a rightful relationship with the absolute central principle, and through it, into right and harmonious relationship with each other...[16]

Solovyov was fully convinced that only such a synthesis can give us integral knowledge whose object is a world of living beings internally related. He states that,

> Intellectual contemplation or immediate cognition of ideas is not man's ordinary state, and moreover, it does not depend on his will, since it is not given to everybody to experience divine food. It depends on the internal action on us by ideal transcendent beings. This action is called inspiration. It takes us out of our natural centre, raises us to a higher sphere, creating in us ecstasy.[17]

Again,

> Intellectual contemplation is not a subjective process, but a real relation to the world of ideal beings... Consequently, the results of contemplation are not the work of a subjective, arbitrary creation. They are not inventions or fantasies, but are actual revelations of super-human activity, perceived by man in some form or another.[18]

Intellectual contemplation is for Solovyov a necessary element of perception, hence it is unconscious in nature and is common to everybody. In the more particular sense intellectual contemplation is a conscious state of inspiration and ecstasy evoked by the influence of the transcendent world upon man's consciousness. It should be pointed out that Solovyov was not primarily concerned with the mechanics or methods of cognition but with the nature of reality and the possibility of knowing reality. Solovyov maintains that the organization of reality is essential for the organization of knowledge. The task of universal creativity is the organization of reality, the object of great artistic realization by man of the divine principle in the real existence of nature which Solovyov terms 'free theurgy' which finds expression in the creative sphere, 'free theosophy' finds expression in the cognitive sphere and 'free theocracy' in the social sphere. The organic synthesis of these three spheres constitutes the idea of the 'integral life' in Solovyov's system. The mystical sphere however assumes priority over the other spheres, for it is the highest principle of the life of humanity as a whole. The task of philosophy, in Solovyov's view, is to establish in the universal as well as

in the particular an organic relationship between the divine, the human, and the natural elements. His theory of knowledge seeks to establish this threefold relationship by means of his threefold approach to the cognition of the Absolute.

Dept. of Russian Louis J. Shein
McMaster University, U.S.A.

NOTES

1. Vladimir Sergeyevich Solovyov (1853-1900) was born in Moscow where his father was professor of history at the university of Moscow. Vladimir Solovyov is perhaps best known in the West for his *Godmanhood Lectures* and *Justification of the Good.* His principal philosophical works are: *The Crisis of Western Philosophy* (1874); *The Philosophical Principles of Integral Knowledge* (1877); *The Critique of Abstract Principles* (1877-80); and *Theoretical Philosophy* (1897-99). His collected works consist of nine volumes and his *Letters* of four volumes. In his philosophical works, Solovyov deals primarily with epistemological problems and directs his criticism against empiricism, rationalism and German idealism.

2. Zenkovsky, V. V. *A History of Russian Philosophy.* Trans. by George L. Kline. Columbia University Press, New York, 1953, Vol. II. p. 496.

3. The following three works deal with the nature of mysticism: *Filosofskiya nachala tsel'nago znaniya* (Philosophical Principles of Integral Knowledge) Vol. I in *Collected Works*, St. Petersburg, 1877, pp. 290, 292, 293. This work will be referred henceforth as *Philosophical Principles. Kritika otvlechennykh nachal* (A Critique of Abstract Principles), Vol. II, *Collected Works*, pp. 307-308. Henceforth *Critique. Chteniya o bogochelovechestve* (Lectures on *Godmanhood*, Vol. III, *Collected Works*, pp. 60-61, 89-90. Henceforth *Lectures.* All quotations are from the Russian texts unless otherwise stated and the translations are mine.

4. Solovyov, *Collected Works*, Vol. I, p. 263, note 6.

5. Solovyov, *Ibid.*, p. 263.
6. Solovyov, *Ibid.*, p. 303, where he discusses the nature of mystical knowledge.
7. Solovyov, *Ibid.*, p. 306-356.
8. Solovyov, *Lectures*, pp. 45ff.
9. *Critique*, pp. 186-187.
10. Solovyov, *Ibid.*, p. 311.
11. Solovyov, *Collected Works*, Vol. I, pp. 219-220.
12. Solovyov, *Collected Works*, Vol. I, p. 261.
13. Solovyov, *Critique*, p. 333.
14. Solovyov, *Collected Works*, I, p. 346; III, p. 44.
15. Solovyov, *Collected Works*, I, p. 286.
16. Solovyov, *Lectures*, pp. 12-13.
17. Solovyov, *Collected Works*, I, p. 290.
18. Solovyov, *Collected Works*, I, p. 291.

CAN MOTIVES BE CAUSES OF ACTIONS?

Recent writers on philosophical psychology do not look favourably on the thesis that motives are *causes* of human actions. This thesis is logically secondary to the contention that the concept of cause cannot intelligibly be applied to the explanation of human actions. Since Ryle's analysis of mental concepts, Austin, Peters, Urmson, Anscombe, Dray, and Melden have discovered new categorical boundaries separating psychological concepts from the language of natural events. A psychological explanation is not a causal explanation; the two, it is held, are logically incompatible. Though to cite the motive for an act or to cite the cause of an event, is to answer the question 'why', the meaning of the question is different in the two cases. It has been argued that to ask 'why' about a human action is to make the action rationally intelligible by filling out its purpose and context, not to mention the beliefs and attitudes of the agent who performs it. A motive explains an action by identifying the agent's reason for doing it. Reasons, like causes, are said to have explanatory power, but a reason is not a cause in the sense of an antecedent event. Or to put the matter in a more radical manner, the rational explanation of an action is so incompatible with any causal explanation that in the former case we should only have description of behaviour in purposive language, while in the latter it would be inappropriate, since causally explicable behaviour could only be involutary.

My purpose, here, is not to attempt a critique of the views which insist on a radical distinction between reason and causes. Without any intention of minimising the value of the conceptual insights of such views, I shall content myself with indicating that Hume's thesis that human actions are caused by motives is not rendered a howler by the recent philosophical disfavour it has fallen into.

Some of the criticisms advanced against the view that human actions are causally explicable may be taken