

DISCUSSION

*Analysis without Empirical Description** (Rakesh Verma on Analysis of 'I')

In his paper, 'Self-knowledge and Human Action', Rakesh Verma argues :

When I conclusively try to answer the question 'What am I?', the self-stultification that I commit consists in my not taking into account the disposition to make the knowledgeable utterance that I do make about myself. Thus when I say that 'I' consists of X, Y, Z (and their interrelationship) then I do not take into account this disposition, namely that which enables me to knowledgeably utter: 'I' consists of X, Y, Z. When I do take this disposition into account then I leave out this disposition, namely the disposition to knowledgeably utter that 'I' consists of X, Y, Z and the disposition to knowledgeably utter: 'I' consists of X, Y, Z and the disposition to knowledgeably utter that 'I' consists of X, Y, Z. It seems to me that any such account would lead to infinite regress.²

More generally, Rakesh then argues :

Any analysis that I may make about 'I' presupposes a disposition to make that analysis but explicitly precludes it in that analysis, rendering it always incomplete or inconclusive. A claim that one has fully analysed the nature of 'I' would, thus, at any time, be a self-stultification....³

Rakesh concludes from this that the only possible conclusive answer to the Question 'What am I?' that can be conceived of is: "I am infinite (where 'infinity' means 'impossibility of conclusive description') ... 'I am infinite' is in fact, the only conclusive statement that I can make about myself (and anyone else can make about oneself) if one has to escape from infinite regress and self-stultification..."⁴

* This note was presented and discussed in one of the meetings of the weekly seminar in the Deptt. of Philosophy, Delhi University, held on 9.11.1978.

Elsewhere in his paper and also in the concluding part Rakesh puts forth the view that human beings are *essentially* souls and that as a soul each is infinite.⁵

In what follows I propose to examine briefly Rakesh's argument and the conclusions he draws therefrom. I shall argue that his argument is faulty in the sense that it involves a certain confusion between philosophical analysis and empirical description leaving his 'conclusions' without any argumentative support. I shall then show that his twin 'conclusions' concerning the essential nature of human beings and the describability thereof are not only mutually incompatible but also lead to further difficulties.

According to Rakesh's own formulations, while his argument essentially concerns the nature of analysis of a certain kind of concept, his conclusion concerns not analysis but description. This surface confusion between analysis and description, however, occurs at a much deeper level in the requirement of completeness that he implicitly prescribes for analysis in the present context. In order to expose this confusion at the deeper level of his argument,⁶ I propose to begin by asking the question: what should philosophical analysis aim at?

Conceived very broadly as conceptual analysis, the purpose of all philosophical analysis should be two-fold. And, in my view, this is what can legitimately distinguish it from science. Firstly it must aim at an analysis as well as criticism of the antecedently available methodological frameworks of empirical description in the sciences. Secondly it must aim at providing better alternatives to these antecedently available frameworks. This view of philosophical analysis is obviously based on the distinction between the empirical problems of scientific description and the philosophical frameworks for solving these problems. Problems of description in the sciences are essentially empirical problems and require to be pursued within appropriate orientating methodological frameworks. On this view no science is possible without a prior philosophical/methodological framework, howsoever rudimentary, for raising and solving its problems.

This characterization of philosophy permits the most reasonable interpretation of even the kind of traditional philosophical

analysis of which Descartes' philosophy serves as a very good example. While analyzing the concept of mind or self Descartes writes :

But what then am I? A thing which thinks. It is a thing which doubts, understands, affirms, denies, wills, refuses and which also imagines and feels.

Now the real philosophical significance of Descartes' doctrine here is methodological in so far as it may be interpreted as answering the conceptual question : what *kind* of entity is the self, soul or mind?, or, what *kind* of being am I essentially? Obviously Descartes' problem is very general and not a specific one concerning this or that person or even himself. What he is thus offering us is not an exhaustive description but a methodological framework, possibly as a better alternative, for empirical problems of describing human minds or persons. Now to require, as Rakesh does, that, in order to be complete/conclusive, Descartes-type analysis must incorporate a *specific* descriptive component describing one's disposition to make that analysis is really to commit the grave error of seeing attempts at empirical description where actually there are only attempts at providing methodologically better alternatives to existing frameworks for empirical descriptions of reality. Hence it is to confuse philosophical analysis of concepts with empirical description of reality, of specifically given objects or entities. To make statements specifying my dispositions to analyze this, that and a host of other concepts is to make empirical descriptive statements concerning the given person that I happen to be. And indeed it is noteworthy here that any attempt at an empirically testable description of human mind or behaviour in terms of a theory of dispositions is possible only as a consequence of a prior methodological framework in the form of an analysis of the concept of mind in terms of dispositional concepts. It makes no sense at all that the former should form a part of the latter's anatomy. Thus a given concept in need of philosophical analysis may be either a psychological or a non-psychological one. Any actual attempt at analysis of either type of concept will presuppose a number of things including the psychological fact of a given philosopher's dispositions to provide the analysis that he does

provide. In either case there is no sense in which analysis of the concept in order to be complete can be required to incorporate empirical statements of psychological fact about the given philosopher doing the analysis. Conceptual analysis, in any case, has to be analysis *without* any elements of empirical description including those of the psychology of analysis, no matter whether it is a psychological or a non-psychological concept. Psychology of conceptual analysis may very well be developed as a branch of psychology. But it is absurd to subject conceptual analysis to a completeness requirement according to which it must incorporate in its anatomy the sort of statements whose proper place is in the psychology of analysis. Only a confusion between conceptual analysis and empirical description can lead to such a requirement. Rakesh's argument above is precisely based on this confusion and hence cannot lead to the conclusions that he draws from it. Let us now consider these 'conclusions' independently: (1) The doctrine that human beings are essentially souls; and (2) the doctrine that the soul is infinite in the sense that it cannot be described exhaustively or conclusively.

Any Descartes-type essentialistic analysis of a certain given concept will entail a methodological framework for empirically testable and exhaustive description of phenomena falling within the range of that concept. Thus, any essentialistic thesis concerning the ultimate nature of human beings as persons is incompatible with any negative thesis concerning the describability of persons, such as the one under consideration here. Their incompatibility is also brought out by the fact that the two kinds of theses cannot be equated with each other on purely logical grounds. Moreover, since the essentialistic doctrine of human beings as souls commits one to the possibility of exhaustive descriptions of human beings and a definite methodological framework for such description, only if one tries to give up essentialism is it possible to arrive at such a negative thesis concerning the possibility of exhaustive descriptions as above.

Now taken by itself the thesis that the soul is infinite in the sense that it cannot be conclusively described says nothing at all unless it is accompanied by a positive identification or specification of the kind of methodological framework that is most suitable for its 'inconclusive description' (though 'conclusive,'

'inconclusive' are not happy expressions at all in the present context). In other words, one must specify or indicate the kind of methodological framework, other than that of essentialism in the present case, within which the kind of entity involved may be subject to an open set or system of descriptions. It is no solution of a philosophical problem concerning a given concept to be told merely that the kind of entity falling under the concept is infinite in nature in the sense that it cannot be exhaustively or conclusively described. For such a thesis does not rule out inexhaustive descriptions and hence must come out with a positive characterization of these.

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NOTES

1. *Indian Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. VI, No. 3, April, 1979. Pp. 570-73.
2. *Ibid*, P. 570.
3. *Ibid*, P. 571.
4. *Ibid*, P. 571.
5. *Ibid*, Pp. 572-73.
6. The structure of Rakesh's argument is essentially as follows: (a) Any analysis of 'I' must satisfy the completeness requirement C; (b) no analysis of 'I' can satisfy C; and hence, (c) any analysis of 'I' is bound to be incomplete, etc. While it seems to me philosophically quite legitimate to look for a proper completeness requirement for any analysis of the concept of self/mind/person, only under the burden of one's confusion between analysis and empirical description, so runs my argument, is it possible to impose on such analysis the type of completeness requirement that Rakesh does impose, however implicitly.
7. Indeed, as has also been pointed out by Dharmendra Kumar in course of the discussion referred to above, Descartes-type analysis of the concept of self/mind shows how any such analysis can cover dispositions *in general* and hence also the dispositions to ask questions and answer them.

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REVIEWS

(1) *Philosophy of Commonsense : A study of Professor G. E. Moore's Metaphysics and Epistemology*—by Smt. Shashi Bhardwaj: National Publishing House, 23 Daryaganj, New Delhi, 1977. Pp. xvii + 193, Rs. 14/-.

(1) Smt. Bharadwaj's book is an excellent study of the philosophy of Professor G. E. Moore within the scope and limitations which she has set for herself. She has not dealt with any part of his ethical writings. For those students who wish to make a thorough study of Professor Moore's philosophical writings it should serve as a very useful introduction. Here they will probably get all the material, with quotations wherever necessary, that they would need both as a preparation for a university examination and for a serious study of Moore's philosophy. It must be stated, however, that had Smt. Bharadwaj added a short biographical sketch of Professor Moore and also a chapter on his ethical views, especially in the light of recent criticism, the book might have had a wider appeal. For, to a serious student of philosophy the manner in which Moore was introduced to philosophy, his transparent honesty and sincerity, whose personality and character would themselves be of some philosophical value. Because it was Moore's character and his transparent honesty no less than his writings that determined, in no small degree, the course of philosophy in Britain in the early half of this century. For instance, when Moore began his philosophizing it was fashionable to hold that Time was unreal and that Reality was in some sense timeless. In philosophy, as in life fashions, in poetry, in religious beliefs and in thinking generally determined our views and as once Gilbert Ryle beautifully said, 'Philosophy may almost be set to be a struggle against our bewitchment by the beauty of the language and imagination. Character and truthfulness are the only rocks with which we withstand the ways of fashions in thinking'.

(2) So far as the ethical writings of Professor Moore are concerned it has to be borne in mind moreover that the first manifestations of his breaking away from the idealistic tradition in England appeared his *Principia Ethica* and his "Refutation of Idealism". Both were published in the same year, i. e., in 1903. In both, moreover, we get the first glimpse of his philosophical I.P.Q...9

method which later in his development as 'Philosophical Analysis' was to prove the undoing of all irrational thinking in the English speaking world.

(3) The philosophical writings of Professor Moore moreover should have inherent charm for the beginner in philosophy. All sound thinking, especially philosophical, must of necessity start from the common sense view of the world. The truth of that view appears to be the basic link in the chain of any reasoning or organization of our thought by means of which we form a rational view of the real nature of the world even if it deviates from that commonsense itself and it is therefore natural and useful for any student of philosophy to see how professor Moore defends commonsense against philosophical views which are remote from it.

(4) The author, however, raises time and again the question whether Professor Moore is a consistent commonsense philosopher. This accusation, however, appears to me to be a case of over-shooting remark. If by this the author means merely that Professor Moore defends a particular variety of what is called the representative theory of perception, she is probably right, provided we accept the metaphysical analysis of a perceptual situation such that what is usually called as sense datum is never literally a part of the physical thing or the physical thing is never a mere "Logical Construction" out of sense data. As she puts it, "Direct realism is the only and the best alternative for him".

"The sense datum analysis of sense perception instead of supporting his commonsense view of the world by explaining as to how we have the knowledge of the material objects, rather entails the consequence that after all we can never be said to know of their existence. This sceptical consequence is inconsistent with the fundamental thesis of Moore's commonsense world view, namely, that, we know with absolute certainty the existence of material objects". To this criticism, I think, Moore would, however, retort that our knowledge of the external world does not depend at all on a particular analysis of what we know through sense perception. Any such analysis may be wrong. A specific analysis of a perceptual situation is not logically a link in our belief that the external world does exist as common-

sense believes it to exist. As Moore puts it "Commonsense statements like 'I know that this pencil exists' or 'This pencil exists' are much more certain than any premise which could be used to prove that they are false and also much more certain than any other premise which could be used to prove that they are true". "I am an unsatisfactory answerer", he would say, "I did want to answer questions, to give solutions to problems and I think it is a just charge against me that I have been able to solve so few of the problems I wish to solve".

(5) It is necessary only to add that Moore's humility knew no bounds. He was too far honest to claim finality for his views or to deny that his views have undergone changes during the course of his philosophical development. There is a distinction between inconsistency and development. In fact it would be interesting to recall that he himself once suggested what Dr. Broad in his 'Mind and place in Nature' called 'the rational theory of appearing' as a possible analysis of a perceptual situation. It must be said to the credit of Moore that while he and Bertrand Russell held the view that sense-data were the objects of what the latter called knowledge by acquaintance he resisted the temptation of moving far away from the commonsense views of the perception and holding as Russell did, that sense-data were the only neutral stuff of which both matter and mind were constituted—a philosophic position which was as remote from commonsense as the idealist view (which he had rejected) as represented either by Bradley or MacTaggart.

(6) On the whole, I think, the author must be congratulated for the meticulous care with which she has discussed Professor Moore's philosophy. The book certainly deserves a place on the shelf of a serious student of philosophy.

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The Advaita Conception of philosophy : Its Method, Scope and Limits Ganeswar Misra, Publisher: Shri Biswaranjan Misra, Utkal University Campus, Bhubaneswar 751004, 1976, pp. iv + 136, Rs. 15/-

Professor Ganeswar Misra is well known among the living Indian philosophers for exposing as well as interpreting the classical Indian philosophical writings in the latest methods of linguistic and conceptual analysis. Particularly his analytical study of Advaita Vedānta has already drawn wide attention among the scholars, both inside and outside the country. His earlier book: *Analytical Studies in Indian Philosophical Problems* which begins with the essay: "The Logical Foundations of Saṅkara Vedānta", deserves mention in this respect.

In the present book under review, the author has mainly concentrated on Śaṅkara's philosophy of language, his doctrine of *Adhyāsa*, his analysis of perceptual knowledge and moral arguments. There are also wide references about the Post- Śaṅkarite works like *Vivaraṇa Prameyā Saṅgraha* and *Vedānta Paribhāṣā*. In the preface, the author asserts that Indian philosophers of the past were actually doing the same thing which the contemporary Western philosophers are at present doing in the name of philosophy. He further says that Śaṅkara has addressed himself to the task of clarification of human thought and human discourse because Śaṅkara (according to him) believes that critical examination of the human conceptual system has the double purpose of releasing the human mind from the bondage of dogmas and allowing us to gain an insight about the working of our language. In all the seven essays printed in this book, the author has tried to vindicate full justification of the above assertions.

The first essay which forms the title of the book places before the reader a significant point that Advaita philosophy is concerned only with the reordering of concepts by examining their mutual relation. Philosopher, according to this point of view, plays the role of an analyst (*samīkṣaka*).

He has no ambition of discovering new facts about the world. The knowledge obtained by means of conceptual analysis has no factual claim. It aims at understanding the nature of human understanding itself. It marks out in the conceptual field eternal elements as distinguished from non-eternal elements. By analysing the linguistic forms from the standpoint of meaning Advaita, according to the author, brings out that logical subject is persistent element while the predicate element is not. In this connection his claim that according to Advaita logical analysis of linguistic and cognitive forms constitutes the proper method of philosophy (*śrutyaḍayaḥ anubhavādayaśca yathā sambhava iha pramāṇa*) has indeed a convincing force. Apart from other effects, this analytical approach has successfully placed Advaitism in the proper philosophical perspective bereft of uncritical shade of dogmatism, mysticism and authoritarianism.

On Advaita concept of *aparokṣyānubhūti*, the author's view is quite refreshing. While traditional interpretation takes it as intuitive realisation, the author has maintained it as "direct knowledge and not mode-dependent knowledge" (p. 14). It is the examination of cognitive forms by the examination of the nature of cognition itself. There are certain statements like: "...the Advaita metaphysics is neither idealism.... it is not either dualism or monism..." (p. 17) which may appear as somewhat startling to a traditionalist. But it is worth noting that the author has well argued out his conclusions and his findings deserve careful consideration.

The second essay: "Saṅkara's Philosophy of Language..." is the longest one and is highly critical of some of the contemporary studies on Saṅkara. For instance, it is pointed out (p. 24) that Saṅkara, so far as the *sūtras* are concerned, at times resorts to metaphorical meaning instead of direct meaning only because he wants to establish his own philosophy (by means of logical analysis of language). The aim of Saṅkara, according to the author, is only to show that his philosophical doctrines are in agree-

ment with the principles of sound logic. In this context it is, therefore, unfair to criticise Śaṅkara as reading his own ideas into the *sūtras* as some writres have done.

Extrapolating Śaṅkara's logical argument, it is held that the Absolute (Brahman) is not the name of any being (p. 35). It only stands for an idea or meaning which is absolutely self-complete and incorrigible. As it is significant only in the meaning level, to look for its empirical or trans-empirical existence is unwarranted. Here the author's observation has definitely helped the reader to see Śaṅkara's programme of investigation as logical and neither factual nor mystical.

The next essay is a careful attempt to interpret the doctrine of *Adhyāsa* not as psychological but as logical. It is pointed out that to Śaṅkara *viśayī* and *viśaya* are logically opposed to each other and therefore any coupling between the two in a propositional symbolism is logically unsound (*mithyeti bhavitum yuktam*) (pp. 63-65). In this context the author's rendering of Advaita concept of *samsarga* is quite interesting. He has differed from Late Prof. D. M. Datta in explaining Advaita view of proposition as not relational at all (p. 67). To characterise propositions as *samsargāvagāhi* is not to characterise them as relational but as coupling the elements of absolutely opposite character, i.e., bringing the opposite elements in a non-relational tie. Having well brought out Advaitin's significant logical point that there is a categorial difference between the subject and predicate expression, the author becomes critical about the conclusion that Śaṅkara brings from this analysis. Even if it is acceptable that there is a difference between the two expressions, it is not logically fair to conclude that the two expressions are so opposed to each other "that they cannot be combined in any judgemental form or propositional symbolism and that every judgemental form involves a logical error" (p. 81).

In the next essay, the author has carefully brought out Vidyāranya's significant point of view that though in epistemology one deals with mental terms like *jñāna* and

adhyāsa, yet their study in epistemological enquiry is only logical and not psychological (pp. 92-93). Instead of determining what is true and what is false as a matter of fact, philosopher is concerned here in laying out the general logical principles by which the terms like truth and falsity are properly distinguished. In this context, Advaita view that all judgements are erroneous has rightly been exposed as a view within the sphere of philosophical logic. In the same essay the author's analysis of the *savikalpaka* and *nirvikalpaka jñāna* is illuminating. It has made a fruitful attempt in determining the exact nature of the dispute between the two opposite theories.

In the essay on the analysis of perceptual knowledge, it is shown how the Advaitins clearly differentiate between factual issues concerning empirical psychology and the philosophical issues concerning perceptual knowledge. It is held that a psychological theory of perception is concerned with discovering empirical facts whereas a philosophical theory of perception is concerned with the logical analysis of meaning of certain cognitive terms. The author has convincingly shown that Śaṅkara's argument against the validity of perceptual knowledge is purely from the standpoint of logic. The scepticism that is advanced in this regard is not factual but logical. The author then proceeds to assess the validity of Śaṅkara's argument and observes that it is due "to a confusion between the words 'contradictable' and 'contradicted'" (p. 120). His criticism of Śaṅkara's stand deserves serious consideration.

The last two essays are relatively small but no less original. The essay on *Śabda pramāṇa* is very interesting in so far as it has made an attempt to reveal how *Śabda* instead of referring to scriptural authority becomes intelligible as logical or linguistic analysis. For the Advaitin, the author maintains, analysis of the conditions of the different types of discourses and their logic is a sort of study which is highly illuminating. It illuminates the intellect from the dogmas and prejudices. In this context his interpretation of Advaitic difference between the meaning of a sentence

in isolation and the meaning of a sentence in the group of other sentences (p. 125) is very significant. Here the reference of speech act and speech activity contributes to clarity.

In the last essay on the analysis of moral arguments, the author has shown how according to Śaṅkara's commentary on *Gītā*, there is full emphasis on the autonomous character of ethical and factual discourses. Elucidating Śaṅkarite point of view, the author rightly holds that an 'ought-conclusion' cannot be derived from an 'is-premise' (pp. 133-134). He has viewed Śaṅkara, at least so far as his commentary on *Gītā* is concerned, as an ethical philosopher rather than a moral teacher. As an ethical philosopher, his business is only to analyse and investigate the structure of ethical discourses and determine its place among other neighbouring fields. Śaṅkara, according to the author, has marked out the eternal and immutable structure of moral discourse. He has laid bare the immutable categorical forms of the moral laws and in this regard, according to the author, Śaṅkara has anticipated Kant.

The book is very much encouraging for the author is prepared to pay adequate philosophical attention to the classical Advaita darśana by means of following the fruitful methods of analysis. The application of the techniques of analysis to the field of Advaita has resulted in a clarification of the traditional confusion and presenting the Advaita logical doctrines both in its strength as well as in its weakness.

There are, however, certain lapses which the reviewer feels to point out so that they can be removed in the subsequent editions of the book. One sentence "We do not try to give a psychological account of how illusions occur" is repeated unnecessarily at one place (p. 93). The language may appear to be conflicting and loose at times — e.g. compare "But though Śaṅkara accepted this analysis for subject-predicate propositions he did not admit that all propositions are straightforwardly of the subject-predicate type" (p. 49) with "What Śaṅkara, Vācaspati and Vidyāranya are labouring to point out is that all knowledge is

judgemental and propositional and all propositions and judgements are of the subject-predicate type..." (p. 95). It is held (vide: p. 14) that the philosophical arguments employed by the Samkhyaites to prove the existence of a transcendental deity is condemned by Śaṅkara as absurd and useless. With all fairness, the reviewer feels, here it should be Naiyāyikas instead of Sāṅkhyāites. Because it is the Naiyāyikas who have extensively argued in favour of a transcendental deity. Again it is maintained (vide: p. 82) that Śaṅkara says that how can that by which everything is known, be known at all. But this statement is actually one Upaniṣadic statement, though favourably commented upon by Śaṅkara. The printing of the book should have been done more carefully. There are lot of printing errors throughout.

But apart from all these minor lapses, I have the definite feeling that this slim volume on Advaita is very much original and has successfully focused the Advaita philosophical logic in its proper perspective.

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Evil, Karma and Reincarnation, G. C. Nayak: Centre of Advanced Study in Philosophy, Viswa-Bharati, Santiniketan, West Bengal, 1973. Price : Rs. 35.

This book deals with some of the important problems of philosophy of religion, and subjects them all to critical scrutiny. Since the publication of the *New Essays in Philosophical Theology* (Edited by A. G. N. Flew) some years ago, and interest shown in problems of philosophy of religion by analytical philosophers like Hare, Hick, Braithwaite and others, application of analytical philosophy to religious beliefs has become quite popular among some students. Dr. G. C. Nayak has in this book, (which was submitted as a dissertation for the Ph. D. degree under the supervision of Professor S. Körner at the University of Bristol), attempted in an original manner to subject theism to serious criticism in the light of the beliefs about evil, karma and reincarnation. Dr. Nayak shows throughout the length and breadth of this lucid work, a sound training he has had not only in analytical philosophy but also in the traditional way of understanding and dealing with religious concepts. This is evident in the first chapter, where he states the problem objectively without bias in favour of any kind of philosophizing. The problem of reconciling evil with theism was first posed in an elaborate manner in the Western world by Leibniz in his *Theodicy*. Before him, theists tended to be dogmatic. Perhaps philosophers ask for too high a price in demanding harmony (as Dostoevsky has very aptly remarked), and "a little acid, sharpness or bitterness is often more pleasing than sugar" (—Leibniz). Why should not one accept evil as a fact, instead of explaining it away mystically in an absolutist way, when all evil is explained as ultimately unreal? The moral philosopher also sometimes regards evil as having no being at all from the point of view of the highest good. So also what Nayak calls the aesthetic approach to the problem of evil would regard evils as being conducive to greater harmony in the ultimate Being. All these 'approaches' are lucidly examined by Nayak. In the light of actual cases of suffering in the universe, it may not be possible for us to accept the benevolence and omnipotence of God.

Somehow, the religious *Weltanschauung* always tends to place man either as a lowly wicked creature, who suffers because he has chosen to act freely, or as an infirm being who cannot but lead himself inevitably to suffering and fall. The fall of man in the Bible (along with the doctrine of original sin) and the doctrine of Karma in the Indian tradition are examples of this kind of belief. Nayak examines these doctrines in an acutely sharp way. He goes on to examine the retributive hypothesis in Chapter IV, by which one is supposed to enjoy or suffer the fruits of one's action, which therefore are retributive in character. There is no doubt that these problems are central to any religious hypothesis; the actions and the state of man is a matter which no religious world-view can ignore. For, are not all religions interested in the salvation of man? Chapters I-IV quite adequately bring out the traditionalist problems of theism and Nayak's analysis is lucid and brilliant.

Chapters V and VI deal with the logical structure of theistic arguments. Nayak has referred to the various writers in the Anglo-Saxon world, who have in recent years subjected various forms of religious belief to close linguistic analysis. Analogy is one of the ways in which God's realm is visualized, though contradictions in the argument by analogy can be shown (as indeed Mascall has done). On the whole the arguments of the analytical philosophers lead to scepticism, because no point of view about theism stands the linguistic test of meaningfulness. It may be that we may have to accept Wittgenstein's famous dictum, "whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent", and Nayak quotes him quite approvingly. Although Nayak denies that he subscribes to the agnostic argument, he declares (p. 101) : "I am in no doubt about our knowledge of God being inevitably inadequate." Nayak very ably and exhaustively presents the arguments of the linguistic philosophers on religious beliefs, but it is of course one-sided.

One-sided because it is wrong to say that analytical philosophers belonging to the Anglo-Saxon tradition have the last word on every subject, including religious beliefs. Nayak does not refer to any other tradition of interpreting religious beliefs, but one should not forget that this book was originally written

as a thesis, and it fulfills the role of a doctoral thesis quite *adequately and admirably*. I strongly recommend this book to **all** students of the philosophy of religion.

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Advaita vedanta : by Dr. R. Balasubramanian, Published by Centre for Advanced study in Philosophy, University of Madras, Pp, xiii + 298.

The book under review by Dr. R. Balasubramanian presents a clear account of Advaita as expounded by Mandana Misra in his *Brahmasiddhi*, the earliest among the Siddhi literature of Advaita. The author of this book is clearly very much at home with contemporary accounts of Western Thought as well as Indian Thought; this impression is confirmed by the references made in the body of the book. Though I have not read his two other books on Existentialism and Sureswar's *Taittiriyaopani-shad*, I am told that they are most original and thorough in their exposition to appear in recent years. The book is divided into six chapters. This learned work is of great documentary value as a source for the study of the Advaita Philosophy.

The First Chapter entitled "The Means of Knowing Reality", gives a lucid scholarly account of the six ways of knowing according to Advaita Vedanta (perception, inference, postulation, comparison, non-apprehension and verbal testimony) and compares and contrasts them with the other notions of Indian Philosophy and Dr. Balasubramanian establishes verbal testimony as the means of valid knowledge and shows the efficacy of the Vedas as a means of supersensuous knowledge to defend their revelatory status, to explain the truth they hold, to show the way to realisation of this truth and to explain the nature of this realisation and he also compares the different ways of knowing ultimate reality such as perception, reason, logic, scriptures and yogic intuition, which are recognised by Advaita Vedanta.

The Second Chapter discusses almost all the "Theories of Error" in Indian Philosophy with a view to bring out the full significance of *Anirvacaniyakhyati* to which Mandana is committed. In this chapter Dr. Balasubramanian has made his own translations from Sanskrit, marshalled his evidence in a scholarly fashion, and produced a volume of interest both to the students of Hindu Philosophy and Western Scholars who may take some comfort from the fact that some of the problems which are being grappled with by modern thinkers have been anticipated, at least in a dim way, by Indian thinkers.

In the Third Chapter "Nature of Reality", the author has discussed how important are the methods of dialectical criticism in the refutation of rival theories and with what carefulness Mandana Misra tackles them. After a clear exposition of the important role of Karma and Jnana, the author ends his work with the chapter "The Way And The Goal", a state of final release or Moksha bringing out the significance of Jivan Mukti. The author has also discussed the concept of Avidya which plays an important role in the discussion of Metaphysical and Epistemological issues in Advaita.

The power of Dr. Balasubramanian's writings lies in the clarity of expression and in the ability to create in his reader the sense of being involved in what he writes and it is of significance to both the scholar and the layman. Excellant brief introduction and a Foreward by Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan and a rich, well organised Bibiliography enhances the importance of the book, which is a necessity for those doing research in this field.

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