

# Current Trends in Indian Philosophy

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of an expression, nor is the speaker always consciously aware of the purpose of his utterance. But when we reflect on how we use our language it becomes hard not to recognise the important role played by purposes and still harder to explain our linguistic behaviour without referring to them. The importance of purposes is overlooked because many of our expressions have become, in usage, standardised vehicles for certain purposes. When anyone in normal circumstances makes the factual statement 'Nehru was the Prime Minister of India', his purpose is to convey information about Nehru, or India, or both. When we have before us such sentences which are in standard usage almost always used for a particular purpose, we take it for granted that they are used in this or that way and do not care or need to look to the purpose involved. In all such cases purposes are there, but they are so common, or habitual, that we do not need to take note of them explicitly. There are also some occasions when we utter something only to let off steam. One may say that no purpose is involved in the use of such utterances. I do not want to deny this fact, but would say that these utterances are not made for communication. They are on the level of physical sighs or groans; they are not on the proper linguistic level about which I am talking. I have been talking all along about language as used in human communication; the role purposes play in the various uses we make of it cannot be denied.

## GOD HAS NO PLACE IN MY PHILOSOPHY

C. KUNHAN RAJA

TO ME the world is what I know or at least what I can possibly know. To say that there is an objective world absolutely independent of me is a contradiction in terms. When I say that there is a world, it presupposes that the world is known to me. It may not be a full knowledge and a final knowledge of the entire facts in the world. Such a knowledge is what is to be designated 'Omniscience'. The question has to be considered whether there is a factor called 'Omniscience'. In every knowledge there is shining, a part of the universe in a partial way. There is nothing in the universe that is absolutely beyond the scope of knowledge. There was no condition when the parts of the world were not known, when there was no knowledge to comprehend the parts of the world.

In the same way there cannot be a knowledge in an absolute state, in itself, without an object to be comprehended in that knowledge. There is a knowledge because there is something that is known. Everything is not always being known. There is knowledge sometimes, and sometimes the same thing does not come within the scope of that knowledge. That means that there is a process known as knowing, the process of bringing into the scope of that knowledge what was not within the scope of that knowledge and leaving off what was within that scope after some time. The thing remains within the scope of a knowledge only so long as the process of knowing continues. A process requires an agent, an intelligent agent.

Thus there are four elements that are self-evident in our life-experience. They are the object, the subject, the knowledge and the process of knowing. The question arises whether they are four distinct elements that come into mutual combination and / or that get themselves separated. It is to be understood that

man has no experience of any of the four factors being separated from the others. The four elements as a unity is what is experienced. Every one feels that he, as the agent of the knowing process, continues while the process and the knowledge and the object known change. But there is no knower without a process of knowing and a knowledge and an object that is known. To this extent there is a change even in the knower; at one time it is the knower of one object, as the agent of a particular knowing process, as the seat of a particular knowledge and at the other time it is the knower of another object. The permanence felt in the matter of the knower is no more valid than the permanency of the object too. An object remains while its knower changes. A particular process continues while the agency for that process changes. A particular piece of knowledge continues while its locus as the knower changes.

On account of the very intimate and indissoluble nature of the combination among the four elements, what one can postulate is that all the four together become a fact in the universe; not one of them is a fact independently and separated from the others. The facts of the universe are the combinations of an agent, a process, an effect and an object. There are other such combinations too that are indissoluble. Take the object of a knowledge. A thing is known as something in a state of movement and change and in a certain aspect. Thus some activity and some attribute are indissoluble from the combination that we call an object in our knowledge. If we look at a rose, it has a colour, a smell and a form and so on; it has also some change in it and also some movement in it. At least there is the change in time; what was before is still there. There is a growth which is in the form of a movement. The object of our knowledge is not any one of the three factors; it is a combination of all the three.

A thing is there in the universe only as known to us. There is nothing in itself independent of a knowledge. When we analyse our experience we find that there is nothing in the universe as an independent fact and that everything in the universe is related to something else from which it cannot be dissolved. Yet

when we do not make such an analysis, it is our experience that there is this distinction between the knower, the subject, and the object that is known. We keep the two separate and we keep their attributes too separate. For example when we see a rose, there is no rose independent of our knowledge; yet we never confuse the rose with ourselves or its colour and its shape and its smell as belonging to us who see the rose; nor do we attribute to the rose the joy that we have when we smell the rose or appreciate its beautiful form and colour. In this way our experience does not yield to us the entire fact about what we experience. It is a further analysis of the experience that yield details not known in the act of knowing a thing.

But there is no uniform method of such an analysis and the results of such an analysis are not also uniform in the case of the different persons who have attempted such an analysis to know the real facts in the experiences. But I think that there is some agreement on certain points in the matter of such an analysis of the experience of man. There is postulated a dualism between the subject, the agent, that experiences and the object, the matter, that is experienced. Life is associated with the agent that experiences, and the material object that is experienced is accepted as in itself lifeless dead. The world is primarily divided into two constituent factors, the life and the matter. But there is no sort of agreement in the case of the relation of the two. In modern science, matter is dead by its very nature, and it evolves, and a phenomenon called 'life' appears in the course of such an evolution. Matter is primary and earlier, and life is secondary and later. There must have been a stage when there was no change, no evolution, in matter, and matter was uniform and in a static state. Then evolution started, and there arose the diversified world. It is in the course of this diversification that the factor named 'life' also made its appearance in the dead matter, and the result was the production of a certain type of matter now known as the 'cells'. The condition in which the 'cells' made their appearance in the course of evolution, has vanished and will not, at least may not, reappear. It is those primary cells, cells producing new cells that continue 'life'. But

no new cell produced can be independent of another cell.

That dead matter acquired life is a theory that is found in most of the ancient patterns of thought. But how did this first change, the change of dead matter into living matter, occur? Here again there is a great difference of opinion among the various thinkers the world has known. The present theory seems to be that there is a natural force in the dead matter and that there is also a natural law, and that on account of this natural force in matter and according to the natural law, evolution starts and proceeds. There is the theory of a 'Primary Atom' which burst and which expanded into the present world, and it is still expanding. There is also the theory that the whole of the world cannot be traced back to a single 'Atom Point'; the world has to be considered as in a state of continuous change. Evolution did not start at a single point, it started in a vast area. These two theories are according to the principle of the world having evolved from the primary, dead matter. There is another theory, according to which the dead matter is itself an evolute and is not primary in its nature; it evolved from 'Electro-magnetism'. If what is primary is a pre-material, electro-magnetic field, then what is called matter is an evolution from this primary, pre-matter field. But in the second theory, we are simply going as step farther than the position taken up in the theory that the world evolved from dead matter, that the world of diversification is a product of the dead matter of uniformity. I start on the postulate that the world that we experience started from the uniform, dead matter. What I have to say on this point will be applicable to the theory of matter itself being a product from the electro-magnetic field. The point that I discuss is just this: How did the first stir come into the uniform dead matter to evolve and to change and to get diversified.

The answer given is that there is a force in the dead matter and that this force set the dead, motionless, unchanging matter into a state of motion and change and also into a state of living matter. Now, the question has to be considered what this natural force in dead matter is which started the motion and change in the dead matter. Was it always in dead matter or did not come

into matter at a certain stage? If it had been there, why should there be a beginning and why did not the change and motion set out even in an earlier stage? Reason demands that the change and the motion had been there without a beginning. If there is a beginning, what is it that determines that beginning? Why did the force operate only at that particular stage and not earlier? If the force came into matter at a certain stage and if evolution started at the stage, where was that force before? Whence did it come and why and how? If the force had been ever there and if its operation started only at that stage, what is it that determines that stage? Did such a determinant appear at a certain stage and did the evolution start on account of the appearance of that determinant? Where was that determinant prior and whence and how and why did it appear at that particular stage? In this way, it is difficult to satisfy reason with a theory of a *start* for the evolution. Theology asserts that God created the world and that there was a stage when there was no world and no life in the world. The present scientific theory of a first start for the evolution is only an acceptance of the theory of Creation by God, eliminating God from that theory. It is neither rationalistic science nor rationalistic philosophy. If we accept a beginning, then we must explain the cause of the beginning at that special moment. If God is that cause, then God cannot be questioned; it is His Will. Now if such a God is eliminated and if a natural cause is postulated then we must have an explanation. We cannot say, 'It is the will of Nature'. Nature, being dead, has no will.

When the dead matter starts on its course of evolution and when there is the production of organic matter, the cells, then what is the difference that is brought about in the dead matter when it becomes living matter? The characteristic of living matter is that there is movement and there is growth from within itself, without that matter having to depend on another agency for its growth and its motion. We can make a plant with paper and it can have all the features of a plant in appearance; it can have branches and leaves and flowers and fruits. But there is no life in that plant; the branches and the leaves and

the flowers and the fruits did not grow and they will not fade away also. That scheme of paper became a plant through the activity of an organism, of a living matter in the form of the maker of that paper plant. But if a seed is put on the ground that seed grows into a plant, grows branches and flowers and fruits, and in course of time there is also decay in it by its very nature.

The umpire in a foot-ball match or in a hockey match can place the ball in the proper position in the play-field. But that ball will not start rolling until the players give it a kick or a hit. But a bird can fly without an urge from another body and an animal can run and a man can walk, in the same way because, there is life in the bird and in the animal and in the man. There may be differences in the matter of the quantity and quality of the force found in a living matter. Thus a plant cannot move from its position while an animal can. An animal cannot change its environment while a man can. But an animal and man cannot continue to grow and to move, cannot continue to live, if certain parts are cut off, while a tree can. The tree can continue its life in one part while another part is cut off, and an injury done to one part is not felt by the other parts. But if in the case of an animal, a fly settles on its body, the tail comes to its rescue, and if a thorn pricks a man his hand is there to help him, to pluck out the thorn. Such differences do not make the living matter different in kind; there is only a difference in gradation in the same kind.

If it is not life force that started the evolution then what is it? If it is the life force that is at the back of evolution, we need not go in for any agency outside of matter to be accepted as the cause for the start of evolution. Life force is in matter, and there is no matter without the life force. Thus we can explain that the evolution started from within matter itself. Just as the change and growth and movement in the organic matter is from within, the change and the movement in the whole universe is from within the material world itself. The primary force in matter which started the course of evolution operates exactly in the same way in which the life force functions in living matter. Why

should we draw a distinction between the primary and the later forces that bring about changes and movements in material bodies from within? I can understand a difference in gradation, but not a difference in kind. Just as the later changing and moving and evolving matter is the product of the primary, unmoving, unchanging matter, the life force in the evolved matter is also a product of the primary force that started the evolution. Just as matter changes during the course of evolution, in the same way, the force too changes in its function from what it was in its primary stage to what it became in its later stage. This will mean that what is called life force in all matter and that ultimately matter. The difference is only in gradation and not in kind. What is called inorganic matter is matter in which the life force is so faint that it cannot be properly detected, and may be ignored.

The force that started the evolution in dead matter and the force that we call life force which differentiates dead matter from organic matter in the evolved and diversified matter have the same function, that is, effecting changes and movements in matter from within itself without an agent outside of matter. I see no rational ground to assume that there is no relation between the two and that they are entirely different from each other; that the force that started evolution is primary and absolute and permanent while life force is an accident that came later and that may come to an end. I can very well accept a position that the function of the primary, absolute force in its stage as a life force is a later phenomenon and may come to a stop. That is another matter. What I am thinking of is that what appears as life force in matter in the phenomenal world is an evolution of that same primary force that set the dead matter in a state of motion and change, and is an aspect of that same primary force; it is not a new factor in the universe, absolutely different from the primary force.

If life is an accident, the position of the scientist will be that what is called knowledge is an accident and that science is knowledge in an accidental man. The scientist and the science are in this case both accidents. If matter is absolute and primary, how can an accident grasp an absolute? How can we say that primary

matter was dead, except in so far as in our own knowledge that matter should be so? If it is not *known* to be dead in nature cannot be dead or it may be otherwise. It is only knowledge immediate that determines its nature, and matter and its nature have no reality except as they are known to man. To say that science is an accident in the universe is a contradiction in terms. We distinguish a science from a casual knowledge because there is something that is fundamental and absolute in the nature of what is called science. How do we say that the knowledge which man had at some earlier time that the earth is flat and stationary was false, casual, not based on the true facts of the universe, and that the knowledge now that the earth is round, turns on its axis and moves round the sun is correct and scientific, if knowledge by its very nature is casual? If knowledge by itself is casual, then a distinction between casual knowledge and scientific knowledge itself becomes an absurdity.

Again a scientist understands a fact as scientifically established only if the establishment of the fact is in itself scientifically carried out. The position that I take up is that intelligence can understand a fact as containing some order within, only if the fact is planned and arranged in an intelligent way by an intelligent agent. It is on account of the distinction between the plan and the arrangement having been intelligently made that a scientist is able to say that this is scientific and that that is casual. If there is a science and if there is a scientist in the world, then that requires the position that there was intelligence behind the original start in the process of evolution in the world. Why should it have started, why should it have started along a certain line? Evolution is not mere change and movement. It is change and movement of the nature of a progression. A progression requires a destination and a method. Without intelligence there is no possibility of fixing a destination and a method, the very fact that we call the change and movement in the universe by the term 'Evolution' also demands an intelligence at the start and during the course of such changes and movements. A satisfactory position can be recognised only in the acceptance that what we call life or intelligence in the evolved world is the same fact in kind

which was at the back of the start and course of the evolution. A life-function in the evolved world may be different from the primary function of the intelligence, just as the moving and changing matter is different from the primary matter that started in the course of evolution. What I want in my philosophy is that both matter and life are primary and fundamental in the universe.

Is there a dualism between the primary matter and the primary intelligence? Or is there only one? If there is only one as fundamental and if the other is a product of that one fundamental, which is the primary and fundamental and which is the product? If there is an absolute dualism between matter and life, then the question again arises why the two came together. I will take up this alternative presently. If matter is the absolute and if intelligence is a product, then the difficulties have been already shown. To produce something from within itself is the characteristic feature of what we term intelligence and cannot be a feature of matter without intelligence. But it is not at all against reason to assume that there was originally only intelligence and that matter was produced from that by itself. Intelligence is capable of such a production of matter from within itself. Otherwise it ceases to be intelligence. The only difficulty is what relates to the origin, why there was no such production earlier. If intelligence did not produce matter at an earlier stage then there must be some external ground for the intelligence to start that production of matter at the stage and not earlier. There is a school of thought in India according to which the absolute intelligence is the source from which as the material cause, matter was produced and by which as agent matter was produced.

A more reasonable stand seems to be that matter and intelligence are both primary and fundamental, there being a dualism in the universe. Here also we have to accept the position that both were together and not separate and that there is no occasion for them to come together. If they were absolutely separate and if they came together, then the cause of such isolation and later coalition has to be determined. One position found in Indian thought is that they were always separate and they never came

together too. But matter received a reflection from the primary intelligence on itself and the change and movement are the results of such a reflection. Thus, it is neither dead matter that evolved nor did intelligence function as an agent. It is the reflection of the primary intelligence that functions as an agent in the evolved world; the intelligence in the agents in the phenomenal world is not real intelligence, but only a reflection of it in the dead matter. It requires a postulation of the existence of a certain aspect in dead matter that can reflect intelligence. There is a fundamental difference between the force that is at the back of evolution and the force that functions as life-force in the world. We can as well equate the aspect of dead matter which is capable of reflecting pure intelligence and intelligence itself. But the position taken up is one which starts and conducts the evolution in neither dead matter nor intelligence; it is dead matter becoming intelligent through the proximity of intelligence. Evolution is from within matter and there is no need for a God or any such external agent to start change and movement in the matter. The only unsatisfactory part in this position is that what is only apparently intelligent functions as if it were really intelligent in itself. The only way in which the difficulty can be overcome is to say that what matter has got is not the mere reflection of intelligence from an extraneous source, but that matter is in itself intelligent.

If there is such an intelligence in matter itself, then, prior to diversification, that intelligence must have had a universal character. It is a universal intelligence which became differentiated when, through its own agency, undifferentiated matter too became differentiated. Does that universal intelligence still continue in its universal nature even after its own differentiation? If there is no universal intelligence remaining after differentiation, how can there be co-ordination in the function of the different parts into which the matter has differentiated? If there is still a universal intelligence remaining and if along with it, there are the differentiated intelligences too, then the question arises why should we not recognise a dualism between the universal intelligence and the individualised intelligences?

This is the position taken up by another school of thought in ancient India. According to this school matter was uniform in appearance, in its primary stage. But the differences were there in a latent and undetectable condition. In that primary condition, there was only a continuum of material particles which did not have even spatial extension. The universal intelligence gave a motion to such particles so that they began to combine and develop attributes, and the various facts of the world were produced with features that were common among a group of facts, but different from other such groups. The uniformity of the primary matter was that there was no common feature between any two particles, and what happened in the course of differentiation was that features that were common among a few facts and different from other groups of facts were developed. Besides matter there were certain entities that were capable of developing intelligence, but they did not have any intelligence in their absolute state. It was some sort of inscrutable factor in them that was also at the back of the start of change and movement. In the course of such change and movement, the entities too developed intelligence. The universal intelligence too functioned as an agent right through the course of change and movement in the world.

What is common in all systems of thought in India is that change and movement started in matter through the agency of intelligence. There is another apparent feature common to all the systems of thought, and that is that there is no real beginning for the course of change and movement in the world. There is no system of thought that postulates an absolute beginning to the course of change and movement in the universe. Though the entire world of change and movement is without a beginning, a particular current of change and movement may have a final terminus, yet the whole current is eternal. As for the beginning, what at best may be meant is that the currents in the changing and moving world may recede back to a state of static uniform and may restart in the course of change and movement. At that terminus of absolute freedom from change and movement, there must be some agent external to matter to enable

matter to restart in the course of change and movement. Life in matter is in the state of change and movement, and the force in the state of motionless uniform is not life. It is to explain this position that a universal intelligence or an intelligence outside, of matter is postulated. If a combination of particles is accepted then there must be an agent to start the combination which is in the form of a movement. But if there is no combination of what are parts, then there is no need for an external agent, the change and movement being within matter itself. One particle is external to another particle and as such for their combination, there is a need for an agent; but if the whole of the moving and changing matter is a single unit, there is no change or movement external to itself. On account of this difference in the primary postulate, there is a difference in view, one being that reason requires an external agent and the other being that reason does not stand in need of such an agent; there is either Theism or Atheism.

But there is another way of looking into the problem. If matter is always in a state of movement, then reason demands that there is no external agent; this is rationalistic anti-theism. What reason proves is that there can be no such external agent. If matter is always in a state of change and movement, that change and that movement is according to a law within themselves; it is only when dead matter starts in the course of change and movement that we have to postulate an intelligence to determine the law in such change and movement. In a dynamic world, where matter is always changing and moving, an external intelligence is not needed for the change and movement. The changing and moving matter is in itself intelligence. Intelligent man does not test the law in the dynamic world with the standard of his own intelligence; he tests his own intelligence with the law in the intelligent movement and change in the intelligent matter.

There is the intelligent matter; man is only such an intelligent matter. Man is dynamic by nature. Man is neither a spirit nor a mere material complex. He is either living matter or life in matter. Life and matter cannot be isolated from each other;

there is no matter without life and no life without matter. there may be a difference in the relative ratio of the life aspect and the matter aspect in the various facts of the universe, the difference being in their functional aspects. In some, the life element functions more prominently and in others the matter aspect may be more prominent. All the same, everything is dynamic, with the matter side, with the movement and change side, and the intelligent side planning and effecting the change and movement in the matter. The world is here, was here and will ever remain here. There is neither a creation nor a destruction. There is always fluctuation, which is change and movement. Every fact in the universe contains the three elements of a matter: its change and movement and the intelligent planning and execution of the change and movement. We cannot isolate any one of the three sides from the others. I want no God. The world that I have presented above satisfies all my intellectual needs.

If there is an outside agency for matter to come into existence and to function in the universe and if God be that agency, then more difficulties are produced for the intellect than the difficulties solved, if at all God solves any difficulties of the intellect. There are two views regarding God's agency in the matter of the facts in the world having come into existence. There is an Indian view that God created the phenomenal world from within himself as the material cause and by himself as the agent. God must be infinite and omniscient and omnipotent, if it is to be a God. I cannot understand how an omniscient, omnipotent, infinite God could create from within himself what is finite, limited in knowledge and limited in power. Are such limitations within God? Then there is no God. Did he create it? Whence could it be and why? How can limitations come out of something that has no limitations? And is there any source outside of God whence such a limitation could have come into what is produced out of the unlimited? Then there was already something in the universe besides God, not created by God. Why should we say that God created the world? The Universe could be there already like those limitations. The world of limitations could not have come from God nor through God's agency.



If God created the world through his own agency, from nothing, then why did he create what was full of limitations? And God must be all-merciful. Why did he create a limited world in which many of the limitations function as evil and suffering? If God is all-merciful his business is to alleviate evil and suffering and not to create suffering through evil. If it be argued that God created evil and suffering so that he could help humanity to find the way out, the more rational position would have been that he did not create them at all. There is no meaning in kicking a man down on the road and then helping him to stand on his own legs. Evil and suffering in a world created by the all-merciful God is a logical impossibility. The position may be that God did not create evil and suffering, that he created a good world of happiness, and that man, after his creation, produced evil and suffering through his own mistake; then God helps man to get out of the suffering which man has created by himself. This does not at all improve the position. Why did God create the man of imperfection in such a way that his imperfection would enable him to create evil, and suffering through such an evil? God with the attributes which alone entitle him to be a God, and the creation of such a world are incompatible.

The only other position that I can think of is that God is actually here and that there is no meaning in applying intellect and logic to what is here as a fact. Is there really a God, or is it only a belief that there is a God? We must understand that a belief in God did not originate in man an account of the nature of man's intellectual being. God was trust on man by conquerors and empire builders to maintain their position as conquerors and empire builders. They had the co-operation of some people with intellect in this effort, and such associates of conquerors and empire builders are the priests. If the credulous people are told that corresponding to the emperor within his empire, there is another Power in the whole world and that power is God; then the ordinary people are likely to attach some supernatural element in the person and authority of the emperor. Some teachers also come up as messengers of that God. Religion

did not originate from the superstition of the ordinary people; it came from the ambition of conquerors.

In different countries different emperors set up different messengers of God; the God also thus became many, each God being the object of worship for a separate empire, and also the agent to send a separate messenger. The emperors and the priests arrogated to themselves the august position of being the guardians of God, the custodians of his religion and the defenders of his law; they rewarded and punished people in the name of God. Every such emperor claimed that his own God and the messenger of his own God were alone really a God and a messenger of God. Thus, God, installed as the creator of the world and of humanity and the protector of humanity became the cause for conflict and destruction among humanity. Man has suffered far more in the name of God and his messenger and his religion than through all the other causes out together like diseases, wars and aberrations of Nature like fire and floods. Religions did not unite; religions got split up into sects and became causes for feuds and sufferings. If such are the Gods who are guarding human happiness, such Gods should be pulled down from their position. Fortunately all that is wanted is only to pull down the beliefs about Gods from man's mind. There is no God in the world to be pulled down. The misfortune of humanity has been that while the emperors vanished, the Gods installed by them continue to create suffering among men. Man will certainly be happier if he is relieved of the malady of belief in God.

It cannot also be maintained that belief and faith in God have made man nobler. That is not our experience. If a man with belief in God is also found to be a man of noble character, it is not on account of such belief that he has a noble character, it is in spite of his belief in God. It cannot also be maintained that man is bad without a belief in God. Among them who openly deny God and refuse to surrender to him, there are individuals who are far nobler in character than the best among those who have faith in God. God is not wanted for moral life in the world among humanity; God has been a danger for moral

life among men. Even now in the matter of mutual opposition among nations, religion plays its part as one of the most powerful elements, not less powerful than economic or political causes and certainly more powerful than all of them. Even in the case of the East-West, tension of the modern time the conflict of 'Dialectical Materialism' vs. 'Creationism' is a very powerful factor. I am convinced that if God and religion can be removed from the life of man, then the conflict of democracy and totalitarianism, and of capitalism and communism would vanish also as causes of the disruption of humanity.

Intellectual needs the realities of the world, moral life – not one of them warrants the existence of God in the universe; on the other hand all of them, including international amity, requires that God be banished from man's mind. *God has no place in my Philosophy.*