

# PSYCHE: A TRADITIONAL PERSPECTIVE

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*"The core of all stupidity is lack of self-knowledge"<sup>136</sup>*

Man is by nature a seeker of knowledge. He has a natural impulse to know reality for himself and to construct a comprehensible mental picture of universe as it appears to him through his experience. This impulse is manifest in his efforts to learn about his environment, the world in which he finds himself, his fellow creatures and his -own self. The last one i.e. his self, serves as the means through which he comes to know the first three. It is the immediate locus of reality for him in reference to which he identifies things as other than self and the conscious centre through which he experiences universe.

Man's quest for knowledge has led to the development of many branches of knowledge and several different sciences. The one that deals with the self of man is called Psychology (literally, the Science of Psyche). It is usually defined as a science of human behaviour studying the central phenomena of mental life as it is manifested in behaviour. By studying behaviour (may it be simple or complex, overt or covert, rational or irrational) in its origin, development and manifestation, the Psychologist ultimately aims to understand the nature of man; his desires, hopes, fears, abilities and limitations. Psychology tries to find the answer to the question, what is man? Taking man as a Psycho-physical complex, it goes on to study the Psychic part of his being.

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<sup>136</sup> Gai Eaton, *King of the Castle*, Lahore, 1981.

"The shifting concept of the human psyche forms the core of the history of Psychology, the determinant of its present status and its future career. The result of the emergent evolution in this concept is that Psychology has been established as the scientific study of the motives and mechanisms of behaviour and their organization according to a naturalistic scheme. Certain phases and schools within the psychological domain are predominantly studies in motivation, others in mechanism of low or high degree and still others are focussed upon organization. But it is all one endeavour — to see the psyche soundly and to see it whole."<sup>137</sup>

But it is not psychology alone which concerns itself with the self or the psyche of man. Man's urge to know his own self has been matched with the emphasis on self-knowledge by various religious traditions of the world:

"If the mind would fain ascend to the height of science, Let it's first and principal study be to know itself."

*Richard of St. Victor*<sup>138</sup>

"He who knows others is wise,  
He who knows himself is enlightened."

*Tao-Te-Ching, XXXIII*<sup>139</sup>

"The Gnostics are ranged in hierarchy: the knower of his Lord and the knower of himself; the knower of himself is stronger in Gnosis than the knower of his Lord."

*Shaikh Ahmad al-Alawi*<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> *Encyclopaedia of Behavioural Science*, see Psychology.

<sup>138</sup> Quoted in S. H. Nasr, *Islam and the Plight of Modern Man*, Longman, London, 1975, p. 9.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>140</sup> Martin Lings, *A Sufi Saint of the Twentieth Century*, rpt. Suhail Academy, Lahore, 1981, p. 204.

Whether it is a medieval Western contemplative or a Chinese sacred scripture or a Muslim sage, the message is essentially the same; the knower must know himself; man must gain self-knowledge. That man has an inbuilt urge to know himself can be seen in the present day Western craze for psychic experiences; transcendental meditation, yoga and occult sciences. In traditional sciences the self of man has been awarded a special place as a subject matter of study. Though it can be easily seen that the term "self" is used in a sense very different from Psychological terminology. These and many other radical differences between modern and traditional points of view has forced us to treat them differently. It should be clarified here what we mean by the term "tradition" or "traditional". This word is used in our treatise as in the writings of Rene Guenon, F. Schuon, Titus Burckhardt, Martin Lings, A. K. Coommaraswamy, S. H. Nasr and other traditional authors. This term also includes the wisdom (Philosophia Perennis) inherent in these religions, that is, the Truths or principles revealed to mankind from a Divine origin.<sup>141</sup>

In speaking of all religious traditions in one breath, we do not mean to imply that they are identical in their approach or symbolic form; no two interpretations of truth or facts can be the same. But all these traditions have one thing in common whether they be Indian, Far-Eastern, European or Islamic; they lay claim to a revealed wisdom as the source of their knowledge. It is that perennial wisdom which is at the heart of every religion; the Sophia Perennis of Western tradition, Sanatana Dharma of Hinduism and Al-Hikmat-e-Khalidah of Muslims. So when we speak of tradition or traditional sciences as opposed to modern sciences, we are referring to those cultures or inherited patterns which have religious doctrines as their basis. They are called sacred as compared to modern sciences which are formulated through human reason and discursive thought and are called secular. This difference has formulated a criterion which draws a line of demarcation and forces us to

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<sup>141</sup> For a detailed discussion on this topic see S. H. Nasr, *Know-ledge and the Sacred*, Edinburgh University Press, 1981, Ch. 2, p.65.

categorize these two perspectives as traditional and modern and makes it possible to treat all belonging to former category under one heading in spite of notable intertraditional variations and differences. The belief in one unifying principle underlying all existence is a characteristic shared by all sacred sciences. Just as modern theories of Psychology are efforts to see psyche as a whole, similarly traditional sciences have also presented doctrines which strive to describe psyche in totality. Hindu philosophy has given a full description of the structure and powers of psyche (or individual atman) as well as the faculties of mind. Psychological exercises are used as a way to God (Raja Yog) in Hindu esoterism. Muslim '*Ilm-un-Nafs*' bears standard texts on dynamics of human *Nafs* or soul as well as on workings of intellect and reason. Similarly other traditions such as Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity, etc give a prominent place to knowledge and discussion of man, his nature and his being. However one must be cautious in comparing the traditional knowledge with modern Psychology; the parallel between them is not exact, and one of the most important differences is suggested by the prefix psycho-. Historically Western psychology has directed itself to the study of the psyche or mind as a clinical entity, whereas traditional cultures have not categorized mind and matter, soul and body in the same way as did the Western Psychology. For these cultures psyche, mind, soul and spirit are levels of man's being or selfhood and he, himself is a part of the reality of the cosmos, or Being. Therefore in order to study any concept of psyche in traditional thought one must first understand their concept of man and his place in the universe, his relation to God or Supreme Being and components of his self. In traditional civilizations, cosmology, theology, astrology, esoterism, metaphysics and philosophy, all contribute towards making of a Psychology, and one must draw upon all of them in order to understand man and his psyche. "There is no science of the soul without metaphysics".

Traditional sciences mentioned above are a very enriching source of knowledge and anybody who aims to make a study of the inner self of man can not possibly ignore these. A true student of psychology must draw upon all sources available if he is to

comprehend his subject matter, and not merely restrict himself to academic texts.

In the past few decades, a new interest in the revival of traditional wisdom has become visible. It can be seen as a breaking away from the post-renaissance prejudice against all forms of sacred knowledge, which was a result of extreme scientism. This interest can be seen working behind the efforts to re-collect and represent the traditional doctrines in different sciences. Even in such areas as frontier physics, the latest research done by such prominent scientists as Erwin Schrodinger, Carl Friedrich, Wigner and David Bohm marks a search for unity in the laws of nature, and shows the interest they are taking in oriental cosmological and metaphysical teachings. In recent years there have appeared a score of works seeking to relate modern physics to Oriental esoteric doctrines.

In quite another realm of science namely neurology and the study of the brain, there are again some leading scientists who refuse to reduce man to a complicated machine or behaviourally determined mechanism. The confirmation of the mind or consciousness independent of its material instrument which is the brain is yet another aspect of this search for the sacred, and evasion of that reductionism which is so characteristic of modern scientism. That is why all kinds of research is carried out in the fields of parapsychology to show the independence of mind from matter or even kirlian photography is developed, particularly in Russia. "This type of research indicates a religious urge towards the rediscovery of the sacred in a world dominated by the emphasis upon phenomena, despite the common error of failing to distinguish between the spirit and the psyche".

In Psychoanalysis and Psychotherapy one observes increasingly in recent years attempts to break away from the mold Freud and also Jung have cast upon this discipline and to rediscover traditional techniques of curing the ills of the soul. To quote S. H. Nasr, "It might appear on the surface that Jung is dealing with traditional Psychology whereas his treatment of traditional doctrines and symbols is a perversion of them so that he is, in a sense, more

misleading than Frued who is openly against all that tradition stands for."<sup>142</sup> Among the recent works which deal with current search for the discovery quite a few could be enumerated but that would be beyond the scope of this study.

In ancient societies and in traditional sciences, man's inner self was mainly the concern of religious, specially esoteric, teachings. Now it has become a field of interest for Psychology. Man has traveled a long way from mysticism to psychoanalysis. Whether he has gained or lost in terms of self-knowledge is yet to be seen.

According to Jung man is an enigma to himself. It is the most important characteristic of his species that he cannot know himself and therefore remains a mystery to himself. "Our psyche which is primarily responsible for all the historical changes wrought by the hand of man on the face of this planet, remains an insoluble puzzle and an incomprehensible wonder, an object of abiding perplexity — there seems to be a curious hesitancy in regard to psyche and psycho-logy. Not only is it the youngest of the empirical sciences, but it has great difficulty in getting anywhere near it's proper object".

The developments which have taken place in the field of psychology during past few decades have contributed a great deal towards establishing it as a science of human behaviour and mind (as it is manifested in behaviour). The most sophisticated and advanced laboratory experiments confirm its standing as a science whereas emergence of new personality theories and systems of therapy which admit and make use of a wide variety of psychological phenomena (imagery, contemplation etc) give proof that psychology is exploring new and wider areas of behaviour. However it is still far from possessing a complete knowledge of human psyche. What it offers are, at the best, plausible explanations for psychological phenomena, dealing with psychological functions separately, so that no whole-some picture appears.

There are still many unresolved issues within the domain of Psychology. For example the explanation or location of higher mental processes is far

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<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 128, n. 69.

from conclusive. The related question about the existence of mind, regarding which different opinions exist, Jung states that structure and physiology of the brain furnish no explanation of the psychic process. The psyche has a peculiar nature which can not be reduced to anything else. As Wilder Penfield, one of the most notable physiologists of our times, points out; by applying electrodes to the memory and motor regions of the cerebral cortex of patients undergoing brain surgery, the surgeon can make them remember past events and move their bodily members, but there is no brain spot which if electrically stimulated will induce the patients to believe or to decide.<sup>143</sup>

Phenomena left unexplained by psychology and issues left unresolved have recently attracted the attention of contemporary psychologists and thinkers and new theories have emerged which, breaking away from the restrictive shackles of empirical Psychology, criticize the reductionism of modern psychology. Also interest in the traditional psychological disciplines is another factor that betrays the dissatisfaction at present being felt with the inadequacy of psychology to explain different dimensions of man's inner self. Whether these new trends serve to dispel the dilemma is far from certain. They nevertheless point towards new dimensions of thought as well as raise a few relevant questions such as, whether the existing tools of psychology are inadequate to deal with the area it claims to study? Should psychology as a science restrict itself to the quantifiable and observable phenomenon only? Does it need to modify its basic approach and its existing view of man? Whether an alternative approach method or knowledge exists which can explain the mystery of human psyche?

As a student of psychology, these questions have troubled me from time to time. It was primarily in search of answers to these questions that I came across some extremely enlightening and profound writings by the authors mentioned earlier in these pages which ultimately led to the idea of this research. Besides providing answers

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<sup>143</sup> Wilder Penfield, *The Mystery of the Mind: A Critical Study of Consciousness and the Human Brain*, Princeton University Press, 1975, pp. 81, 79, 80, 48. See also Sir John Eccles' Preface to Eric Polten, *Critique of the Psycho-Physical Identity Theory*, (The Hague: Mouton, 1973).

to above questions, they seemed to contain a fresh and promising approach towards the problematic study of human psyche. These writings discussed modern as well as traditional concepts and objectively analyzed both of them. Through them I was acquainted with the resurgence of traditional sciences that is taking place in West today and came to realize how this could help to broaden the horizons of psychology and enrich the study of man.

After studying them, I was motivated to undertake a comparative study of the concept of psyche in various traditions and in modern thought.

Today in the West, as well as in the Islamic world it self, there is an ever greater need to study both the principles and manifestations of Islam from its own authentic point of view, and in a manner comprehensible to contemporary man. Moreover this needs to be achieved by using methods of analysis and description which are at once logical and in conformity with the Islamic perspective. This type of writing which can 'translate' Islamic teachings into a con-temporary idiom without betraying or "psychologizing", it, is very important, not only for non-Muslims who wish to learn about Islam but most of all for young Muslims who are now mainly products of modern educational system and seem to have lost faith in the effectiveness or profoundness of their religious doctrines in face of the scientific superiority of the West. They need to be acquainted with their intellectual heritage which contains a profound wisdom. The aforementioned writings seemed to fulfil the above function. Present work is another effort in this direction.

The present study is a humble attempt to conduct an objective exploration of traditional, specially Islamic, sciences and to bring out the concept of psyche contained therein. Although it refers to other traditions briefly, main emphasis of this study is on the Islamic perspective.

Before reviewing the concept of psyche as it prevailed in various traditions and philosophies, it seems suitable to explain briefly, the origin and uses of this word. We find almost in every language that the entity, which by dwelling in the body imparts life to it, is called by some word indicating air, breath or wind. Thus in



the poems of Homer, that which survives the dissolution of a person's body was denoted by the term psyche, which is the Greek for breath. Similarly in Latin, anima and animus come from a Greek word which means wind, while spiritus is from spirare, to breath. Sansikrat Atma and Prana (vital breath) signify the same meaning. The Arabic terms *Nafs* (نفس) and *Ruh* (روح) derive from roots which mean 'to breath', 'to blow-into' and 'blowing of wind or breeze." This use of the same word (breath or wind) in many languages, to denote an entity within man is extremely significant. It points towards a concept which was held almost universally by all ancient civilizations. They believed in the existence of an invisible source of life inside man, which sustained and moved him. The material function that the breath performed in keeping the body alive was frequently taken to consist of in imparting to the body the power of movement. Hence to soul was attributed the ability to move itself. "Self motion is the very idea and essence of the soul" (Plato) "Anything that has a soul moves itself" (Aristotle) Hence we see here that this entity was named soul.

In Greek mythology, the personification of human soul occurs in the figure of psyche, represented as a beautiful girl who falls in love with cupid and wanders over the earth in search of him. After many hardships and completion of difficult tasks, she is made immortal and reunited with her Iover.<sup>144</sup> "The mythological story of psyche as told by Roman writer Apubius in the Golden Ass, is interpreted as an allegory of the destiny of human soul, which eventually finds complete happiness by purification through trouble and sorrow."<sup>145</sup>

All the symbolic representations of psyche signify one thing; that soul or psyche is seen as something which is non-corporeal and subtle and which has the power to reach levels unapproachable for material bodies. This concept will be further discussed in the concluding part of our study. For the present, we are only presenting the ideas and theories from various sources. Their interpretation will

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<sup>144</sup> Angell, *History of Psychology*, Macmillan, London, 1953.

<sup>145</sup> "Psyche," *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

be taken up later.

## **Greek Thought**

An historical approach to the human psyche, necessitates at the outset, a glance at the great tradition handed down by Greek thought; not only because this word is derived from Greek language and is used extensively in their mythology but also because this tradition has profoundly influenced the modern thought and conceptions specially in the realm of human psyche. Nevertheless, the limits of our study allow only a brief overview of the ideas attributed to the most outstanding figures of Greek thought.

Greek philosophy falls into three periods. The first may be described as pre-Socratic; the second period as ranging from Sophists to Aristotle, and the third as post-Aristotelian. The second period which includes Socrates and Plato, is the maturity and actual zenith of Greek thought. Very little authentic material is available about the pre-Socratic period though it is believed that the thinkers preceding the ancient Greek philosopher pythagorus were heirs to a revealed religion and their philosophical teachings proceeded from the doctrines of this religion. Whatever material is available can not be trusted on the grounds that it has been re-interpreted according to modern conceptions and thus amounts to distortions. So we will confine our study to the middle period.

Before Socrates, we encounter such schools as atomists who held that soul consists of spherical atoms spread through the body which disperse at death and the Sophists, whose skepticism denied the possibility of knowing about the knowing process itself. The Sophists found in human consciousness a meaningless flow of experiences behind which neither outer reality nor any stable inner principle could be found. In this period appeared Socrates "whose critical method erected the framework within which most subsequent philosophy and psychology develop" <sup>146</sup>Most of the Socratic ideas

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<sup>146</sup> Gardner Murphy, *A Historical Introduction to Modern Psycho-logy*, R. K. P., London, 1967, p. 7.

and discourses were in the form of talks and discussions and were later on elaborated and put forward by his illustrious pupil, Plato. Plato is called the "mouth piece" of Socrates. So we will pass on to Platonian ideas.

*Plato:* Plato is perhaps best known for his theory of emanation which holds that all reality emanated from God. This theory is also applied to human soul. According to his emanationistic theory of man's creation, the primordial One (God) which is the Absolute Good and which rational knowledge cannot reach produces by emanation an image of Itself which contemplates it. This image, the Universal Spirit (Nous), contains the ideas or the archetypes. The Spirit produces the soul (Psyche) or more precisely the animistic or subtle state, which produces in its turn, matter (Soma), the "in-existent"

Thus Platonian system presents a hierarchical order of reality which is based on Divine Principle and goes from principle to matter through intermediate levels of universal spirit and universal soul (psyche); the former corresponds to the celestial realm, the latter to the intermediate one between Heaven and Earth. This intermediate realm is known as the *psychic* realm.<sup>147</sup> This order is reflected in man as well, except that in him the spirit is the deepest and most inner core of the self, and the soul veils it and is in turn veiled by the matter, which is the most outer layer of man's self. It follows that man is composed of spirit (or Intellect), soul, and body, and is both part of the cosmos which is the object of his knowledge and, in view of his spiritual nature, appears as a small cosmos within the larger one, of which he is the counterpart, like a reflected image.

Among the components of man's inner self, spirit in which Intellect dwells is similar to universal spirit which moves the cosmos. It is simple and indivisible. It is attributed with indestructibility since destruction means the sundering of parts and it has no parts; it is one, like the primordial One, of whom it is a reflection.

Spirit is identical with Intellect which is defined as the cognitive pole of universal existence and which radiates from God as light shines forth from

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<sup>147</sup> For a contemporary exposition of this view of the universe see, Huston Smith, *Forgotten Truth*, rpt. Suhail Academy, Lahore, 1981, Ch. 3, Ch. 4.

the sun. In the human beings this Intellect is the presence of God. This Intellect is called reason by some interpreters of Plato and spirit is called the rational part of the soul which is immortal. These terms are misleading since reason signifies human intelligence whereas Intellect (Nous) according to Plato emanates directly from Divine wisdom and is supra-rational. Soul is not divided into parts as such. The Intellect, reason, sensor knowledge, etc are all levels of his being or self-hood and signify the functions or type of knowledge possible at each level.

Since Intellect is the essential part of man's spirit, the knowledge which is available to man through intellect is called innate by Plato. But still soul has to "recapture" that knowledge through the means of recollection. Plato connects the doctrine of the immortality of the Spirit with the theory of ideas by means of the doctrines of recollection and transmigration. According to the former doctrine all knowledge is recollection of what was experienced by the soul in its original state of unity with Spirit. (By knowledge, Plato does not mean sensory knowledge but knowledge of one's essence or reality, that is, divine knowledge)

But this does not mean that divine knowledge in any way excludes knowledge of outward phenomena which reaches us *through senses*. *The forms which come to us empirically from without*, correspond to the immutable prototypes or possibilities contained in the Intellect which constitute the real content of all knowledge. Hence the prototypes of the natural universe in all its diversity of forms are present in the domain of spirit; these *possibilities or prototypes are called archetypes* by Plato. It is also defined *as* the ideas of things. These archetypes are to be found above the level of reason and whatever reason can discern regarding them is never more than a restricted aspect of what they really are in them-selves.

Here, we would like to recall Plato's famous image of the cave which explains the gist of his theory in a most clear-cut manner. Plato asks us to imagine a large subterranean cave in which are prisoners who have been confined there ever since their child-hood. They are made to sit in a long row facing one of the walls of the cave and they are chained to their seats in such

a way that they cannot turn their heads, being only able to look straight in front of *them*. *A fire raised up behind them, casts its light on to the wall and between them and the fire puppets are being carried, made in the image of all kinds of living and lifeless earthly creatures. But not being able to turn their heads, the prisoners can only see the shadows which the puppets cast on to the wall in front of them. Then, Plato asks us to imagine that one of the prisoners escapes from his chains. First he is able to look around and see the puppets themselves. Then he escapes from the cave and goes up to the outside world where are to be seen all those things in whose likeness the puppets were fashioned.*

The cave is this world and the prisoners are mortals during their earthly life.<sup>148</sup> The outside world is the next world which contains the spiritual realities and which the things in this world are symbols. It is easy to see now what Plato means by archetypes and what does true knowledge signify. As mentioned earlier, Plato held that before entering the body soul lived in the world of archetypes. But after be-coming detached from Intellect and becoming attached to material body (corpus) it tends to forget these archetypes. Since all things in sensible world are made in the likeness of these archetypes or primordial images, they remind the soul of its essential abode. From this point of view all knowledge is

#### REMINISCENCE (ζ);

Through the union of soul (which is subtle) with body, sense faculties of man came into being. The so-called parts of the soul are thus explained. The soul or psyche is the seat of reason, which is its exclusive faculty and could be a synonym for human intelligence. This intelligence is supposed to be the reflection of the Intellect at human level, it is the trunk of the tree through which the sap (intellect) reaches from roots (spirit) to the rest of the tree. Thus rational soul which also contains higher mental processes (thinking, imagination, memory, will etc) is the higher extremity of the soul, that which opens towards Intellect or Spirit, whereas sense faculties and biological desires as well as elementary mental processes are the lower extremity of soul, that which is near to body or gross matter.

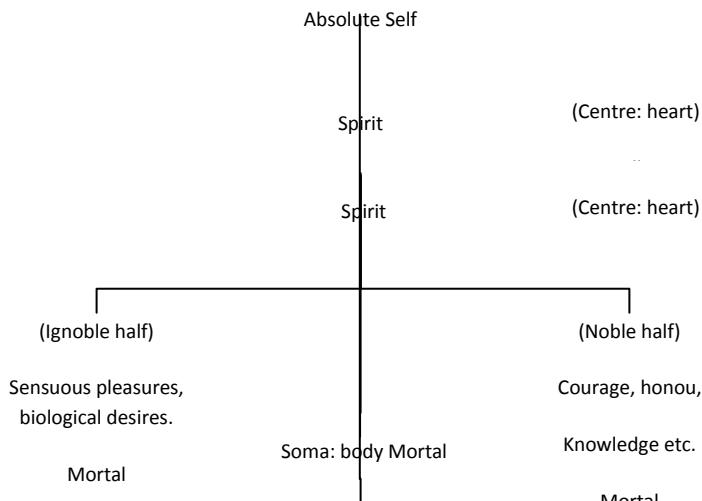
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<sup>148</sup> Book VII of *Plato's Republic*, or, more correctly, *Plato's State*., Our interpretation is based on Martin Lings's exposition of the image. See his *Ancient Beliefs and Modern Superstitions*, London, 1980, pp. 46-48.

The centre of the Intellect is heart, (not the physical heart, but the inner most core or centre of man's self), that of reason is head, of lower faculties, the lower part of man's body.

The will of man is rooted in the Divine Self. Among the manifest powers of the soul, is its capacity to deal with abstract relation-ships. Hence the power of discursive thought in the-soul. Plato sees soul or psyche as a mediator between the world of senses and the world of the archetypes. But it is not possible for reason or imagination to discern them fully except in the return of the soul into the undivided unity of the spirit — only then a certain reflection of the eternal possibilities in the formal consciousness takes place. The contents of the Intellect, which is the 'faculty' of the Spirit, thus suddenly 'congeal' in the forms of symbols, in reason and in imagination"

The higher part of the soul is called by Plato 'the noble half' and the lower part 'ignoble half,' or the appetitive and sensuous soul, and such emotions as generosity, honour, courage-and love, are found in the noble half



Plato believed that man gets satisfaction not only from the fulfilment of biological needs and sensuous pleasure but also from other activities such as pursuit of knowledge, serving others, taking up courageous tasks, and doing honourable deeds, procuring social, political and public respect and fame as

well as getting mental satisfaction from study of ideas or practice of fine arts. All these activities provide a higher form of pleasure comparing to which sensuous pleasure is very superficial. But the fact remains that they are at best satisfaction of the higher part of psyche and do not relate to spiritual or intellectual centre of man's self. It would be interesting to compare this to modern concepts of "fulfilment of inner self", "intellectual satisfaction" "higher mental activities" etc. Such phrases are used in modern terms They are thought to denote the other end from sensuous pleasures, the latter being called superficial. In the light of Platonian: theory it can be easily discerned as belonging to the noble half of the soul, still rise no higher than the psyche. The Spirit, which is the innermost core of our being lies deeper and higher above such functions and can only be reached through intuition.

To Plato, harmonious soul is that in which all parts of the soul i.e. appetitive, sensuous and rational, work harmoniously, each discharging its own function the rational part commanding, and the appetitive and sensuous parts obeying its commands. A balanced soul is thus maintained. These concepts are then related to ethics and Soul's progress is explained in terms of achievement of the "highest good"

It is notable that what Plato calls soul's reminiscence of the world of archetypes is not readily available to the soul but it has to be recollected if the soul is to keep itself in touch with its origin This could bear a similarity to the concept of collective unconscious in Jung's theories but the two differ in many important respect and, furthermore, it is extremely naive to draw superficial comparisons between ancient thought and psychological theories since the latter are totally alienated from the former and to compare them amounts sometimes to distortion of the traditional concepts, thus leading to grave misconceptions.

**Aristotle.** Aristotle, the great genius of Greek tradition is the man whose ideas have influenced and contributed greatly towards the development of modern Psychology. His works "De anima" and *para naturalia* deal with the system of knowledge for the study of soul, definition of the nature of psyche and its activities and

description and interpretation of human experience and behaviour in concrete terms.

He differs from his great master on account of the gulf he had placed between soul and body. At the same time, he also disagreed with the mechanical theories of Democritus. He aimed to discover the intimate relation of mental and physical processes yet to define the mental so as to show its differences from the physical. His solution lay in terms of a conception of "Essence" and "Substance" of things or in "form" and "matter". These two are always together but it is only through substance that the essence of thing is actualized. The soul is the essence or form of the body, as well as the principle of its motion.

Aristotle declares five different ways in which things are said to live:

1. faculty of absorbing food i.e. nutrition and reproduction,
2. locomotion,
3. sensory perception,
4. desire,
5. Intellect.

The functions of plants are assimilation, growth and reproduction, those of lower animals are, in addition to these, sensitivity, appetite and locomotion, while those of man are all these together with his specific function i.e. reason. As the human soul combines within itself the function of all animate existence it is a veritable microcosm. But the terms in which he can truly be called a microcosm is that the higher planes of being are also reflected in him i.e. supreme or ultimate reality. This concept will be discussed later on.

According to Aristotle, the world process is a continuous elevation of being into higher and higher levels, and thus reality exhibits a continuous scale of being. In the higher scale the form predominates, in the lower, matter outweighs form. At the bottom is solid matter devoid of soul, -at the highest level, pure essence devoid of matter. In between these two exist different levels of being graded in order of subtlety. The highest which



comes at the top of the scale, the Absolute Essence is called by Aristotle, God. This is the immanent self, the levels which are near to the self are subtler than those away from the self. Matter which is farthest from pure Essence is gross. This could be illustrated by the example of water. It evaporates and turns from tangible, into subtle and a time comes when it is no more there but it is said to exist. What is it that exists? Some levels of existence are bound to space and time both, (matter), some to space alone, some to time alone (psychic phenomena). But God or Infinite is above both and it alone is Absolutely real. The psychic level of being is nearer to him than matter since it is subtler but that does not mean it can reach Him.

In the lower order, scale of being proceeds from animals to man. The human organism of course contains the principles of all lower organism. Man nourishes himself, grows and procreate his kind, moves about and is endowed with sense-perception. But he has, in addition to it his own special function i.e. reason and Intellect; former being the reflection of the latter at the human level. Within human consciousness there are lower and higher grades. These stages of consciousness can be called "faculties" but Aristotle is against the division of soul in parts; it is a simple, indivisible thing having no parts. These faculties are different aspects of the activity of one and the same being. The lowest faculty is sense-perception. It takes place when the object stamps its form upon the soul i.e. when matter is perceived in sense of its qualities which are form of the matter. Next in the scale above the senses comes the common sense. It must not be mistaken with the current meaning of the term in everyday language. It means the central sensation-ganglion in which isolated sensations meet, are combined, and form a unity of experience. This is what compares and contrasts various sensation specially those coming from different sense-organs and turns them from a blind medley of phantasms into definite experience.

Above the common sense is the faculty of imagination. By this Aristotle does not mean the creative imagination of the artist but the power, which every one possesses, of forming mental images and

pictures. This is due to the excitation in the sense-organ continuing after the object has ceased to affect it.

The next faculty is memory. This is same as imagination except that there is combined with the image a recognition of it as a copy of a past-sense-impression.

Recollection, again is 'higher than memory. Memory images drift purposelessly through the mind whereas recollection is the deliberate evoking of memory images:

From recollection, we pass to the specifically human faculty of reason. Reason itself has two grades. The lower is called passive reason, the higher active reason. The mind has power of thought before it actually thinks. This latent capacity is passive reason. The positive activity of thought itself is active reason.

Now the sum of the faculties in general we call the soul. And the soul, we saw, is simply the organization or form, of the body. It is to body what sight is to eye. Soul as form of body is inseparable from it. You can not have a soul without a body. The connection, of soul and body is not mechanical but organic. Soul is not a thing which you can put into a body and then take out just as you pour water in a bowl and take it out; it is a function and the function ceases when the body ceases to be. It is clear that Aristotle is talking about the psyche here. However there is one aspect of man's being which according to Aristotle does not perish with the body i.e. active reason or the Intellect. God being absolute Intellect, man's reason comes from Him and returns to Him after the body ceases to function. Intellect which is universal and capable of perceiving Truth, has a counterpart in reason which is individual and discursive. In reason concepts are potentially present, in Intellect they are actualized. All lower functions and whatever arises in consequence being connected with the body, cease with the death of the body, only Intellect remains. It alone is imperishable and immortal since it emanates from Divine Qualities and their reflection in human realm. Thus it implies that Aristotle believes in the immortality of essential part of man's soul that which can be called spirit in other words.

Thus it can be concluded that Aristotle defines the soul as "the first entelechy (or perfection) of a natural organized body, possessing the capacity of life"<sup>149</sup>

But he also believes in the human soul which corresponds to Intellect or Absolute Being. His great commentator and systematizer, Alexander of Aphrodisias explicitly holds this view; that human mind achieves immortality by contemplating eternal objects. But it loses individual form or consciousness of its individuality. There is no "I" separate from the eternal self, but it exists in pure Being just as a drop of water exists in an ocean. The individual spirit is reabsorbed in the Essence i.e. in God.

Among the later Greek philosophers the stoics, more or less adhered to the immanent and immortal character of human soul; it comes from the Divine fire and returns to Him. But they have not treated the structure of soul in detail. However one finds a revival of Platonian emanationism in somewhat different form, in the neoplatonists. Among this school Plotinus based his theory upon the principle of unity. According to him, God is absolutely One; He is the first principle of all being or universe and there is no duality in this Oneness. At the same time, he holds that world emanates from this Divine Principle, yet does not exist apart from Him. This apparent contradiction in terms can be explained if we consider it in depth. According to all traditional cosmological doctrines, ultimate reality is nothing other than the Divine Principle, the "Self" which is Infinite, Absolute and Immanent. It is the Supreme Essence which is beyond Being, and there is no duality in it; it is One. Since it is the absolute Reality, all other reality is relative to it. From this supreme Reality emanates all existence just as the light emanates from the sun yet it can not exist apart from the sun. All reality is manifestation of the "Self". This manifestation ranges in hierarchical order from matter to the self.

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<sup>149</sup> W. T. Stace, *A Critical History of Greek Philosophy*, London, 1969. Also M. M. Sharif, *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, Vol. 1, Wiesbaden, 1966, Ch. 1.

Emanating from One, it goes down to universal spirit (where archetypes are present) to psychic realm which though being sensible is nevertheless subtle and then finally to the matter. In Hinduism this order is described as following: Universal/non-manifested/manifested/subtle/gross — It is this same concept which Plotinus explains.

## HINDUISM

Hindu philosophy and Hindu doctrines impart information about the measurable structure and power of the Psyche, analyze the intellectual faculties of man and operations of his mind, classify the senses and study the processes by which experiences are apprehended, assimilated, interpreted and comprehended.

Among the six famous systems of Hindu thought, from which mainstreams of Hindu philosophy have emerged and developed, Vedanta and Sankya contain elaborate analysis of the psyche. It is from these analyses that a complete system of psychology has taken shape.

Hindu Psychology is not an independent science in itself but a branch of sacred knowledge which aims to understand one level of existence i.e. man's self and to apply that understanding to the

spiritual journey towards Brahma. The knowledge of psyche is used as a means of self-knowledge which is the first step towards realization of truth (Nirvana) or unity with the Self (Yog). Due to the spiritual aims of Hindu psychology and its metaphysical origin it relates man's psyche to the universal principle or spirit (Atma). For as Dr. Zimmer points out "The great theme of all Vedantic teaching is the identity of the individual life-m Monad with Brahman which is the nature of pure consciousness or spirituality".<sup>150</sup>

The Hindu concept of man rests on the basic thesis that he is a layered being. The principal layers can be reduced to four. First and most obviously man has a body. Next comes that portion of his mind and experience that he is aware of i.e. his conscious personality. Underlying these two is a third region of the realm of his individual subconscious. This has been built up out of his private past experiences down through the years. Though it is hidden to his normal awareness, it shapes his life in profound ways. These three parts of man are paralleled in contemporary Western view though with a different approach. The distinctive point in Hindu hypothesis is its postulation of a fourth part. Underlying the other three, more unperceived by the conscious mind than even its private subconscious though as vitally related to it, stands Being itself, Infinite Self, Atma or Brahma. Brahma is said to be in the vital centre of the human being, which is the heart. "The Self, the universal Being dwells in the individual and gives him life. It transcends both the gross organism of his body and the subtle organism of his psyche; it is the life-force that enables man to act. — It is the nucleus of the phenomenal man".<sup>151</sup>

## **Ontological Placement of Psyche**

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<sup>150</sup> VEDANTASARA 27 — Quoted by Dr. Zimmer in *Philosophies of India*, Routledge & Kegan Paul London, 1952, page 417.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 409.

According to Hindu doctrines hierarchy of Being can be de-scribed in following manner: First of all there is the "Self", the transcendent and permanent principle of which all manifested being (the human being for example) is only a transient and contingent modification. It is never individualized, since it is eternal and immutable (Pure Being). It is the supreme Being (unmanifested) underlying all creation. It is identical with Atma (universal spirit) and Brahman (Divine Being) since Atma and Brahma permeate all things. "The Self develops its manifold possibilities, indefinitely in their multitude through a multiplicity of modalities of realization, amounting, for the integral being, to so many different states, of

which states one alone; limited by the special conditions of existence which define it, constitutes the portion or rather the particular determination of that being which is called human individuality".<sup>152</sup>

In order to understand this hierarchy, let's observe the following chart drawn by Guenon:

Universal	(The Unmanifested)	
	(Formless Manifestation)	
Individual	(Formal Manifestation)	Subtle state
		Gross state

The gross state is the corporeal and sensible world, the tangible, visible level of material existence whereas the subtle state is the inner world of forms, extra-corporeal modalities of the human being such as thoughts,

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<sup>152</sup> "Man and his Becoming according to Vedanta" Rene Guenon, Luzac & Co. 1945, Lodon, page 29.

ideas, imagination, experiences, emotions etc. These two are also called gross body (Sthula Sarira) and subtle body (Suk-Sana Sarira) respectively.

The Brahma when it dwells in individuality is called purusha. Purusha is represented as light (Jyotis) because light symbolizes knowledge. It is written in the Upanished that in the vital centre where purusha dwells the sun shines not, nor the moon, nor the stars; all shines by the radiance of purusha. It is by its splendour that this whole (the integral individuality regarded as "microcosm") is illuminated".<sup>153</sup>

In order that manifestation may be produced, purusha must enter into correlation with another principle. The correlative of purusha is prakriti, the undifferentiated primordial substance. (The purusha and prakriti may be compared to yin and yang of Toaism). Purusha is active, whereas prakriti is passive and represented as feminine. It is the union of these complementary principles which produces the integral development of the human individual state. Purusha and prakriti may be called Essence and Substance in English vocabulary.

The meeting of these two principles (one vertical, pertaining to Brahma or Heaven and other horizontal representing the realm of substance) is what brings forth the manifestation (called *Zuhur* in Muslim terminology). As described above formless manifestation universal principle or "self" is unmanifested; it is beyond Being. Being is a veil of the "self" or Brahman. This veil is Maya — prakriti also pertains to Maya — It possesses or comprises of the three gunas, the three cosmic qualities or tendencies: the upward (Sattva), the expansive (rajas) and the downward (tamas). The gunas are in perfect equilibrium in the state of primordial indifferentiation: every manifestation or modification of substance represents a rupture of this equilibrium, and beings participate in the gunas in varying degrees and proportions. These gunas are therefore not state but conditions of Universal Existence to which all manifested beings are subject.

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<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, p.44.

Sattva is conformity to the pure essence of Being (Sat), which is identified with knowledge and represented as an up-ward tendency; rajas is the expansive tendency in accordance with which the being develops itself in a given state at a certain level of existence, and lastly there is tamas, which is identified with obscurity and ignorance, and represented as a downward tendency. These tendencies when seen as manifested in man can be described as below: the quality of "obscurity" or ignorance (tamas) is prominent when man is attracted towards his animal nature and confines himself to the fulfilment of his biological desires which he sees as an end in-itself. This amounts to absurdity because it is cut off from the metaphysical principle and unintelligible and as F. Schuon writes "the unfolding of human events, appears as a struggle against absurdity; the intelligible is affirmed as a contrast to the unintelligible". Where-as sattva is perfectly intelligible since pertaining to Divine knowledge and when man overcomes the play of lower modalities (tamas) and aspires to higher modalities (sattva), he is, as it were, relating to an upward dimension.

Rajas, or expansive tendency explains man's efforts to achieve knowledge of the phenomenal world (which is on the same existential level as man) and develop the potentialities of his self on purely psychic level, not rising above maya and thus this tendency is horizontal whereas Sattva is vertical relating man to the upward, higher levels of reality. Coming back to the realm of universal manifestation, among the manifestations of Atma, is the higher Intellect (Buddhi). It is also called Mahat or the "great principle". The seat of this Intellect is also called Brahma-pura, seat of Brahman. That is why heart is considered as the centre of life. The brain is no more than an instrument of the mental faculty, that is, of thought in its reflective and discursive mode. Guenon presents a symbolism in his book, according to which heart corresponds to the sun and the brain to the moon.<sup>154</sup> This Buddhi is equivalent to AI-'Aql of Arabic. "If we view the "Self" (Atma) as the spiritual sun which shines at the centre of the entire being, Buddhi will be the ray directly emanating from this sun and illuminating human state".<sup>155</sup> That which dwells in the vital centre is either from the physical point

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<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.* p. 39.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 66.



of view and Jivatma (living soul) from the psychic point of view. The Jivatma is only a reflection of the Atma in the individual human state. This reflection could not exist without the mediation of Buddhi. This latter when intersecting with human state produces the individual consciousness (ahankara) which is inherent in Jivatma, or "living soul". This consciousness gives rise to the notion of the "ego" since its proper function is to establish the individual conviction (abhimana), that is to say, precisely, the notion of that "I am" which concerns itself with external and internal objects. The sum total of these objects is described by the term "I dam" (this) as opposed to 'aham' or "me".

As shown in the chart the subtle state precedes gross state thus it follows that the psychic sphere is above the corporeal sphere and psyche is placed at a higher level than body. It is closer to the centre of being, the Atma, and it is an intermediary between corporeal state of man and his transcendent, spiritual self. What has been said so far can be summarized as follows. The supreme principle or ultimate Reality that is the core of all being is universal and Unmanifested "Self". It is identical with Brahma and Atma, which is "the highest, deepest, final, transcendent" power or vital force of life. It is universal and formless. When it is reflected in individuality, that is, in individual beings (human, animal, other creatures, etc) it becomes manifested and acquires form. Human state is one of the many individual states. It is formal and its forms are of two types; subtle and gross. Subtle state contains all that is termed or regarded as psyche, (mental faculties, ego functions, senses, thoughts, feelings, etc) and gross state is made of matter hence the body of man belongs to this state.

These levels are described in Vedanta as successive vehicles or envelopes. Purusha or Atma, manifesting itself as Jivatma in the living form of the individual being, is regarded as clothing itself in a series of "envelopes (koshas). The first envelope (ananda mayakosha "maya" signifying "made of" or "consisting of") is none other than the Atma, the principal and undifferentiated state itself. It is formless. The second envelope (vijnanamaya-kosha) is formed by the directly reflected light of integral and universal knowledge (jnana). It is composed of five elementary essences (tanmatras) conceivable but not perceivable in their subtle state; and it arises

out of the conjunction of the higher Intellect (Buddhi) with the principal faculties of perception proceeding from five tanmatras. The external development of these constitutes the five senses of the corporeal individuality. The third envelope, (manomaya-kosha) in which, constituents of the preceding envelopes are linked with the inward sense (manas — मनः), especially brings into play the mental consciousness or thinking faculty. This faculty is a result of the reflection of Buddhi or higher Intellect in human individual form. The 'fourth envelope (prana maya-kosha) comprises the faculties which proceed from the "vital breath" (prana) that is to say the five vayus (modalities of this prana) as well as the faculties of action and, sensation. The combination of these last envelopes (vitnana maya, manomaya and pranamaya) constitute the subtle form' as opposed to the gross or corporeal form (sthula -- sharira).

## **Structure of the Psyche**

According to the analysis of the psyche rendered by Sankhya and accepted by the disciplines of yoga, man is active (kartar) though the five "organs of action" and receptive (bhoktar through the five "organs of perception". They are known as the "faculties working outward" (bahyendnya) and function as doors or gates (outlets and inlets) while inward sense [Manas which includes, according to certain texts, consciousness (ahankara) and Intellect (Buddhi) as well] stand as door keeper. The five instruments of sensation are: The ears or hearing (shrotra) the skin or touch (twach) the eyes or sight (chakshus) the tongue or taste (vasana) the nose or smell (ghrana) being enumerated thus in the order of development of the senses. The five instruments of action are: the organs of excretion (payu) the generative organs (upastha) the hands (patri) the feet (pada) and lastly the voice or organ of speech (vach). Manas must be regarded as the eleventh, fulfilling the double function of service both towards perception and towards action.

The Sankhya compares the body to a town or place in which the supreme ruler or king (Brahman, Atma or purusha) lives: Its presence moves the activities of its staff (the sense-faculties and the inward sense). The outer sense-faculties bring in outside world (stimuli or experiences of the senses) and hand them over to the in-ward sense (Manas) just as village-heads hand over taxes to the governor, who in turn hands it over to the Finance Minister and Chancellor of the King and ultimately to the King. The experiences of the senses are collected and registered through manas, appropriated by ahankara and then delivered to Buddhi. "A bodily sense perceives and an organ of action executes (one working as entry the other as outgoing); between the two, inward sense (Manas) examines; consciousness (ahankara) makes the individual application that is assimilation of perception by the "ego" and finally the pure intellect (Buddhi) transposes the data of the preceding faculties into the Universal".<sup>156</sup> Ahankara, ego function, causes us to believe that we feel like acting, that we are suffering; it is the prime motivating force of "delusion" (abhimana). It refers all objects and acts of consciousness to an "I". The

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<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 74.

making of the utterance 'I' (aham) — accompanies all psychic processes". Due to this consciousness we perceive ourselves to be the subject of all deeds and actions. We identify ourselves with this "ego", or consciousness instead of the purusha or Atma which is our real being.

Buddhi on the other hand is a faculty of awareness. According to Sankhya, Buddhi may be regarded as the faculty of "determination, resolution, mental effort, awareness, feeling, opinion, belief, knowledge, discrimination and decision". (Buddhi or Intellect be-comes this faculty when it intersects human subtle form.) Dr. Zimmer remarks that Buddhi is a great store house of our psychic potentialities, wherein our intellectual, volitional, emotional and intuitive faculties *are assembled side by side*".<sup>157</sup> It *renders the* unconscious manifest through every possible kind of creative and analytical psychic process; and these processes are activated from within that is why we become aware of the sun total of our own nature only a posteriori through its manifestations and reaction in the forms of feelings, recollections, ideas and the choices we make through the intellect or will.

Ahankara is characterized by a predominance of rajas guna since it is concerned primarily with doing. Buddhi on the other hand, is predominantly Sattvic, for it is the faculty of awareness, through which psyche can become aware of higher levels of being. According to the Sankhya, Buddhi is the faculty of what is known as adhyavas aya i.e. determination, resolution, mental effort, awareness, belief, knowledge and decision. All of these spiritual processes take place within man, yet are not at his disposal according to his conscious will. One is not free to feel, to know and to think precisely as one chooses. This means that Buddhi precedes ahankara both in rank

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<sup>157</sup> *Philosophies of India*, H. Zimmer, p. 321.

and in power. The modes of judgement and experience, according to which we react to impressions, control us from within; they appear as manifestations of the subtle substance of our own character, in fact they are the very constitution of that character. Hence, Dr. Zimmer concludes, it is that we may suppose ourselves to be free and following reason, actually what we are following is the lead of Buddhi, our own "unconscious" nature. However, the term unconscious should not be understood in the popular Fruedian or Jungian sense but as that essential sacred nature which is common to all the living beings i.e. Atma. Since Buddhi is a reflection of this Atma it is called "Mahan", the Great one.

Dr. Zimmer observes that Buddhi is known by various names such as mat (مت) "knowledge, judgement, resolution, intention, remembrance, recollection". Within these great store houses of our Psychic potentialities, our intellectual, volitional, emotional and intuitive faculties are assembled side by side. Hence "the great one" is also known as Prajna (پراجنا) "wisdom, discernment"; dhi, (دهی) intuition, visualization, imagination"; khyati (کھیاتی) "knowledge, the power of distinguishing objects by proper names"; smrti (سمرتی) "memory" and Prajna-santati (پراجنا سنتاتی) "the continuity of knowing". Buddhi renders the unconscious manifest through every possible kind of creative and analytical psychic process; and these processes are activated from within. That is why we become aware of the sum total of our own nature only a posteriori, through its manifestations and reactions in the forms of feelings, recollections intuitions, ideas and choices that we make through the intellect or will. On this account Guenon differs from Dr. Zimmer. He compares Buddhi to Intellect or Nous of the platonian concept and relates it to its cosmic or universal counter-part. We must always keep in mind the simili which compares Buddhi as a ray emanating from the sun (Atma or Brahma). All the human mental processes take place through the power and illumination of this divine ray. Hence though in a way all the higher mental processes (mat, prajna, dhi, khyati, smrti, etc) as described above could be called in a manner of speech, synonyms of Buddhi, in reality they are nothing more than its reflections on the psychic level.

Buddhi both contains and is the spontaneity of our nature; the other faculties (ahankara, manas, and the ten indriyas) are "like bees, which follow the advice of their Kings". However apparently it

seems that outer senses come in contact with their environment; their experiences are disgusted by *mamas*; the product of *manas* is brought through *ahankara* into relation to one's individuality and then *Buddhi* decides what is to be done. The primacy of *Buddhi* is heavily obscured. Only with the removal of *rajas* and *tamas* does the veil become transparent, for the powers that then pour into the human organism are the "supra-normal" ones of the king's son and the *Buddhi* is revealed in its innate strength. Human nature is composed of three *gunas* but by the means of yoga, *sattva* *guna* is made to prevail. Yogic training purges and clarifies the individual self from *tamas* and *rajas*. With the removal of the first, darkness is removed i.e. the inferior, sub-human tendencies of the soul are transcended, and the subtle matter of *Buddhi* becomes translucent. With the removal of the second i.e. the horizontal ordinary psychic movements, the agitation is removed and the rippling of the restless surface then is stilled so that the waters already cleared become a steady mirror. *Buddhi* then is revealed in its essence; as *Atma* or *purusha*. The matter stops being active the moment one becomes identified with *purusha*. Since in the first place, it is *prakriti* that exhibits the psychic as well as physical phenomena, but the eye that gives energy to the spectacle is the all-illuminating eye of *purusha* and the moment it returns to it-self, the world sense disappears.

In vendantic language, the term used for thinking processes is *citta* (from verb *cint/cit* "to think"); it denotes whatever is experienced or enacted through the mind. *Citta* comprises 1 . observing, 2. thinking, and 3. desiring or intending; that is to say, the functions of both the reasoning faculty and the heart. For, normally, the two behave as one, closely knit in the soul-substance of our nature. Thought, when it surges to the mind is both directed and coloured by our emotional biases and trends; and this to such a degree that a considerable discipline of concentration is required before one can learn to separate reasoning from the movements of the heart.

Because the subtle matter of the inner organs assumes all the forms presented to it by the senses, objects tend to give to the mind a shape or character and to leave on it an impression, or "memory" more or less permanent. Not only the shape of the object itself, but

also the associated feelings and thoughts, as well as the will and determination to act that it aroused, remain as vestiges or traces and, these may be reanimated at a later time by the impingement of something new. In this way memories are excited, images of recollection aroused and continuities of life-desire, fear and manners of conduct founded. The psychological process is understood in Sankhya and Yoga in strictly mechanical terms. The unceasing agitation of transformation brought to pass in the inner organ through perception, emotion, thought and will is not different in kind from the changes observable in the outer world. The transformation is material in both spheres, the sole difference being that in the outer world (which includes, of course, the body of the subject) the matter is gross whereas in the inner it is subtle.

According to Dr. Zimmer this mechanistic formula gives the key to Sankhya interpretation of the mystery of metempsychosis. Within the gross body, which suffers dissolution after death every living being possesses an inner subtle body, which is formed of the sense-faculties, vital breaths and inner organs. This is the body that goes on and on, from birth to birth, as the basis and vehicle of the reincarnated personality. Without going into the details of this idea as presented by Dr. Zimmer we will now refer to Rene Guenon who has discussed various conditions of subtle body of man in detail.

As previously explained, an individual being includes the subtle form (sukshma-sharira or linga-sharira) on the one hand and the gross or bodily form (sthula-sharira) on the other. The various states to which any single individual being is subject can be explained briefly as follows: Firstly there is the "waking state" corresponding to gross manifestation of Atma; secondly the "dream state", corresponding to subtle manifestation and finally the "dee sleep" which is the "causal" and formless state. "The first condition is vaishwanara, the seat of which is in the waking state (jagaritasthana), which has knowledge of the external (sensible) objects, which has seven members and nineteen mouths and the world of gross manifestation for its Province".<sup>158</sup> The word vaishawanara means "that which is common to all

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<sup>158</sup> *Man and his Becoming*, p. 90.

men". It also denotes whole of universal Manifestation, i.e. the macrocosm. Hence the description given above ascribes both to macrocosm as well as to microcosm. The seven members mentioned in the above quotation from the Upanishad are presented by Guenon in the following order: (1) The assemblage of higher luminous spheres is compared with the part of the head containing the brain, for the brain in fact corresponds organically with the "mental" function, which is but a reflection of the intelligible light or of the supra-individual principles; (2) the sun and the moon are represented as two eyes; (3) the igneous principle is the mouth; (4) the directions of space are the ears; (5) the atmosphere, that is to say the cosmic environment whence the "vital breath" (prana) proceeds, corresponds to the lungs; (6) the intermediate region (Antariksha), extending between the Earth (Bhu or Bhumi) and the Heavens (Swarga) corresponds to the stomach; (7) finally the Earth, corresponds to the feet, which are taken here as the emblem of the whole lower portion of the body. It will be noticed that no mention is made here of the heart; Guenon explains that heart's direct relation-ship with universal Intelligence places it outside the sphere of the individual functions and also because this "seat of Brahma" is really and truly the central point in the human being and all other parts or states are peripheral in regard to it.

The nineteen organs through which Atma as vaishwanara becomes conscious of the world of sensible manifestation are described as "mouths" because they are the five organs of the action, the five vital breaths (vayus), the "mental" faculty or the inward sense (manas) the intellect (Buddhi), thought (chitta), conceived as the faculty which gives form to ideas and which associates them one with another, and finally individual consciousness (ahamkara). These have already been discussed.



In the dream state, the outward faculties, while existing potentially, are reabsorbed into the inward sense (manas). "The second condition is Taijasa (the igneous element) whose seat is in the dream state (Swapna-sthana - سہنا - استھان) which has knowledge of the inward (mental) objects, which has seven members and nine-teen mouths and whose domain is the world of subtle manifestation".<sup>159</sup>

Manas or the inward sense is the common source of all mental faculties and it resides in the luminous arteries (nadis نَدی) nature in the manner of a diffused heat. As the igneous element (Taijasa) is compared symbolically to fire, it has like fire two aspects; heat and light, Nodis, correspond physiologically to ramifications of the nervous system. So the subtle state is linked to the corporeal state in two different and complementary ways, through the blood, as to the caloric, and through the nervous system as to the luminous quality.

"In the dream state the individual 'living soul' (Jivatma) 'is to itself its own light' and it produces, through the action of its own desire (kama) the objects consist exclusively of mental conceptions, that is to say of combinations of ideas clothed in subtle forms".

The state of deep sleep or the condition of Prajna (پراجنا) is beyond any form or phenomena. It is the state of union or reabsorption in the Brahma or Atma. "This is essentially a formless or supra-individual state; it cannot therefore have anything to do with a "psychic" or "psychological" state. The psychic properly speaking is in fact the subtle state. . . ." Since this state is beyond the range of our topic we will not discuss it further. However one point must be clarified. As mentioned earlier, Dr. Zimmer believes that the subtle-body or soul survives along with its sense-faculties after dissolution of the material body and goes from life to life in re-incarnated possibility. But Guenon has shown that the part that survives the body is not sense-faculties or thoughts but the Jivatma or living soul in individual form. "When a man is about to die, speech, followed by remainder of the ten external faculties is reabsorbed into the inward sense (manas). This later faculty there

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<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 96.

upon withdraws in the same way into the "vital breath" (prana accompanied in its turn by all the vital functions (the five vayus); the individual consciousness ceases to be. As a King's servants gather round him when he is about to go forth upon a journey, even so all the vital functions and faculties (external and internal) of the individual gather round the "living soul" at the final moment when this living soul is about to retire from its bodily form. Accompanied thus by all its faculties (since it contains them in itself as possibilities) it withdraws in an individual luminous essence composed of the five tanmatras or supra-sensible elementary essences into a subtle state.

Before concluding this review of the vedantic concept of psyche, it seems fit to briefly consider one important, rather essential, point of the Hindu thought, i.e. the meaning that it attributes to the term personality. The word personality is derived from "Persona" signifying a mask worn by the actor during a play. The mask bears the features or make-up of the role whereas the actor himself remains anonymous, aloof and unconcerned with the enacted sufferings and passions. In modern outlook the actor and the persona has become identical whereas Hindu philosophy insists upon the difference, stressing the distinction between the actor and the role. It emphasis the contrast between displayed existence of the individual and real being of the anonymous actor, concealed and veiled in the costumes of the play. One of the dominant endeavours of Indian thought throughout the ages has been to develop a dependable technique for keeping the line clear between the two. Their interrelationships and modes of collaboration are defined and a systematic effort is made to break from the confines of one into the unfathomed reaches of the other, primarily through the discipline of yoga, which cuts through the mask and reveals to consciousness the centre of one's being.

**To be Continued**

(Discussion of the idea of Psyche as presented in the Buddhist tradition, Taoism, Hermetic tradition and Islam, with its comparison to the modern psychology will be published in the next issue, October 1986.)