BOOK REVIEWS

S.P. Singh,

Sri Aurobindo and Whitehead on the Nature of God,
Aligarh. Vigyan Prakashan, 1972, 183 pp.

The progress of dialogue between various cultures and religions is still in its infancy. There is a need to deal with specific issues and to grapple with specific concepts from the different traditions if we are to understand and appreciate one another. It is for this reason that Dr. Singh's book on "Sri Aurobindo and Whitehead on the Nature of God" is so important. He engages himself in seeking to be fair in expressing each man's position; to be incisive and revealing in his comparisons and analysis of the two, and to set them in an historical framework to show their continuity and discontinuity with other thinkers. He has selected prominent thinkers from the East and West and sought to engage them in serious dialogue. The criticisms that are raised below are secondary to the larger task of involving ourselves in a world-wide dialogue. The need for a creative transformation of the various traditions so that we can see more unity among the various cultures of the world is only too obvious. My purpose here is to set forth the over-all thrust of the book and then to deal with specific issues that are raised, particularly in chapters 2, 5, and 9. I will then turn to a critical evaluation. Since I have a different interpretation of Aurobindo from Dr. Singh's and since I also disagree with some of his interpretations of Whitehead, these will be proposed not in the spirit that I am right and Dr. Singh is wrong but rather in terms of dialogue whereby we both may advance our learning.

Dr Singh proposes to carry out a comparative study between Whitehead, a western "scientist"—primarily a mathematician—and Aurobindo, an eastern "yogi". There is need today to develop an idea of God that will do justice to the modern discoveries in "psychology and cosmology", in philosophy and religion, in literature and the advances that have been made in historical studies. (21) Dr Singh is eager to show the similarities between the two men in the light of their vastly different backgrounds. Both of them are critical of "antropomorphic and mechanical ideas" of God. To conceive of God as an "Imperial ruler, the personification of moral energy, an ultimate metaphysical principle of cosmic energy is not to deal with the God

of religion".(22) God's function in the world cannot be limited to these. How then can we conceive of God as religiously available as well as cosmically significant?

Both men hold that God or the Supreme is complex. Dr Singh deals with this complexity in terms of "The Primordial nature of God and Saccidananda" and "The Consequent Nature of God and Supermind." (27ff, 41ff.) Taking the first contrast, Dr Singh finds that both the authors discerns three "natures" in the Supreme. (27, 34) For Whitehead, there are the Primordial, Consequent and Superjective natures, which correspond to the three stages of an actual entity—"concrescence, prehension, and self-transcendence". (27) In Aurobindo there are three phases in God: Absolute, Saccidananda and Supermind. (34) The primordial nature of God, for Whitehead, refers to the realm of Eternal objects which constitute all potentiality, (29) are unchanging (28), uncreated and co-eternal with God. (29) The Eternal objects are graded for relevant ingression into actuality. God provides a subjective aim at satisfaction for each occasion. The primordial nature is "free, complete, primordial, eternal, actually deficent and unconscious." (31) In the primordial nature of God there is the potentiality of consciousness. Dr Singh feels that this is a very inadequate account of consciousness and really violates Whitehead's ontological principle. (32) The primordial nature of God is the eternal Potentiality of the world consciousness, satisfaction. (33) Dr Singh believes that rather than the "Absolute" corresponding to the "Primordial" nature in God, according to Aurobindo, the Absolute is "indeterminate and inconceivable by finite mind" but it is the self-power of the original and omnipresent reality. (34) It must be approached by the supermental vision, not mental cognition, and its "Absolute potentiality is realized as Saccidananda". (34) Saccidananda has as its own "facets"—existence, consciousness and delight. (34)

Existence is both permanent or static and dynamic; it is one and also many. (35) Consciousness is pure consciousness, and this is consciousness in itself which is meant to be other than ordinary "mental consciousness". (36) This state of consciousness-in-itself does not have a subject-object relation. The dynamics of consciousness is "Consciousness-Force." (67) This is essentially the principle of creativity in Saccidananda. Consciousness has the two aspects of "illuminating" and "Effective", which is the "state of and power of self-consciousness" and the state and power of self-force, respectively. (68) Consciousness-Force is responsible for "manifestation". (36) Lastly, Delight is bliss, pure and self-delighted. "The being of stasis is the becoming of delight". (38) But God is more than Primordial

or Saccidananda; for Whitehead there is also the "consequent nature of God" and for Aurobindo, "Supermind." (p. 41ff)

The consequent nature of God is constitute by the becoming of the world; it is the "physical prehension by God of the actualities of the evolving universe." (41) The process of "consciousness, prehension, and self-transcendence" leads the world from indetermination to determinateness. (43) The consequent-primordial nature of God is the principle of order; God's immanence "gives reason to belief that pure chaos is intrinsically impossible". Yet God is not creator for if he were, then he would be responsible for "all evil as well as all good." (45) The "consequent" nature unlike the "primordial" nature is conscious. (45) Though Dr Singh does not develop this, the consequent nature is not only conscious but also "determined, incomplete, consequent, everlasting, actual." (45) The comparison of this with Aurobindo's thought is to be found in supermind.

Supermind is the knowledge of Saccidananda; it guides the course of Involution-Evolution. (47) This puts Supermind in the role of meditation between Saccidananda and the realms of Matter, Life, Mind. This means that it is the agent of Consciousness-Force; "Aurobindo finds this principle as having been carved out of the Consciousness-Force of Saccidananda and calls its Supermind." (47) Supermind has three poises: the principle of unity of the world as a whole; the unity of knowledge and will, the whole and the part; and the complete "diversification of the original unity." (49-50) There is a movement from unity to diversity and back to unity. (51) Supermind serves as "the principle of actualization". (53) Though it provides the potential of the world, Supermind "does not create the world out of nothing". (49)

A third comparison, closely related to the above two, that Dr Singh makes is between "Creativity and Consciousness-Force". In Whitehead "the principle of creativity is to be discerned in the primordial nature of God". (61) The primordial nature consists of the following, according to Dr Singh: (1) the "envisagement of Eternal objects; (2) the subjective aim at satisfaction; and (3) the ingression of Eternal objects. (61, 62) For Whitehead, creativity is regarded as the supreme philosophical principle and God and the world constitute the character of creativity. (63) Creativity is not prior to God but is co-eternal with Him. But what is creativity? It is the actualization of potentiality; (64) it is the principle by which the many become one. Hence, "creativity is not mere dynamism"; it introduces "something novel in each instance of its operation". (65) In short, "by means of novelty, creativity, on the one hand, it saves the world

from mere repetitions, and, on the other, removes all the limits to its creative advance." (65, 66) God and the world cannot be thought of without creativity.

Aurobindo derives creation from the "common entity Saccidananda". (66, 67) Saccidananda is the source of potentiality as well as the dynamics of creativity. (67) Consciousness-Force is the source of creativity; existence is the source of potentiality and delight is the aim of creativity, or Consciousness-Force. In Consciousness-Force, 'force' represents the creativity of consciousness. (67) The original principle of consciousness as noted before, has two aspects: ' "illuminating" and "effective".' (68) In the process of the "actualization of potentiality" there is the two-fold movement of "self-awareness" and "self-force". In its first movement, Consciousness-Force crystalizes into Supermind and thus starts its creative task of Involution-Evolution. (68) Consciousness-Force is a manifestation of one of the possibilities of the creative principle; it is the mother of Supermind. (71) In short, God creates not in any anthropomorphic sense but has "released it out of himself, albeit partly in the case of Whitehead and wholly in the case of Aurobindo". (71) Creativity makes the indeterminate determinate. For Whitehead, however, creativity is neither conscious nor force but "mere impetus". (74) Nor does Whitehead establish the primacy of process on the metaphysical level. (77) Before examining these contentions we must look at the comparison of "Process and God".

In Whitehead a subject is constituted by a process of feeling and this process has three steps: actual objects, concrescence and transition or concrescence, prehension and transition. (79) Whereas creativity is the counterpart of events; eternal objects is the counterpart of objects. (81) The consequent nature of God becomes through the process of the world; God is a creature of creativity and hence, is not immune to process. "Thus, the primordial nature of God is process and, therefore, real and actual." (83) Within the consequent nature of God, which is constituted by events, the relation of these events leads to the emergence of space. (104) Time also emerges from events. Hence, space-time is the result of events and not some eternal receptacle such as earlier thinkers had surmised.

For Aurobindo time is measured by events and space is measured by matter. (108) Both of these are aspects of Consciousness-Force. (109) God is beyond both space-time and there are different time-space continuums. Whereas in Whitehead the subjective aim derived from God develops toward intensification, in Aurobindo Supermind acts as the principle of intensification. (108, 110) It is in this way

that God offers himself to the world and receives from the world novel actualizations for Whitehead, and "whatever of himself he offered to get involved" for Aurobindo. (113) In Aurobindo's thought the world is a sheer movement of a mass of energy and God as pure existence stands behind all movement; as pure consciousness behind all mental modifications and as pure delight behind all existence. (86) God is the source of cosmic process. Flux and stability, being and becoming, constitute the Absolute; when reserved in itself then it is static or permanent; when manifest then it is dynamic like the dancer who has dance in him while not dancing. (87) Aurobindo regards process as dependent on being; becoming functions as the manifestation of Being; being is pregnant with becoming. (89) These are affirmations that a Whiteheadian does not make. In short, process is two-fold: involution-evolution. (90) Both conceive God as process.

In his chapter on "Harmony and God" Dr Singh elaborates the points of intensification and enjoyment. In Whitehead he finds a discord between the subject and the object and feels that this pulls the world asunder into mutually exclusive groups. (116) In Aurobindo God is abstractly harmonious in his being-Existence, Consciousness and Delight (132) and the dichotomy of subject-object is only "functional". (126) Brahman in his unity is aware of multiplicity. (128) The analogy used indicates this unity or identity: it is the process of food digestion in an organism. The world process is a gradual assimilation of the world into God's experience and it is, in the assimilation, impossible to say which is God and which is the world since "both have become one". (137) The process for Aurobindo moves from unity through diversity and back to unity. It is here that Dr Singh feels that Whitehead as scientist stresses the external, objective side of reality and Aurobindo as Yogi stresses the internal, subjective side. (145)

It is for this reason that Singh finds Whitehead's concept of God inadequate and Aurobindo's more satisfying. The epistomological critique is crucial: "What is the epistomological justification for such a vital role to an entity (God) that we know nothing about directly?" (148) Due to Whitehead's scientific method, the "working hypothesis", science is limited due to the limitation of its laws and its knowledge. (150) But Dr Singh is also aware of Whitehead's definition of Speculative Philosophy as the "endeavour to frame a coherent, logical, necessary system of ideas in terms of which every element of our experience can be interpreted." (150) Dr Singh seems to interpret 'framing' as the 'working hypothesis' of the scientist and this is not at all the case in Whitehead. He is critical

of the limitations of the scientific method; indeed, theory dictates method and it is only a working hypothesis open to criticism. Hence, to claim that Whitehead's approach to God is more scientific than religious, that it is dominated by scientific laws, cannot be substantiated in Whitehead. (155) And to further claim that Whitehead relies on mere abstractions of certain men of deep insight and religious experience whereas Aurobindo goes into himself, integral yoga, and there grounds his assertions in immediate experience is also an overstatement; to know God we must realize Him. (154, 167) I am not contending that Whitehead was a Yogi nor that he had all the experiences of a Yogi, but Whitehead was an intuitive as well as a speculative thinker and his personal insights into religion are quite illuminating.

Dr Singh concludes his study with the fundamental difference between the two men: (1) For Whitehead, God is taken as a mere function; for Aurobindo God is the supreme functionary; as the supreme functionary God is "inclusive of the dynamics of the world" hence, Being includes Becoming. (2) Whitehead finds a complete disjunction between the Primordial and Consequent natures whereas Aurobindo holds that the world is the dynamics of Saccidananda. (3) Whitehead regards creativity as independent of God; Aurobindo takes Consciousness-Force as the dynamics of Saccidananda. (4) Whitehead considers the Primordial nature of God and creativity as unconscious whereas Saccidananda and Consciousness-Force is conscious. (5) Whitehead clings to satisfaction whereas Aurobindo clings to the Delight and self-realization. Whitehead fails to include yoga experience and has no clear idea of involution. (168-172)

Critical Evaluation

The following comments are intended to be taken as a corrective as well as to suggest some of the deeper substantive issues of the book. I shall follow Dr Singh's lead in dealing with the differences.

The first difference noted was that of the function of God for each thinker: in Whitehead God is a mere function and in Aurobindo God is the supreme functionary. There have been those who were desirous of interpreting Whitehead's metaphysics "without God" but this is the exception rather than the rule. Without God the system collapses. God is supreme in Whitehead in terms of order and value. Without God there would be sheer chaos, nothing. God functions as the cosmic orderer; in terms of the "ini-

tial aim" of each entity there is the guarantee that it will not end in absolute disorder. Hence, God is necessary, therefore the supreme function of reality. But it is the Becoming of God that is "inclusive", not the Being of God such as Dr Singh suggests. The reasoning is as follows: whereas becoming can include aspects that do not become, being, which is permanent and fixed, cannot include becoming. To compound and double compound the Absolute, as I think both Aurobindo and Dr Singh do, does not solve the problem of the relation of being to becoming nor does it clarify how we might conceive flux and permanence together. Being is the abstract aspect of becoming, which is the over-all nature of reality. Becoming, creativity is the fundamental reality. We know being; we can only intuit becoming. This is related to the third difference that Dr Singh discusses.

The criticism here is that creativity is independent of God. This certainly is the case in Whitehead's early writings in philosophy, "Science and the Modern World", "Religion in the Making", but in "Process and Reality" such independence is overcome. In the first two books mentioned, Whitehead deals with the Eternal Objects of pure possibilities, actual occasions of experience and the on-goingness of the universe or creativity. I grant that in both of the first two books there is justification for Dr Singh's criticism but not in the last. Whitehead indicates that there are four creative phases by which the universe creates its actuality: there is the conceptual origination; the physical origination; there is the phase of "perfected actuality in which the many are one everlastingly; finally, the phase of satisfaction. (R. 532) In the first phases there is little novelty but in the last three there is. Hence, creativity is the over-all character of God as the Consequent nature includes and exceeds the primordial nature. Creativity is essential to the consequent nature of God, the initial and subjective aims. Hence, it is misleading to say that creativity is independent of God.

The second difference is related to the nature of God and Dr Singh indicates that Whitehead has a "complete disjunction" between the primordial and consequent natures of God. Here Dr Singh has firmer ground on which to build his case for Whitehead does not successfully bring the two together. Others, particularly Hartshorne, have successfully argued that if we are going to maintain the coherence that Whitehead himself upheld then we must consider God as a "society of actual occasions of experience" rather than an actual entity having two different natures. To talk about

two natures is to introduce incoherence into the doctrine of God. To use Hartshorne's language here, God is "Absolute yet related to all" and His creative becoming includes his fixed being. Nor is it correct to characterize the Primordial nature of God as in process. The Primordial nature represents the eternal, permanent aspects of reality.

There are some other points that I will just mention. I find the comparison between the Absolute and the Primordial nature more suggestive than Saccidananda and the Primordial nature. Both are indeterminate in terms of actualization, and both constitute the ultimate nature of the supreme. Yet in Whitehead-Hartshorne the absolute is the abstract, that is, the abstract aspect of the concrete. I do not find in Aurobindo or Dr. Singh's analysis this understanding. Yet for both Whitehead and Hartshrone the abstract is indeterminate as to its actualization and this seems to agree with Aurobindo's description of the 'indeterminate' nature of the Absolute. And I find the comparsion of Saccidananda more in line with the consequent nature of God. Both constitute the principle of creativity and both are involved in process. I understand Supermind to be a manifestation of Consciousness-Force in its involution-evolution through Matter, Life, Mind, Overmind into Supermind. Yet 'manifestation' is the key-notion: I find Aurobindo arguing for manifestation rather than creativity in the sense of novelty, newness, additions to reality. When Dr Singh deals with Whitehead's notion that the 'many become one' he fails to note the last part of that claim which is 'and is *increased* by one'. (P.R. p. 26) Manifestation is not the same as creativity.

I also think it is misleading to call Whitehead a "scientist". Certainly he was a mathematician, and a very great one, but when one reads Whitehead's metaphysics one is surprised by the absence of mathematics. When dealing with the notion of God Whitehead does so as a metaphysician not a scientist or mathematician. Whitehead was heavily influenced by science, particularly physics, but he sought to put scientific notions as well as mathematical notions into a metaphysical framework.

Although I cannot agree with the author that his book is a 'minute and detailed study of Aurobindo's and Whitehead's views on God' (10), I do feel that Dr Singh has moved ahead in the spirit of Radhakrishnan in promoting dialogue between two very prominent thinkers. For this we can be grateful for his efforts.

Dr. George Nordgulen

Raimundo Panikkar,

The Vedic Experience : Mantramañjarī
An Anthology of the Vedas for the Modern Man and Contemporary Celebration,
London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1977, xxxviii + 937, pp., £ 20.

When the publishers Darton, Longman and Todd wrote to me asking if I could review the latest book of Prof. Raimundo Panikkar, *The Vedic Experience: Mantramañjari,* for *Journal of Dharma*, I readily agreed to oblige. But when actually the book reached me a few months ago its size and structure frightened me and I wondered whether my review would do any justice to this magnificent volume. As I started reading its Preface, Introductions, general as well as special to each section, and the "Texts, Contexts and Texture", I was taken up by the wonderful insights of the Vedic seers rendered into contemporary English and set in a very meaningful pattern of human life. Towards the end of the reading, including the highly informative Glossary, I was convinced that the *Mantramañjari* is unique in kind and content and it can rightly claim an "advaitic" character for itself, which it discovers for the Vedic seers in their world-vision enshrined in their hymns containing sublime insights about this cosmos, human life situated therein, and the One Real, enveloping everything. But I was led to almost the same existential struggle as the author himself was in when he was gathering the flowers of the *Mantramañjari:* to write or not to write, fearing that I may not give a correct understanding of Prof. Panikkar's insightful work. To share something of the same tension of choice between "writing or abandoning" which the author had, here is that beautiful articulation of Prof. Panikkar's own existential struggle, which he finally overcame by bringing out this attractive bouquet of the Vedic insights as relevant for modern man:

> This study emerges out of an existential struggle between concentrating on the writing of it at the risk of letting people be trapped in the fire, and helping persons out of the house at the price of abandoning the manuscript altogether. The act of faith behind this study is to have denied the inevitability of a choice, not by an act of the will alone or of

> the mind alone, but by allowing circumstances to guide my intellect, my spirit, and indeed my whole life. Is not the entire Vedic experience based on the life-giving sacrifice? (Preface p. xxxvi).

The answer is "yes", and so this review after a decision in favour of the affirmative alternative of the dilemma, is a modest participation in the same "life-giving sacrifice" which from time immemorial forefathers have been offering to God and gods as well as to the generations of humans to come.

The Preface of the Vedic Experience gives at the end the amazing information that Prof. Panikkar was engaged in the struggle of preparing the *Mantramañjari* for twelve long years (1964-1976)—the period in which the giant planet Jupiter was smoothly making its usual "ritual" of one revolution around the sacrificial pyre of the Sun-god. Prof. Panikkar also seems to have offered a few of his newly-gathered flowers to that sacrificial fire of the Sun-god, for he says that his thanks are due even "to the Vedic Gods and all other spirits who have blessed this venture" (p. xxxvii). The time has certainly been well spent when we realize that the *Mantramañjari* is a bouquet of the very ancient flowers Wisdom belonging to pre-historic and historic times when the Aryan culture flourished in the Indian subcontinent. It contains representative flowers from the Vedic gardens growing on the banks of Indus and Ganges, Indraprastha and Aryāvarta, Mānasasaras and Kailas.

Concerning the Texts, Contexts and Texture of this *Mañjari,* it must be admitted that Prof. Panikkar has collected the "most crucial texts of the Vedic Tradition", incorporating also some significant text from the *Bhagavadgita* and *Kalpasūtras,* though they do not belong to the *Śruti:* these have been integrated into the texture of *Mantramañjari,* "for reasons arising from both external and internal considerations" (p. 15). It is understood that the Vedic experience does not confine itself to the Vedas alone, but flows spontaneously to the *Vedangas,* which interpret the *Śruti* for socio-moral and religious life.

The Structural pattern of Mantramañjari is a very simple one. Perhaps, simplicity is the best criterion for judging contemporary art. The stalk of the bouquet itself evokes our imagination, and reminds us of the decorative art of Indian tradition. At the very

entrance of this sanctuary of Wisdom there is drawn the beautiful *rangoli* of *Pūrnakumbha* which symbolically anticipates the inner structure. As we move past this *rangoli* we are led to the door of the sanctuary named *"Vedadipa"*, which describes in bold relief the "cosmotheandric insight" of the Vedic *ṛsis*. It depicts the basic pattern of the "World of the Vedas."

The pattern is painted in "seven colours", as it were, of the rainbow (p. 6) and is set in seven spectrographic circles around the central vision of the Vedic experience, namely, the "theanthropocosmic epiphany of the One Real", as experienced by the "cosmotheandric insight" of the Vedic sages. In the words of the author, "this anthology seeks to encompass the whole range of the Vedic experience and to cover the main body of the Vedic Revelation" (p. 6). The criterion of selection "springs from a simple human experience": This pattern is "offered by nature, by Man, by life on earth, and by history. It is the pattern that seems to be built into the very core of being itself. It is as much a geological pattern as a historical and cultural one" (pp. 6-7).

Since an inaccurate condensation would mutilate the beautiful pattern, here is its spectrograph in the colourful words of Prof. Panikkar himself:

I. *Dawn and Birth:* Preparation for emergence into existence, the tilling of the ground, or pre-existence and bursting into being, into life.

II. *Germination and Growth:* The beginning, the striving, the affirmation of identity, the settling down in the realm of existence.

III. *Blossoming and Fullness:* The acme, the reaching of plenitude, of maturity, the zenith.

IV. *Fall and Decay:* The beginning of the downward path, the discovery that nothing resists the acids of time and that nobody is immune from the corrosion of existence.

V. *Death and Dissolution:* The destiny of all existing things, and the price that must be paid for having been alive and for having been a bearer of existence in time and space.

VI. *New life and Freedom:* The marvellous mystery of being, the re-emergence of life out of the ordeal of death, the disclosure that life is immortal, that being is unfathomable, and that bliss and reality are capable of self renewal.

VII. *Twilight:* The last part of this anthology, like the ribbon that ties the bouquet, has an altogether different character from the rest. It binds together all that has been explained and integrates all that has been described. It brings back the living unity that the glare of the single aspects may have endangered (p. 7).

The Vision of life depicted in the *Vedadipa* is elaborately displayed in the nave of this sanctuary of Wisdom. But unless we "place first the right leg at the door-step" as the tradition goes in Indian culture as a sign of suspiciousness, we may not understand and appreciate the drama of human life unveiled on the stage of the "holy of holies" of this sanctuary. So in order to help us place the right leg itself first into the *mandapa,* after opening the door of the *"Vedadipa",* we are given a detailed description of the various acts of the drama of "being and life" which constitutes the "Content" of *The Vedic Experience.* Immediately our stagemaster, who reproduced the ancient drama of life of the Vedic people, gives an "Introduction" to the basic "cosmotheandric insight" of the real composers or the original actors of this drama who once actually lived it meaningfully.

Rangapūja (invocatory offering) is the next programme. Presenting the vignette of the first mantra of Ṛgveda addressed to Agni, the "Divine Fire", we are invited to invoke the name of "something greater than ourselves" and thus to "break our own boundaries", which is the "beginning of wisdom, the source of hope, and the condition of joy". Here is provided an opening to the understanding of the whole "Vedic Revelation" (p. 36). Then begins the solemn recitation of the *Gāyatri mantra,* which is the "most renowned mantra of the Vedas". "It is addressed to the divine life-giver as supreme God, symbolized in Savitṛ, the Sun" (p. 38).

Now the screen of the stage is wide open to view the panorama of the "Dawn and Birth" of the being from its "Prelude" of "non-being itself" pp. 47 ff). The "Primeval Word" *(ādi śabda)* of being emerges from its "Absolute Prelude" of being "no-thing" into elements of "Water", "Earth", "Wind", 'Fire", and "Space", to form the Cosmic environment. In it the "Being" as "the Lord" moulds himself, as it were, a cyst of "Life" and evolves as the "Dawn" of "Human Birth". The newborn babe of the human stalk of Being is then invited to make an act of "Faith" in its existential predicament of being laid there in the bosom of

"Being" as such, to be blessed with the "Divine gifts" as "Food" for "Life and Growth".

Then the child is "initiated" into the "science of awakening consciousness" in order that he may become a full man and live a meaningful "Human life" growing into the fulness of the "One universal reality" by means of "knowing the earth" and doing his "human work in view of living "the happy life" destined for him on this beautiful shore of the stream of life. But the "Radiance and the Cosmic Refulgence" of the other shore beckons him thither. To reach the "Divine Splendour beyond" man offers sacrifice in life which "break the boundaries of human selfishness". This, in brief, what "blosoming and fullness" of being in man is. So far the pattern has been unfolded in bright colours. Perhaps to make the bright strokes brighter, there are also shades drawn with dim colours. They are the shades of the "Fall and Decay" of man on his "pilgrimage" to that "spring of the eternal" "Becoming".

"Sorrow and Suffering" are real and they are "physical ailments", and they are often "obstruction on the way" to that "holy shrine of eternity." "Evil and Fear" are also real stumbling blocks against which he has to be protected or "liberated". Yet they are "two sides of one and the same reality" (p. 483). There cannot be a day without an evening or a night without a dawn; because it is a globe revolved by the "rhythm of being" within and without that man is living in and moving with. There is the one supreme Being, the "One Creator", who is also a "Merciful Lord", who finally understands the origin of both good and evil. Or "if he does not know, then nobody else knows" (Rg X, 129, 7).

"Man can survive only if he unloads the weight of his sins and if he sees at least some bright spots on the horizon of his future" (p. 518). The Vedic people discovered in the ordinary water a subtle power of "purification" both physical and spiritual. Their holy dips at the sacred conjunctions of times and climes in the waters of the holy ghats had been found acceptable to the "Merciful Lord" as acts of repentance and penance. So they used to sip from the same water of purification as a symbol of "Divine Grace" coming from the graceful clouds or the snowclad Kailas, the abode of God, as if "without water there is no real forgiveness" (pp. 518-19).

But as man in the course of his "pilgrimage of existence" crosses the stream of water using the bridge of his critical reflection, he understands that the real purification is achieved not by more water but by the real "Wisdom" which "performs a catharsis of the soul". He who achieves this "Consciousness" is freed from every stain and sin.

Nevertheless, the faltering steps of our human journey takes man finally to the frontier of "separation" : "Death and Dissolution." Death draws the line of demarcation between this shore and the shore of life beyond. "The Mystery of the Beyond" presents itself so formidable and elusive that "anything we say or think about death is bound to be unsatisfying. Death is precisely such because it is a state where all words recoil." (p. 542) So we better speak and meditate over the possible deathless transcendence, "because if we belong to the living we can more congruently deal with life than with what is not life" (p. 542). Yes, it is true, because the primary exigency of being is to continue in being rather than to be lost or destroyed.

The Vedic man appears to be very keen to perpetuate his life even after his apparent separation from this life and his dream of a recurring cycle of re-birth is named *samsāra;* but *samsāra* is also the *nirvāna* of the previous life; both in *samsāra* and *nirvāna* Brahman is the ultimate, because apart from him there is "nothing" : death or life. So whether we live or die we have our being in Brahman. This logic gives the "homology" of *samsāra-nirvāna* and *nirvāna-samsāra.* This means that "it is by integrating the fact of death into life, by re-absorbing, as it were, death into life, by not losing ground, or rather by finding a ground that is common to both death and life, that we can find the proper Vedic perspective" (p. 543). Hence "a feature of the Vedic experience", says Prof. Panikkar, "is that it treats the problem of death as a non-eschatological question. Death does not belong to the *eschata,* to the last things, but is an accident in the life of the individual and an incident in the life of the society. The beyond is the unfathomable ocean which makes the beaches on this side worth walking on and paying on" (pp. 543-44). The basic supposition seems to be the insight provided by the Iśa Upanishad that "everything is permeated and enveloped by One Lord".

Since death "helps us realize the value of life", man has to be blessed even at death, because death is not a curse: it only

puts an end to one phase of life that is of this side of the eternal stream of life. Man survives death by another life, perhaps a better one on the merits of his previous life. So he requires a "Liturgy for the Dead" to complete his sacrifice of daily life in this cosmic context. The significance of the entire "Last Rites" with its blessing ceremonies and valedictory mantras as well as purificatory rituals is the wish of the living to "let the dying depart in peace". This gives also the dying man a certain satisfaction that "life has been a good thing and that it is still the highest blessing" (p. 575). Now the "cosmotheandric elements" present themselves conjointly even at the last moment of man. "In the last rites *(antyeṣṭi)* as in the first rites *(jātakarman),* the relatives, the cosmos and the Gods attend him: the Waters, Fire, Savitṛ, Earth and Sarasvatī are present once more" (p. 601).

The relationship between Man and the World is so integral that the "Vedic experience tends toward a non-dualistic understanding of this relationship. Man is not an undifferentiated part of the world nor, however, is he a foreigner. He is not even a temporary resident or guest on this planet, for the world is his home just as his body is, and body and world are linked together in a common destiny... Man and Cosmos are both involved in one and the same venture and both undergo the same process, though each in its own way. The cosmos, like Man, dies and is also immortal" (p. 614). This correlation throws some light on the other worlds of "Hell" and "Heaven" as temporary transformations of the cosmic order and in the rhythm of life until the "final dissolution takes place", though even that is not a full stop of Being. "All things can dissolve and come again into being because there is a point, the One, which is outside this dynamism. It is indeed this One that brings about the circular movement of the universe" (p. 618).

The ultimate meaning of dissolution or of reemergence of this world is related to man's place in it. The insight of the Vedic experience about the predicament of man's life as a choice between "Hell" and "Heaven" is that "human life is a texture of darkness and light; man shuns gloom and darkness and craves light" (p. 625). This craving for light never halts at the crossroad of indecision. The Upanishadic sages went straight ahead holding high their torch or consciousness lit brighter towards an "Ascending Way" in view of clearing that hill-road to "Transcendental Consciousness" which is the "Fullness up there" as the reality of the "Fullness down here" (Br. Up. V, 1).

The pilgrim who is not yet distracted by the dream valley heading towards this only city of *ātman* with determination. In the lime-light of consciousness which is in man as his "fullness coming from the Fullness of *ātman*", man discovers by means of intuitive meditation the underlying oneness of all things. The discovery is that "oneness and consciousness are the two landmarks on the ascending way" (p. 652).

The Ascending Way is equally an "Internal Way" from the epicentre of human existence. So just as by a process of enlightenment man can ascend to the "zenith" of Consciousness which is *ātman* (Self) so also in the light of the same luminosity of *ātman* he can reach internally the "ground" of his reality, which is his real *aham* (self), by means of "interiorization". Then takes place in man the "encounter of the real *ātman* and real *aham*". This is a participation in the absoluteness of the One Universal Reality. It is also the "Ultimate Fulfilment of the Person" and the "Absolute Simplicity" of Reality. Hence this is the final "Liberation of Man" according to the Upanishadic seers, who went boldly to the inner sanctuary and entered the "cave of the heart" of human existence.

The "Cosmotheandric Conception" of reality does not make of man the centre of the universe, according to Prof. Panikkar; rather "it makes of him an image, a reflection, of the entire reality" (p. 659). But the process of realization of this reality by man is presented as a drama acted, as it were, viewed from the opposite direction. Perhaps that is the very nature of interiorization. In the words of Prof. Panikkar, "the process of *realization,* of discovering the whole of reality and finding in it the role of Man, has four acts, the four acts of the theandropocosmic drama. The four classical *mahāvākhyas* represent these four acts. Finally, the coming down of the curtain, the resumption of all into the One, though not as it was "before" the Prelude, is represented by our sixth and final Utterance. The drama is not only a display of the One, but also its "play" in order that the many may become and realize oneness. All this is expressed in the *ekam evādvitiyam*" (p. 659).

Man experiences this unity and harmony of the Universal Reality to a certain extent, here and now, at the "twilights" of sunrise and sunset in all the six seasons of the cosmic rhythm, namely, in "Spring, Summer, Rainy season, Autumn, Winter and Frosty season". From the Vedic times until now, the "twilights

of Dawn and Dusk" have been called *saṁdhyā,* two privileged and very auspicious conjoints of times of "re-collection", "re-union" and 'prayer." *Saṁdhya,* then, is a "the anthropocosmic twilight; it suffuses the three worlds. It expresses the peculiar dual polarity residing in the very heart of the great *ātman.* Besides, "*saṁdhyā* represents that third sphere which encompasses our whole life and destiny as well as the life of the universe. This is the meaning of prayer: it is that human or rather total cosmotheandric act by which Man transcends both time and space and discovers that within his own human heart at least a part of the destiny of the whole universe is being played out and re-enacted. No wonder that calmness, attention, and silence are needed" (p. 783).

This is in brief the spectrograph of Prof. Panikkar's pattern of human experience according to which he set in order the various flowers of the Vedic gardens into one bouquet of the Vedic experience of the Revelation of One Universal Reality.

The *Mantramañjari* contains a last finishing touch, a *tilakam* (spot of attraction) on the forehead itself. It is the valedictory hymn of Ṛgveda (X, 191, 4) placed at the zenith of the bouquet as the last jewel-mantra which radiates the cosmic rays of peace and harmony to all:

> United your resolve, united your hearts,
> may your spirits be at one,
> that you may long together dwell
> in unity and concord.

To Conclude this Review we may say that in the process of making this marvellous anthology of *The Vedic Experience,* Prof. Panikkar's principle has been, as the Publishers also rightly point out on the flap, "to select and place together texts so as to show how they manifest the universal rhythms of nature, history, and man". It must be admitted that this criterion has been consistently followed in setting the various and multicoloured flowers of the mantras of the Vedic lores. The effect is an original "version" or representation of the Vedic Revelation in a coherent and easily intelligible "pattern of human experience" suitable to the taste of Contemporary Man. Here lies, then, the crux of the matter", in Prof. Panikkar's own conception:

> This anthology claims to represent the canon, as one might

> say, of the whole *śruti* or Indian Revelation; it purports to contain the central message of the Vedas, to embody their essence, their *rasa*" (p. 6).

When we finish reading all the 975 pages of this voluminous *Mantramañjari,* capturing the underlying insights of the pattern of human experience of the One Universal Reality which the author has successfully imparted from the ancient seers with further guidance to readers in his inspiring introductions, we will have to recognize and accept, whole heartedly, the above said claim of Prof. Panikkar.

Hence this is a very beautiful "Bouquet of the Flowers" of the Vedic Gardens. I believe that this bouquet will not be so quickly thrown into the oblivion of the stacks but will be held in the hands of those aspirants of real wisdom who seek sincerely for a new meaning in their life and actions. *Mantramañjari* is, then, a symbol of hard work, sincere pursuit after truth and wisdom, open attitudes, a broad vision, scientific maturity and creative synthesis. So it may further encourage researches into the wisdom of human achievements with a view to filling up some of our empty chambers of human existence, being itself a model of "life-giving sacrifice".

Thomas M. Manickam

Lucius Nereparampil,

Destroy This Temple,
Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 1978, xii + 124pp. Rs. 12. ($ 3)

The work under review is an excerpt of a dissertation submitted by the author to the Pontifical Gregorian University of Rome for the degree of Doctorate in Theology. The whole study aims at bringing out the real meaning and significance of the *Temple-Logion* in Jn. 2:19: "Destroy this Temple and in three days I will raise it up". According to the author, the Temple-Logion is a "pointer to the very meaning and importance of Jesus' life and activity in confrontation with the Jewish religion" (p. 1) and "a summary statement of the meaning and importance of the

whole life and teaching of Jesus for the Jew, on the one hand, and for the Christians, on the other" (p. 91).

Being an excerpt containing only the last (fifth) chapter of the original dissertation, obviously the whole weight of the argument could not be brought out in this work. But it is to the credit of the author that he has succeeded in highlighting the important points by summarizing the important ideas of the four chapters of the dissertation (pp. 1-23). The body of the study is divided into four sections: the first one deals with the introduction to the *Temple-Logion* (pp. 25-30); this is followed by the analysis of the *Logion* (pp. 31-58); then the misunderstanding of the *Logion* by the Jews (pp. 59-64); and finally, the reflection on the *Logion* and the realization of its meaning by the disciples (pp. 65-84). In the conclusions (pp. 84-98) the author summarizes the results of his analysis. A comprehensive bibliography (pp. 99-144), an index of scriptural texts (pp. 115-121), and the indexes of authors and subjects (pp. 122-124) conclude the study.

The author has done a good job analysing this 'enigmatic' text and bringing to light the profound theology lying behind it. The first part of the *Temple-Logion,* : "Destroy this Temple" is explained as a prophetic ironic imperative; not primarily a material destruction, but a destruction under its value aspect, "the agents of which are solely the Jews" (p. 84). The author concludes: "The ironic imperative of this first part of the *Temple-Logion* implies that the Jews have already been destroying the Temple in the moral sense, and are still continuing to do so" (p. 84). The *kai* ('and') introducing the second part of the *Logion* is explained as 'but' (p. 89) showing a contrast. The author is also aware of the apologetic context of this passage, a context that has to be reckoned with as part of the *Sitz im Leben* of the Fourth Gospel as such.

While appreciating the many positive values of this study and its contribution to the *mare magnum* of Johannine literature, it may be observed that if greater care had been taken quite a few drawbacks in the presentation of the subject could have been avoided. At times the discussion is far too verbose and at times the meaning is not very clear. On p. 73 the author refers to the Mandean literature that "has been made known to the West (sic!)." It is equally true of the East, and the author is an Indian! Ps 118 is referred to as Ps. 117. The abbreviation of the Letters of Peter

is 1 Pt and 2 Pt, and not 1 Pe and 2 Pe (p. 88). Some of the abbreviations on p. xi are quite unnecessary.

These latter observations have been made not to devalue the many positive contributions of this very useful work. In fact, this work has touched on a very important point in exegetical studies. Far more than being one among the many sayings of Jesus, the *Temple-Logion* is a characteristic one of John's Gospel, and a challenge to all human attempts to make religion a matter of ritualism and formalism. Over against this human tendency, the risen Christ promises to raise religion to its higher significance and fuller meaning.

Joseph Pathrapankal c.m.i.

E. Bolaji Idowu,

African Traditional Religion—A Definition.
New York: Orbis Books, 1975, xii + 228pp.

Of late there has been vastly increased interest and enthusiasm for African Studies. Studies on Africa and African Traditional religion find a place in the curriculum of many universities even in Europe and America. African traditional religion is a recognized course in African Universities, training colleges and seminaries, and even in the upper classes of secondary schools. So there was need of a guide book and the publication of this book is therefore timely.

The author E. Bolaji Idowu is an African citizen, Professor of Religious Studies in the University of Ifadan, Nigeria. So far those who engaged in studies on Africa have been westerners; they had their own prejudices and preconceived ideas about Africa and her religion.

This book is divided into six chapters of which the first three chapters can be considered to be the introductory section dealing with the nature of religion. It is the two long chapters describing the nature and structure of African traditional religion which constitute its nucleus. A concluding section summarises the significance and relevance of the study.

In the first chapter, "The Study of Religion", the author defines what the study of religion means and how it should be ap-

proached. There is an inherent urge in man which makes religion a matter of ultimate concern to him. This urge makes him embrace it or to fight a defensive battle against it. He then explains in detail the possible dangers and obstacles in the way of the study of religion. These are, mainly ignorance, prejudice and the scientific attitude interpreted narrowly.

We should study living and organic religion as practised by living men. In every living religion there are both changing and unchanging elements. After dealing with changes in religion and how dogmas were formed, and the relation between dogmas and living religions, the author proceeds to offer some highway codes in the study of religion, such as caution, openness, sympathy and reverence. Imaginative sympathy, appreciative understanding and experiential participation are needed to study any religion properly.

In the second chapter "Religion", he explains the meaning of religion and its origin. He brings together the different theories explaining the etymological meaning. Then he brifly explains some of the theories which explain the origin of religion such as the theory which says that religion is an invention for the sake of convenience of society, the theory of enhemerism which says that heroes and benefactors were deified after death, the theory of psychological origin represented by the Freudian School and the theory of sociological origin of Durkheim.

The author holds that it is meaningless to seek the origin of that which happened long ago in the very dim or dark past of the beginnings of man, especially when it is not meant for any objective interest but as a weapon to fight religion. But the matter could be pursued reverently and humbly. And thus he goes on to deal with revelation as the origin of religion. In the awakening of consciousness and in living experience man encountered that which is other than himself or his fellowmen—that which is wholly other. Here lies the origin of religion.

In the next chapter, "Study of African Traditional Religion," the author lists the common difficulties besetting the study such as the geographical situation of Africa, the impact of foreign cultures, the feeling of inferiority of Africans, non-availability of those who knew the religious and cultural tradition at first hand, the influence of western education, the bewildering situation created by myriads of languages and innumerable dialects. The fact that there is no recorded history of Africa by Africans makes the situation worse.

So the main source of information for studies of African traditional religion is oral tradition. The mythology, folk tales, liturgy, songs and proverbs are also some of the sources. To be able to see the African religion from inside one should make an approach through all these.

The author finds three stages in the study of African traditional religion: the period of ignorance and false certainty, the period of doubts and resisted illumination and the period of intellectual dilemma. The author is of the opinion that the best interpreter of Africa is the African with a disciplined mind and the requisite technical tools. But he has his own difficulties and limitations.

Then he considers the question whether we can speak of one indegenous religion for the whole of Africa. Despite the size of the continent, despite the social, racial and spiritual disruption caused by the cultural rape by foreigners, despite the complexity of cultures and systems of belief, there is a common Africanness about the total cultural, religious beliefs and practices of Africa. There is the common origin and a shared view regarding the concept about God as a living God.

He states that the aim of the African traditional religion should not be to glorify the dead past and drag it back to life but it is meant for the living to help realize their own intrinsic personalities and to make certain of their own bearings for now and for eternity—to discover what Africans actually know, believe and think about Deity. For this we should not import what is not there and expel out what is there. The author also warns the African scholars: "It is both spiritually and morally wrong to approach our study with the mind that for Africans. Whatever had or has been African, practised traditionally by Africans centuries ago, recently or currently, must be good enough".

In the following chapter, "The Nature of African Traditional Religion", the author exposes and refutes the wrong notions about the essential characteristics of African traditional religion. The writers of Africa termed African religion as "Primitive" "Savage" "Native" "Tribe" "Paganism" "Heathenism" "Idolatry" "Fetishism" and "Animism." The author explains in detail what all these mean and proves that African religion is none of these.

Then he proceeds to define African traditional religion. He prefers to call it, "diffused Monotheism" or implicit monotheism. "Monotheism", because ultimacy is accorded to God; "diffused"

because here we have a monotheism in which there exists other powers, which derive from Deity such being and authority that they can be treated, for practical purposes, almost as an end in themselves.

The author goes on to explain in the next chapter, "The Structure of African Traditional Religion", the component elements of African traditional religion. Taking Africa as a whole, there are five component elements: belief in God, belief in the divinities, belief in spirits, belief in ancestors and practice of magic and medicine. Among these elements, the first exists in its own absolute right but all the other elements depend on the first. The author analyses each element in detail. So far as belief in God is concerned, the Africans as a whole believe in a God who is real to them, one who is unique, the absolute controller of the universe, and the only God of the universe. He analyses other elements also in detail and proves that they are not detrimental to the belief in one God.

The final chapter which deals with the future of African traditional religion, is claimed by the author to be an assessment and a prophecy. He assesses the present situation. Upto now Africans educated in western ways had a contempt for their own religion and considered it fashionable to pursue the foreign, imported religions such as Christianity and Islam. Now, as a result of university studies on African traditional religion, educated people are getting interested in their traditional religion and discovering the soul of Africa.

While every African may wish to be regarded as attached to one or other of the two fashionable religions, deep inside, most of them are still attached to their own indigenous beliefs.

Furthermore, a new interest has been evinced in everything African as a consequence of nationalism, independence of the African nations and a general search for identity. "Ethiopianism" has gained currency throughout Africa to emphasize that the continent is moving actively and purposively to refree the enslaved soul. "Ethiopianism" is expressly seen in the indigenisation of Christian churches, the founding of African national churches, the founding of churches which though they are a positive repudiation of Christianity are a self-expression of traditional religion, the founding of political churches etc.

This new interest is not merely academic. But it is not yet

clear what shape it will take in the future. However, the author is optimistic about the future of African traditional religion.

Professor Bolaji Idowu's book is a controversial one, challenging many assumptions made by earlier writers on African religion. But he writes from his "experience gathered through research, teaching, seminars and discussions at home and abroad" as he himself claims. His academic competence and wide knowledge are well manifested in the book. He thus provides an introduction to the study of African traditional religion and a new direction for its progress.

But, as the author himself admits in his preface, the reader may feel disappointed because he may not get detailed information about the religions of Africa and the religious beliefs of Africans. The aim of the book is not to provide such information, it is only to give a right orientation to the study of African traditional religion. The author devotes several pages of the book which is out of proportion to a general study of religions which we can get from other sources as well. One would have expected instead something more about African religion from such a scholar on the subject.

The exposition of the last chapter does not seem to be very lucid. About Christianity, Islam etc, the author's mind is not quite clear whether these should be wiped out altogether to help the emergence of African traditional religion or whether these should be culturally adjusted to the spirit of Africa. If the first is his aim, one cannot agree with him; if it is the second, no one would object.

On the whole the book is a scholarly work and the reader will benefit reading it.

Thomas Nadayil

T.M. Manickam,

Dharma According to Manu and Moses,
Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 1977, xviii + 358 Pp., Rs. 25 ($ 6).

'Dharma According to Manu and Moses': The scope of the subject is indeed vast and complex and the first question one is

prompted to ask is: Could one treat exhaustively such a topic of gigantic dimensions in one single small book? The concept of Dharma according to Manu and Moses is so comprehensive that it could perhaps fill several volumes of explanation and discussion.

But if we cast a critical glance at this work, we will be undoubtedly convinced that Dr. Manickam has done justice to the theme in full measure. This careful historical and sociological investigation into the idea of Dharma in the Semetic and Aryan religious traditions comprises in compact form, a wealth of materials. The work, therefore, bears evidence of the tremendous amount of effort that has gone into its composition. A meticulous scrutiny of the source books, especially of Manusmrti, is one of its marks of distinction.

Beginning with a well-framed introduction, which delineates the methodology employed and the scope envisaged in the work, this substantial doctoral thesis leads us through the literary evolution of Dharma, the religious milieu of the social and moral systems, the philosophical presuppositions of the social and moral systems, the social institutions of Manu and Moses, in the first four chapters. The fifth chapter is an excursion into the topic of Dharma as such according to Manu and Moses, followed by the sixth and the seventh chapters on sin and punishment according to Manu and Moses. In the eighth chapter the author proposes his conclusions in the form of 25 theses.

Dr. T.M. Manickam, Professor of Philosophy and Comparative Religion at the Dharmaram Pontifical Institute of Theology and Philosophy, Bangalore, and managing editor of the 'Journal of Dharma', has set himself to the task of bringing to light, as he himself puts it, 'the points of agreements, disagreements and complementarities', which he could dig out from the books of Manu and Moses. The work is of an exemplary of scientific probity. This is especially true as far as Manusmrti is concerned. And this book, which is essentially a new analysis, or rather the only analysis of the Dharma-concept of the two basic religious traditions of the world, clears up some wrongly projected questions, enlarges research perspectives and opens out new horizons of fruitful dialogue between the offsprings of the two traditions. As mentioned above, it is a study based on the culture and sociology of the Aryan and Semetic people, followed by a philosophical criticism and a comparative review, which traces to some extent the possibility and worthwhileness of mutual understanding and mutual contribution bet-

ween these two colossal traditions. Countless details pertaining to both Manusmrti and Pentateuch assume a new meaning and value and powerfully explicate the love inspired insights of the author.

Concluding his enquiries and confrontations, to articulate and support his investigations, the author tabulates his views and arranges them in the form of theses, and there could be no better way of ending this very substantial and topical study. A student of comparative religion will be immensely interested in this book, even if as he advances in his study the work he may feel annoyed sometimes by vaguely developed affirmations and developments hard to keep track of logically.

Studies on comparative religion—their methods and results—are of central importance in the field of scientific religious studies today and they irradiate the whole contemporary religious scene. However, many of these studies and tracts do not progress beyond the journalistic level. In the present ferment of studies on various religions, Dr. Manickam's painstaking account on the two mighty religious traditions will certainly serve to inspire more such scientific attempts. We hope to get more in this line from this promising young writer.

Augustine Thottakara.

R.C. Pandeya & S.R. Bhatt (eds),

Knowledge Culture and Value, Vol 2,
Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1976, vii + 679 Pp., Rs. 125/-

New avenues and new frontiers of knowledge are ever opening up and the exponential rise in the output of knowledge knows no boundaries. The question, how this knowledge explosion affects our value-consciousness and the way of life is very seldom raised. That which is known becomes a value indeed, when it is related to the integral development of the being of man.

But when that conviction is realized in a life-context and lived for an appreciable time, it becomes a recognizable form of culture. It is heartening to note that the Indian Philosophical Congress selected this theme for its fiftieth anniversary.

The International Federation of Philosophical Societies came forward to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the Indian Philosophical

Congress in the form of a World Philosophy Conference in 1976. The deliberations of this Conference have been published under the title *Knowledge Culture and Value,* in two parts. The first part of this book consists of the papers presented in the various Plenary Sessions, Panel Discussions, and a Special Lecture. The second part contains the papers presented in the Sectional Meetings of the Conference.

In the first part of the book we have twenty nine essays presented in the five Plenary Sessions, and five papers of two Panel Discussions, and the text of one Special Lecture. The first six essays by eminent scholars in the field of epistemology shed much light on the relation between knowledge and truth. As we go through these essays we are, inevitably, forced to accept what T.R.V. Murti says on this subject. He writes: "It is not possible to formulate a neutral or universally acceptable position, for any position presupposes or is but an expression of a particular metaphysical stand" (p. 8).

The central question about knowledge and truth concerns their objectivity. The question, what additional perfection is required to turn a piece of knowledge into truly objective, was a bone of contention among philosophers from time immemorial. A.K. Chatterjee, in his article, asserts with justification that no theory of truth has succeeded in yielding objectivity, which should be of the very essence of truth. Yet his view that if some sort of pre-philosophical acquaintance with being is not accepted, at least theoretically, there would be no question of objectivity and therefore truth (p. 15), has to be taken seriously.

In the four essays from the second Plenary Session, various aspects of scientific induction, technology and value-consciousness are discussed. Scientific knowledge itself is valuable. Over and above these values, as W. Steinkraus puts it, "There can be at least three other transcultural value-presuppositions for science such as the principle of integrity and basic honesty, and the conscientious avoidance of personal or other bias and the principle of co-operation" (pp. 63, 64).

The question of arranging various forms of knowledge in a hierarchical order may be an issue beyond the scope of science; yet in the possibility of putting in, "a scale as higher and lower knowledge and in the understanding of the lower as *avidya* in relation to the higher *(vidya)* there is a value-perception", as S.P. Sen puts it, (p. 91), which can never be forgotten.

The most powerful means available to man to communicate his thoughts and convictions, is language. This subject receives attention from various standpoints in the section on "Language, Culture and Man."

The depth of knowledge and conviction is revealed through committed action. P.T. Raju's article in the section on "Commitment and Action" rightly points out that there are many kinds of commitments such as ontological, epistemological, sociological, cultural, ethical and political, and many kinds of actions" (pp. 143, 145): "The commitment to a plan, however, and to the actions implied without losing sight of the ideal, will have to be said to be a moral imperative" (p. 157). It is a distinct value which serves as a foundation for culture.

In the field of science, the basis for commitment is theory and this again is the foundation of praxis: "A theory which is not based on genuine involvement does not lead to action is hardly a real theory" (p. 233). But every action presupposes a theory and leads to yet another theory. This ever-swelling interrelation between theory, the work of the mind, and praxis, human action in the world, has been commendably discussed in the section, "Theory and Praxis."

The last section of the first part contains the texts of the two Panel Discussions and a Special Lecture. The first Panel Discussion makes an attempt to show how "Buddhism and Vedanta" are very fundamental to Indian philosophical thinking. The second topic of the Panel Discussion is "Myth and Symbols", and that of the Special Lecture, "Science and Religion and their Complementary Nature."

The second part of the book is a veriable mine of precious thoughts and ideas. The essays appearing in the volume can be classified under six groups, namely, Morality and Culture, Religion, Science and Man, Language, Thought and Reality, Logic and Experience, Education and Human Development, and Aesthetic Theory and Art. Though the editors have not arranged them under these title, the essays on related topics are edited in a logical order. Since it is practically impossible to review the individual essays within the limited scope of this examination no such attempt has been made here. But a careful perusal of this volume would certainly be a refreshing experience in the higher levels of thought.

K.T. Kadankavil