George Santayana, who combines a versatile intellect with a rare gift of expression, is undoubtedly one of the remarkable talents of the twentieth century. There is hardly a sphere of thought into which he has not probed his mind. All the values of the higher psyche have engaged his attention. He has an elaborate ethical, aesthetic and religious philosophy to his credit. He has tried to scale the dizzy heights of the metaphysics of essence and existence. Epistemological problems also do not escape him. The present work purports to be a systematic study of the afore-said aspects of Santayana's philosophy.

Santayana's philosophy presents an able statement of systematic dualism. The human mind functions in two ways: it intuits the given (or essence) and believes the non-given (or existence). Here dualism is found between intuition of the given and an animal faith in the non-given. Existence or non-given is approached by belief, and yet it is doubtful to the sceptic. The sceptic would accept nothing but the simple appearance or essence given to intuition. Essence Santayana describes as what is self-identical, devoid of all extrinsic relations, of time, of existence and even of subsistence (since by subsistence he means latent duration). Moreover, each essence, being self-identical, is individual; and again, being denuded of all extrinsic relations, it appears as an ideal term, and in that sense
it is universal. Santayana's essentialism does not constitute his whole philosophy; on the other hand, it refers to the transcendental side of his philosophy.

The transcendental side of Santayana's philosophy is a variant of Platonism, no doubt; but it is not absolutely Platonic in spirit. Santayana has carefully distinguished the realm of matter from that of essence. The things which are in the flux of existence can by no means be accounted for by essences which transcend existence. This is a vital point on which Santayana differs from Plato who takes things as appearances of Ideas.

If transcendentalism forms the lofty side of Santayana's philosophy, materialism in his philosophy serves as the presupposition of all natural science and of all deliberate action. Consistency in Santayana's philosophy is marked in two ways: (1) first, naturalism serves as a basis of his idealistic philosophy, and (2) secondly, essence has a central role to play in his philosophy.

(1) In every sphere, in epistemology, in aesthetics, in morality, in religion, naturalism appears as a firm basis. In the case of epistemology, knowledge arises out of the demand of the psyche which is material in nature. The material psyche has a vital demand to act upon the surrounding things. And in its adaptations to the surrounding things it becomes intelligent and creates spirit which, though originating from the material psyche, is not itself material, and meets the vital demand of the psyche by selecting essences or 'qualities sensed' which serve as descriptive terms of the
objects encountered in action. Knowledge finally means description of things.

Next, for the sense of beauty what are essential as the basic material are vital functions. With a feeling of bodily discomfort we cannot surely have a state of aesthetic sensibility. Art also has a material source; it springs from automatic instinctive action. A useful and automatic instinctive activity becomes art when it is supervened by purpose and conscious expression. What is true in the cases of beauty and art is also true in the case of morality. Santayana understands that the life of impulse is an essential part of human nature. So instead of extirpating the life of impulse he makes it the basis of true morality. The life of reason by which he means rational morality can be led only when impulses are modified by reflection. The ideal which is to be followed in our rational life is the harmonious adjustment of all impulses and interests of life. Santayana discards the notion of the supreme ideal in the abstract sense and accepts many ideals in the concrete sense. The individual alone is judge of what shall be his ideal, for he himself feels his own impulses which are to be directed and harmonized in order to give rise to the ideal. Santayana's ethics is naturalistic and individualistic.

Finally, Santayana determines the naturalistic basis of religion. Naturalism, instead of excluding religion, allows for it. Religion is the imaginary extension of the natural. It is the inevitable reaction of the imagination in front of the difficulties of a truculent world. The
solution to all the problems of life, since it is furnished by imagination, remains ideal to us, admitting no verification in sense.

(2) Essence, which Santayana discovers by the sceptical process, serves as the key-note of his whole philosophy. Its role in epistemology, in ethics and in religion is most important. The role of essence in cognition is to provide the descriptive terms by which we think and speak about the objects. While in epistemology essences are descriptive, in moral experience they are expressive. In epistemology essences are causally connected with the objects external to the psyche, whereas in moral experience essences bear no such causal connection. Moral essences are selected or preferred as they express vital feeling or the state of the psyche only.

In religion essence is neither descriptive nor expressive. Here essences are contemplated ideally; that is, here they serve as Ideals. All essences are not ideals at the initial stage. An essence becomes interesting to the spirit due to its repeated appearance, and as it grows more and more interesting to the spirit, it appears to the latter in a form of beauty; and then it serves as an ideal. Ideal contemplation of essences means spiritual freedom. Spiritual freedom is freedom from oneself, that is, from all allegiance to what is private to each psyche.

This is, in brief, the exposition of Santayana's philosophy. With his philosophic insight has been united the poetic expression of his ideas. His originality as a philosopher lies mainly in his attempt to reconcile the natural with
the ideal by making the former the ground of the latter.

Santayana is not easy to understand, for divergent streams of ideas stem from his thought struggling to find expression in his voluminous writings. The present writer does not boast of being an authority on Santayana's philosophy. Indeed, very few writers of the present century can claim to be so. Santayana's comment on Schilpp's edition of his own philosophy makes explicit the truth of what is said here. Santayana says that most of the writings of the said edition are "second-rate for the most part". Even of the paper of no less a philosopher than Bertrand Russell, included in that edition, Santayana comments, "Bertie's paper is good, but not remarkable except for a few phrase here and there." The philosopher's own comments tend to prove that his philosophy was not properly grasped by a great many amongst its contemporary exponents and critics. Of course, Daniel Cory, who was the personal friend for the last twenty-five years of Santayana's life, can claim the covetable title of being an authority on his philosophy, and this honour was conferred by Santayana himself on Cory. And this was confessed by Santayana in his letter written, in July 1941, to Mr. Conant, the then President of Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass. In that letter he writes, "I will only add that Cory would certainly be the man for the place, if it were thought appropriate that the first incumbent of my Fellowship should be a personal friend of mine.

2. Ibid., p.234.
and an authority on my philosophy."

The present writer claims to be an humble student of Santayana's philosophy. He has tried to exercise great care and circumspection in entering into the puzzle box of Santayana's philosophy. So this dissertation is an attempt at disentangling some of the difficulties which easily beset a student of Santayana's philosophy. (This work not only expounds Santayana's philosophy critically but judges it also by comparing it with some philosophical doctrines, both eastern and western.)

The author, in preparing his work, remains indebted to some reviewers and critics of Santayana, to P. A. Schilpp, Daniel Cory, Sterling P. Lamprecht, Milton K. Munitz, G. E. Howgate, Irwin Edman; and to many others referred to in the appropriate foot-notes of this work. Among those who have given the writer aid and encouragement by words of mouth or through correspondence, he heartily expresses his gratitude to Dr. P.B. Chatterjee, Reader in Philosophy, University of Calcutta. He is especially indebted to Professor P.N. Bhattacharya, Professor and Head of the Department of Philosophy, Presidency College, Calcutta.

In preparing his dissertation the writer faced many difficulties. Sometimes the books needed were not easily available, for Santayana's literature is hardly available in our libraries. Still he is grateful to the authorities of the National Library, the American Library (U.S.I.S) and the Presidency College Library, Calcutta, for allowing the writer to enjoy their respective facilities.

3. Ibid., p.240.

D.K. ROY.