CHAPTER - III

YOGA AND THE HUMAN DESTINY
Conception of Salvation

In Indian philosophy salvation plays a predominant role. Deliverance from sorrow is the central theme of all systems of Indian philosophy. They aim at seeking a final solution to the problem of existence in general and human existence in particular. Vedas speak immortality as the final solution of the problem of life. Rg Veda speaks of the worshipper who expresses his wish of being released from death and attaining immortality. Immortality mentioned here is not that of the God's. God's immortality is 'temporal' in character and achieved by consuming the drink of soma. There is another kind of immortality which is transcendence. It goes beyond the manifested existence in time and space. This is the immortality for which the Vedic seers aspired. Rg Veda says that the world was created out of the primeval Spirit (Purusa) one quarter of whom was transformed into...
the world. The remaining three quarters are "immortality" (amṛtatva). That is, the world is the manifest form of the Cosmic Puruṣa, while immortality is His unmanifest force.

The Upanisads have regarded mukti as the release from the round of births and deaths (saṃsāra). Mokṣa lies in the liberation of man from the necessity of being reborn again and again. At the core of the heart, man is one with the essence of the universe. The essence of man's personality lies at the Divine source. The kernel of the individual self is the same as the kernel of the universe. Salvation is achieved by one who knows this truth. Knowledge of this truth is the only means to immortality. Neither rituals nor good deeds lead to liberation. They only bring temporary rewards. They may take one to heaven which is not the final freedom. "It is knowledge alone as a personal, individual achievement which, paradoxically, breaks the shell of individuality and enables the knower to arrive at the realization of the underlying universal oneness."  

Liberating knowledge is the knowledge of the Bṛahman. It is entirely different from the ordinary knowledge which is dual in nature. There is no duality of the knower and the known in the liberating knowledge. The one who "knows" Bṛahman becomes the Bṛahman himself. Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad says, "Knowing Bṛahman in the real sense means becoming Bṛahman or rather becoming aware that
one is and has always been *Brahman*, that one's self (*jīvātman*) is the universal self (*Ātman*) which is *Brahman*. Kena Upaniṣads says that *Brahman* is known through awakening. It also says that it is 'unknown' to the one who claims that he knows it. And it appears to be known to the one who says that he is 'ignorant'. That is, those who have only intellectual knowledge of the *Brahman* do not know Him really. The learned theologians who believe that they known *Brahman* have only a secondhand knowledge of it. But they do not know the fact that they do not really know the *Brahman*. So they are called ignorant. The real knowledge of the ultimate is intuitive and supra-intellectual. This act of knowing is not knowing in the ordinary sense. It is an awakening to one's inner and real essence. It does not involve perception by the senses and conception by the mind. It is a direct and an immediate experience of everything including the deepest kernel of oneself and that of the reality itself.

The early Buddhism, like the Upaniṣads, regards salvation (*nirvāṇa*) as the liberation from the round of births and deaths (*samsāra*). The liberated one becomes free from craving (*taṇhā*). *Nirvāṇa* is blowing out of the personality resulting in the extinction of thirst. It also means extinction of the three roots of evil, namely, desire, hatred and delusion. As a great pragmatist, the Buddha asked his disciples to practice the *dhamma* without indulging in metaphysical speculations. He refused to answer questions about the
problems of transcendence. Like moskṣa of the Upaniṣads, nirvāṇa also is a transcendental state which not accessible to knowledge based on the senses and the mind. It transcends all the existential spheres of the universe. "Nirvāṇa is nowhere to be found within, or in connection with, the structure of the universe." But yet nirvāṇa is inherent to our living experience. It emerges within the mind that has undergone a thorough change through the practice of the dhamma. It is accessible to the direct experience unrelated to the senses and conceptual thinking. It is amendable to the vision bypassing the intellect.

The awakened one is no more an ordinary man. His personality composed of five groups of grasping has undergone a radical change. He has no personal motivations at all. He does not find satisfaction through 'personal' achievements. He does nothing to augment the natural course of his personality and phenomenal life. He simply waits for his life of saṁsāra to come to an end in the form of death(Parinirvāṇa). But as long as he is alive he leads a restrained and quiet life with unselfish tendencies like friendliness (maitri) and compassion (karuṇa) for all beings. These tendencies are the only motivations for all his activities. He works for others welfare and helps them in overcoming suffering by promoting the knowledge of the Buddha's teachings. Having himself achieved liberation he lives with a resolve to teach others the path of liberation. For him, rebirth is not
automatic, since the thirst to live has completely extinguished. The personality stops functioning altogether. He passes beyond the existence as we know it to be. Here it is important to note that death does not mean total non-existence. As it has already been mentioned the liberated one does not exist eternally in some way after death. Nor does he totally cease to exist. The dimension of a liberated one is beyond our conceptual understanding through the logic of "is", "is-not", "both is and is-not" and "neither is nor is-not".

According to the classical Saṃkhya, human personality (jiva) is created by nature (Prakṛti) for the sake of Puruṣa. Because of ignorance, the Puruṣa identifies himself with the Prakṛti. He forgets his true spiritual character and suffers the vicissitudes of saṁsāra. It is through discriminatory knowledge that he can overcome this wrong identification. Discriminatory knowledge is achieved by purging the Intellect (buddhi) of the rājasic and tāmasic elements. Intellect is basically of sattvic nature. Rājasic element represents energy experienced as passion. Tāmasic element represents inertia experienced as sluggishness. So the intellect has to be purified by eliminating these two elements. Then the intellect acquires the quality of transparency. It reflects the true spiritual nature. Then the Puruṣa realizes that he is just a witness Self (Dyota) in saṁsāra. He can watch the world without himself being involved in it. He can watch even his own personality as an object (dṛṣṭa) without identifying
himself with it. This is the testimony to the fact that the Puruṣa is free from Prakṛti. Then the Prakṛti fails to influence the Puruṣa and completely stops functioning for him. Puruṣa here is the liberated one who is still alive (Jivanmukta). He continues to exist as long as the momentum of his body lasts. But he does not involve himself in its activities. But he enjoys full freedom after the death of his body (Videhamuktī). “The Free Puruṣas can continue to watch the world process without ever being in danger of getting involved again and being deluded into participation. They exist in eternal purity and freedom from all activity”11.

Advaita Vedanta speaks of final deliverance on the lines of the Sāṅkhya and the Upaniṣads. Sankara interprets salvation as the realization of one’s essential identity with the Ultimate Reality. It is freedom from the necessity to transmigrate from life to life. It is liberation from the limits of the phenomenal existence of space and time. Liberation is the realization of our true nature which is the same as that of the world, namely, Brahmaṇ. The one who has attained liberation acquires the state of Existence, Consciousness and Bliss (Sat-Cit-Ānanda). Advaita Vedanta equates the state of liberation with true knowledge. Mokṣa is the perfect knowledge of the Brahmaṇ. Pure knowledge is itself liberation. The knowledge that one is not of the nature of the phenomenal existence is itself liberation. The ignorance, sorrow and fear of the rope mistaken for the snake
disappears soon after the realization that the snake is only a rope. So also ignorance, sorrow and fear of saṃsāra disappear to be immediately after one realizes the truth that one is not the body, but the Self.\(^\text{12}\)

Liberating knowledge may be attained during one's life here and now. This is possible only for the adepts. And those in whom obstructions to knowledge are too strong, they would attain liberation upon the bodily death. One who is liberated during his lifetime is called a Jīvamukta. And he one who attains liberation only after the physical death is called Videhamukta. A Jīvamukta becomes entirely free from all possible fruits of his past deeds (Sancita Karma). During the rest of his life he does not produce any Karma for the future (Āgami Karma), because he does not act with selfish motives and ends. And there may be the past karmic seeds which have already started having effects (Prārabdha' Karma) on the Jīvamukta. He accepts them and remains balanced and unperturbed by them. He accepts both the pleasant and unpleasant, the good and bad with equanimity. "He lives in full knowledge of his true essence, and events on the phenomenal level although not unreal in themselves, do not reach the depth of existence in which he is centred.\(^\text{13}\)

Mahāyāna Buddhism which arose in the first century B.C. speaks of salvation which is slightly different from that of the early
Buddhism. The traditional Buddhism speaks the attainment of Arahatship as the final goal of the individual. Arahat is one who seeks to win for himself the final freedom without bothering about other people. But the Mahāyāna Buddhists argue that this kind of attitude is dangerous. It involves self-centredness and narrow mindness. The individual will fail to achieve the real task of transcending the prison of individuality. Therefore the Mahāyānists formulated the ideal of the Bodhisattva. Bodhisattva is one who has attained final freedom of perfect enlightenment. He is the one who works for the liberation of all others by teaching the Dhamma. He serves others with love and compassion and takes a firm resolve to help others in attaining nirvana.

The uniqueness of the Bodhisattva is that he postpones entering Nirvana from which he is very near. He struggles through several lives to develop perfections (pāramitās) and when he reaches the state of complete perfection, he sacrifices himself for the well-being of others. The primary aim of the Bodhisattva is to help other beings to obtain liberation. He does not want anything for himself, not even Nirvāṇa. He renounces everything that is meant for him. Even when he is about to enter Nirvāṇa, he turns back from it. He prefers to stay in Saṁsāra for the sake of helping others. This is an act of supreme renunciation. This is the noblest act of perfect selflessness. And Nirvāṇa is none other than perfect dissociation from self and self-
centredness. He cultivates the altruistic virtues like recognition of all sentient beings as mothers. He becomes mindful of their kindness and strives to repay their kindness. Paradoxically, Bodhisattva's act of refraining from entering Nirvana takes him to Nirvana without any doubt or difficulty. He finds himself in Nirvana while at the same time he continues to stay and act in Samsara. "An accomplished Bodhisattva is entirely free and enlightened while remaining active within Samsara into which he keeps being reborn. He renounces the final Nirvana of a Buddha, whatever that may be, until all suffering beings are released, that is until universal liberation is brought about".

**HUMAN NATURE AND DESTINY**

Human being is the most mysterious reality in the world. It is not only the outer universe that is enigmatic. The inner world of the individual is as puzzling as the whole universe. Despite the plethora of knowledge in the field of psychology, philosophy and religion, the nature and essence of man is an enigma. Man is a riddle to himself inspite of being an inquiring and intelligent being. Of all beings human being alone is a being of thinking about himself and other beings. But only some are capable of pursuing self-inquiry and resolve the puzzle about human existence. It is by the act of direct insight into the inward being that one can resolve the riddle decisively and permanently. This kind of direct insight may also be called
mystical vision or Yogic enlightenment. It may otherwise be called supra-intellectual cognition. Most of the people escape the unbearable uncertainty about the life-world through faith in a dogma or through a modern scientific inquiry. Some may take recourse to a belief in the existence of an immortal Soul inside oneself. Some others may choose to explain away the uncertainty through a materialistic theory that man is merely a product of chemical processes, a product of the biological and natural evolution. Basically these are the approaches that we follow to unravel the mystery that surrounds us. People ranging from philosophers and scientists to the common man choose one of these theories. "The man in the street also adopts one of these attitudes, usually unwittingly. Sometimes these attitudes strongly co-exist in the one and the same person".17

In the primitive times, there seemed to be no real problem about man and his destiny. In ancient cultures, people strongly believed that although man is made up of the fundamental material elements he nevertheless possesses a being that is independent of them. The Soul was believed to be a transcendental and spiritual entity. It was regarded as suprasensuous and supraconscious. It was also treated to be a substantial and an indivisible reality. The idea of a substantial and transcendental Soul has been entertained even by the European thinkers. The modern European rationalists thinkers like Descartes and Spinoza, transcendentalist like Kant and the objective idealist like
Hegel have entertained the idea of the Soul or the Spirit. Among the empiricists it is the septic Hume who has expressed doubts about the existence of a substantial Soul. The postmodernists like Derrida have deconstructed the notion of the substantial Self. However, it is no denial of the fact that the Western thought, to a large extent, has been built on the conception of the substantial Soul.

It is worth noting that most of the European thinkers starting from Plato and Aristotle including some of the pre-socratic thinkers believed that the Soul survived death. They believed that something leaves the body upon its death. Something that is associated with the breath was believed to go out of the body at the time of the demise of a person. This is true even in the case of the Asian thinkers and people in general. Indian culture and Philosophy do entertain the belief in an immaterial and complex entity called the Self. The ancient Indian scriptures and sages subscribe to the eternal reality called the Soul. They regarded the Soul to be the real person. They espoused the idea of the Soul as the basis of physical, mental and emotional actions. It was believed to be the seat of all powers, the power of warmth, the power of will, possession and communication.

During the Vedic times, the idea that the human being survives the death was widely believed. It is the body that dies and not the Soul. The Soul transmigrates from body to body, from life to life without any break. The Vedic sages strongly propagated the idea that
the Soul is deathless. Vedic hymns reveal that the whole personality of the departed person survived the death. They advocated that the bodily self (\textit{tanu}) also survived the death. The mind (\textit{manas}) comprising the "brain", the "heart", thoughts, volitions and emotions also was believed to survive. Further, the constituents like vital cosmic force (\textit{prāṇa}), and animating vitality (\textit{asu}), and various faculties of the bodily organism, like hearing, seeing and so on, survived the death. Everything of the person is said to survive in its elemental form. The whole of the person's identity survives in its subtle form because all its constituents are regarded as cosmic forces. None of them belong to the individual as such. They have their respective abodes in the whole nature and structure of the Universe. The Universe is all encompassing and embodies all that is there, the sentient as well as the insentient. "Thus the mind belonged to the moon, breath to the wind, hearing to the space, seeing to the Sun, blood to water, flesh and bones to the earth"\textsuperscript{18}.

When death occurs the constituents of the departed person merge in their respective cosmic counterparts. Only a shadow-like entity of the deceased remains to be. It may be called a mysterious structure without any content. The hollow structure is immediately filled with its previous contents in their purified form. The refined constituents again emerge from their cosmic abodes. Thus there occurs a transfiguration of the person into a subtler dimension of
existence. It may also be called the transference of the person into a subtler dimension of life. The person passing from one world to another is not entirely identical. But transfiguration means a virtual new birth or the rebirth of the individual person. It is the rebirth of the individual in a different world. It is born in a different dimension of the world.

In Indian philosophy, the belief in the cycle of births, the other worlds and spheres of life dates back to very early times. This belief may be said to have been entertained even in the Rg Vedic times. Immortality is not possible automatically and immediately after entering the next life. Man has to face several lives after his life on the earth. Doctrine of rebirth figures fully and clearly in the Upaniṣads. The law of balance (ṛtā) also figures in the Upaniṣads. This law is regarded as the basic force operating in human life. It is also the basic force underlying moral order in the entire universe. The law is autonomous and independent of even divine authority. According to this law man's future is determined by the nature of his previous life. The destiny of man is shaped by the quality of his deeds in the past life. As you sow, so you reap. Good deeds reap good consequences and bad ones result in pain. "The force of his previous actions also determines his character in future lives, one becomes pure by pure actions"19.
Action (Karma) plays a predominant role in the determination of rebirth. Besides action, knowledge and experience also play an equally important role in shaping the future lives. Man's future is formed by what he has consciously acquired in terms of knowledge (vidya). It is also determined by what he has absorbed as his experience in the previous life. The knowledge and experience work as inborn intelligence in the future lives. They help in the constitution of the new body in rebirth. One may be born as one among the celestial or non-celestial beings. But one lives in these other worlds only as long as the fruits of actions done in this world last. One returns to this world when the merits of the actions performed in this life are exhausted. One may be reborn in the lower worlds and as an inferior creature like an animal or an insect in case the actions done in the previous life are wicked.20

Upaniṣads view man as consisting of universal elements. These elements leave man upon death and return to their cosmic counterparts. As it has been already mentioned, the subtle structure of the person remains to be after death. It comprises knowledge, volition and experience of the previous lives. Although changeable, this structure survives the body. This structure is variously called mind, consciousness or mentality. The person or the personality consists of mental capacities but without the body. It is also said that it is only "name" (nāma) that survives the death. The "name" is
regarded as the infinite which denotes the personality. The "name" is also identified as 'character'. It bears a mysterious relation to the personality of its bearer. When a person dies, the person is "enveloped", as it were, by the name which embodies knowledge, volition and experience of the past life. The "name", the "character" or the "personality" is only the shell and not the kernel of the person. The kernel, the reality of the person, is the Self, the Ātman. Ātman is the innermost essence of man. Having cast off the body and ignorance, the Self makes for itself another, ever and more beautiful form.

Ātman is the life force in the individual. It also manifests as the breath. It is regarded as the person himself or herself. It is used as a reflexive pronoun which indicates the meaning of the Self. Ātman is regarded as the "essence" of everything in the universe—a person, an animal or an object. Ātman is man's true Self and also the true Self of everything else. It is also the Self of the universe as a whole. That is why the Ātman is also called as the Brahman. Brahman is the transcendental Cosmic source of everything. It is the inner essence of all that exists. Thus the essence of man and that of the Cosmos is one and the same, namely, the Ātman or the Brahman. Karel Werner writes, "Thus two lines of inquiry, one proceeding by analysis of cosmic phenomena, trying to find their basis and source, and the other turning its attention to man in order to find out what he actually
is in himself, meet here and find themselves facing the same mysterious and transcendental source of all beings.\(^23\)

The important point to note is that the Ātman in Indian philosophy is not a mere concept constructed by the mind. On the contrary its being is deeply felt as the inner controller (antaryāmī) in all beings. It is the actual intelligence of everything in the world. Ātman is described as the unknown knower, unthought thinker, and the unseen seer\(^24\). Immorality is attained when Ātman is actually perceived through supersensible union (asparśayoga). The Brahman is realized through the intuitive experience of the Ātman. This is precisely the immortality that transcends the round of births and deaths. As it has been mentioned above Ātman is source of all beings and the entire world. It resides in our heart, the core of our personality. It is in the heart of man that the Ātman is experienced as Brahman. The “heart” is the point of contiguity where the individual and the universal reality meet. It is here where they interface or intersect. The heart is the place of deep experience where the Ātman and Brahman become undistinguishable, like pure water poured into pure water\(^25\).

Human being is always, at least faintly, aware of his or her true nature, viz., the Ātman. It is due to ignorance that the individual is only conscious of his or her personal self (Jivatman) only. On deep
contemplation one can have the realization of the Ātman. The three states of consciousness (Sattātraya), namely, waking, dreaming and deep sleep are a testimony to the existence of Ātman. They indicate the possible union of individual self and universal Self. The superficial states of consciousness gradually evolve into the innermost essence of the individual, namely, the Ātman. Let us in brief mention the experience of the three states of consciousness leading to the fourth, namely, Turiya. During the waking state we live in a world that is external to us. We experience the world of division and plurality. We fail to see the essential oneness underlying the division and multiplicity. When we are in a dream state, we experience the world produced by our own mind. We experience the subtle and the abstract objects conjured up by the mind. And when we are in the state of deep sleep devoid of dreams we experience the unification with our essence. Devoid of the sense of division and multiplicity the individual experience bliss. The irony of this state where there is the cessation of sorrow is that the individual cannot carry the experience of ecstasy over to the waking state. It is only an aftertaste of the bliss of the deep sleep that remains to be. This state of bliss is called Turiya. It is also described as the full and uninterrupted knowledge of the Self (Ātman or Brahman). Although small in size, the whole of Mandukya Upanisad deals with the four stages of human experience. It pictures how one can realize Turiya, by contemplating on the Ātman
that remains to be all through our experience. Ātman or Bhrahman which is unthinkable (achintyam), unseen (adrśtām) and undivided whole (advaitam) remains to be the underlying principle of the whole of our existence.²⁷

Having examined the nature of the true Self as contained in the Upaniṣads, let us now in brief elucidate the conceptions of human personality according to Saṃkhya, Advaita and Buddhism. Saṃkhya system exposes the metaphysical dualism of Puruṣa and Prakṛti. It is also called philosophy of personalism since it champions the cause of the liberation of the individual self (jīvātmā). According to Saṃkhya, Puruṣa is the consciousness (cit). It is the real Self, the onlooker of the Prakṛti. Prakṛti constitutes the empirical personality of the individual. It constitutes even the mental forces of the person. It is only a puppet playing its part for the sake of the Puruṣa. Puruṣa gets absorbed in the drama of the empirical self and thus lends it the light of consciousness. Consciousness is an accompanying factor of every process of Prakṛti. It gives meaning to the experiences of the empirical self. Puruṣa as pure consciousness is devoid of any distinctive mark. It has no gender or any other adjunct. Yet the Puruṣa is neither an impersonal factor nor a process constituting the structure of personality. But it enables the individual personality to become conscious. Puruṣa identifies itself with the empirical Self. But yet it never gets tainted by the experiences of the embodied self. Puruṣa
remains to be eternally pure, even though he is forgetful of his effulgence temporarily. 28.

Sāṃkhya advocates the plurality of Puruṣas. There is an individual Puruṣa underlying every person. This implies that there are as many Puruṣas as there are phenomenal selves in the universe. There is no one Puruṣa behind all individual empirical persons. The empirical person is composed of impersonal elements. These elements mutually intersect under the influence of Ahaṅkāra, the principle of individuation. The points at which the elements intersect are grouped into innumerable number of separate structures. These structures are called concrete beings each of which is illumined by the power of the individual Puruṣas. The concrete beings or the individual beings disappear when their constituent elements are disintegrated. They get disintegrated when they are abandoned by its Puruṣa. The concrete structure becomes dead and becomes decomposed when the Puruṣa leaves it. 29.

Sāṃkhya says that the empirical personality is illuminated by the Puruṣa. The metal constituents of the self are the products of the sāttvic forces of Prakṛti. Unlike the rājasic and tāṃsic guṇas, the sattva guṇa constitutes the lucidity of Nature. So the Sāttvic character has a certain affinity towards the Puruṣa. Because of its receptivity and sensitivity towards the Puruṣa, the sattva guṇa gets
illuminated by Puruṣa. As a result there evolves Intelligence (Buddhi) both on the individual and cosmic level. Buddhi resembles Purusa. Individual buddhis look almost like their respective Puruṣas. So the Puruṣas fail to see the difference between them and their buddhis. They accept everything that is happening within their buddhis as real. They put up with everything that takes place within the empirical selves as if it were happening within them. Infact all that is happening in the empirical personalities is confined to their buddhis only. But the Puruṣas fail to see this truth, since they are under the spell of ignorance (nescience). Liberation lies in the discriminating knowledge of a Purusa from its buddhi. “The Puruṣas failure to distinguish between himself and the buddhi, including the whole empirical personality with its mental and sensory activities, is called ignorance (avidya) and is the cause of bondage for the Puruṣa, to the round of births and deaths undergone by the empirical personality.”

Advaita Vedanta advocates the essential oneness of reality in all its aspects. Śaṅkara says that Brahmān is the essence of the material, mental and spiritual aspects of life. Brahmān is the common ground of all that is there in the universe. Brahmaṇ is of the nature of pure existence (sat), pure consciousness (cit) and pure bliss (ānanda). The three aspects constitute the unity of the essence of the reality. In distinction from the pluralistic dualism of the samkhya, the idealistic monism of Śaṅkara’s Advaita speaks of Brahmaṇ as the only one.
underlying substance of everything, both the material and spiritual beings. Human being too is of the nature of Brahma. He is entirely identical with Brahma. Man is essentially a spirit. Atman is the core of his personality. Just as the Brahma is the essence of the reality as a whole, Atman is the purest kernel of all individuals. Atman is inaccessible to the empirical self. It is unthinkable and unperceivable from the superficial level. It is completely outside the space-time continuum. No category of the intellect, either quality, quantity or causality can comprehended it. It is also beyond the epistemological dyad of the knower and the known.

Following the Upanishads, Śaṅkara admits that the individual experiences the existence of a self during the waking life. But he holds that what is experienced as the self at this level is not the true self of the individual. This is only the limited self (jivātma) that we experience at the level of waking state. Śaṅkara holds that the empirical self is only the reflection of the true Self (Atman). The empirical Self is the transcendental Self reflected in the mirror of ignorance (avidya). It is the limitation imposed partially on the unlimited Self by ignorance. Śaṅkara metaphorically calls the empirical self as the limiting “adjunct” (upādha) of the Supreme Self. According to Śaṅkara ignorance is responsible for the separateness between the individual and the universal Self. It is responsible also for the difference between the two individual selves. In reality there is
only unity everywhere. The unity is so real that the illusory difference cannot diminish it. Śaṅkara compares the oneness with the infinite, the undivided space which appears to be divided into a multiplicity of enclosed spaces in rooms, pots and so on. These limitations cannot in fact impede the oneness of space. The limiting factors cannot split the absolute space into plurality of spaces.

The individual person is a complex constituted by various constituents. The Self is the kernel of the empirical person. It is surrounded by various layers. The sheaths around the Self represent the successive stages of consciousness. These states of consciousness correspond to various worlds which are existential in character. Accordingly, there are four states of consciousness and the worlds it manifests. Śaṅkara analyzes them systematically and empirically. The formulation of the four spheres of consciousness is not speculative. It is based on the individual inner experience which may be called intuitive or insightful. The Advaitic analysis of consciousness may also be called phenomenological. The analysis begins with everyday waking state of the physical world. This state corresponds to the subjective experience of the awareness of the physical body. Here the physical body and the world of objects are mistaken for the sole reality. The individual here identifies himself with his body and the world around. This is the grossest sheath of the self. It is called the sheath made of food (annamayakośa). Here the body is called the
gross body (sthūla śarīra). The individual absorbs himself in the purely material aspects of life. He is overpowered by the sense organs and related objects and sensations. As a result, the Self here is completely oblivious of itself, since the external world of duality and multiplicity is its field of activity. The out-turned sense organs are the channels of all its experience and knowledge.

In the state of dream (svapna sthāna), the gross body with its sense organs is forgotten. Here the self is free from the gross body and lives in subtle body (sukṣma śarīra). It experiences subtle objects that are the impression of the waking experience. The mind or the intellect creates its own world of diversity without the medium of the body and the senses which are at rest. It projects from itself all kinds of objects like chariots, tanks and so on. Here the self with its subtle body, otherwise known as the character body (līṅga śarīra), consists of three progressively subtler sheaths. They are the sheath made of the vital force (prāṇamaya-kosā) which is experienced as being alive, the sheath made of mind (manomaya-kosā) which is experienced as the awareness of the mental processes, and the sheath made of intelligence (vijñānamaya-kosā) which one experiences as knowledge and understanding. In the third stage namely, deep sleep (suṣupti) the Self or Consciousness is alone and non-intentional. Consciousness here knows neither the objects nor their distinctions nor relations. It is neither the knowing subject nor the object known but the pure
witness Self (Śāksin). It is in a state of pure awareness of the absence of the objects both gross and subtle. Here the mind becomes quiescent by relapsing into its casual condition of Avidya. Consciousness here is non-dual and self luminous. "That the Self is non-dual consciousness is evident from the experience of sleep. There is then no other besides that which it could see." Here Consciousness is neither externally aware as in the waking state nor internally aware as in the dream state. Nor is it aware at a time in both ways. Consciousness here is described as being unseen, ungraspable, and beyond the reach of thought and word. It is peace (śāntam), auspicious (śivam) and non-dual (advaitam).

The first three states of consciousness mutually exclude from each other. Waking state ceases to be in the sleep state and vice versa. These two cease to be in the deep sleep. And the deep sleep state along with the other two states disappears in the Turiya. The earlier three states are characterized by the unawareness of the ultimate reality. Ignorance persists in all of them. Yet they are the different manifestations of one self-identical consciousness. Supreme consciousness is possessed of four quarters like the coin. The fourth is realized by the merging of the earlier three into it. Here the individual self attains the state of pure existence, pure consciousness and pure bliss (Sat-cit-ānanda). Bliss experienced here is different from the bliss experienced in the state of deep sleep. Bliss in deep
sleep is not ultimate since volitional tendencies are still present there.

*Kārmic* activities begin to work soon after we wake up from deep sleep. Waking consciousness, cannot hold the unified awareness of the deep sleep. Waking consciousness is essentially divisive and object oriented whereas consciousness in deep sleep is the subject without the object. So there can be no recollection of the unification with the Absolute in the waking state. Only a faint aftertaste of a forgotten blissful experience remains to be in the waking state. The fourth state is altogether distinct from the three preceding states of consciousness. They cannot touch the state of *Turiya* in which alone the Self (*Brahman* or *Ātman*) is realized. Advaita Vedanta calls this state of realizing the Self as *Samādhi*. It is also called the state of *Mokṣa* or *Jivanmukti*, "the individuals pure experience of the ultimate oneness".

Buddhism forms an important part of Indian philosophy. It is necessary to consider the nature and destiny of man in that system also. Like all other orthodox systems of Indian philosophy, Buddhism, although unorthodox, subscribes to the doctrine of *karma* and rebirth. In Buddhism, the law of *Karma* represents the moral force in the universe. It may be likened to the law of *ṛta* taught by the Vedas. It is an impersonal and a neutral force which balances the world process. But unlike the Vedic law of *ṛta*, the law of *karma* and rebirth in *Buddhism*, is ethical in character. According to the Buddhist law of
karma, every being is governed by its actions. Every being is reborn with a pattern of life and character determined by the deeds done in the previous lives. The human life is the most precious of all lives, for it alone is conducive to overcome the cycle of births and deaths. The sub-human forms of life are full of struggle and suffering. In these it is impossible for the individual to work for better life in the future. Even the superhuman spheres are not helpful for shaping our future destiny. In the higher spheres, the individual indulges in enjoying the fruits of the good deeds done in the previous lives. Human birth takes place only when the results of good and bad deeds done in the past lives are exhausted.

According to Buddhism, the beginning of the cycle of life is enigmatic. Although inconceivable, the round of rebirths (samsāra) can be ended by having insights into the nature of existence and the law governing it. By knowing the law of karma, one can abandon the desire to live and reach the state of nirvāṇa. Otherwise it is impossible to overcome the cycle of becoming. "A world without end is this round of birth and death. No beginning can be seen of those beings hindered by ignorance, bound by craving running through the round of birth and death."

Buddha was not speculative but pragmatic. His analysis of the essence of man is highly empirical. The constituents of the human
being are accessible to our present experience. Human personality, according to the Buddha, is composed of five groups of grasping. They are also known as the khandhas. They are as follows: (1) the group of corporeality (rupa khandha), (2) the group of feelings (vedana khandha), (3) the group of perceptions (saññå khandha), (4) the group of mental processes (sañkhåra khandha), and (5) the bundle of consciousnesses (aññåna khandha). In Buddhism, the five groups are referred to as nama-rupa. "Name is nothing but the abbreviation of four mental khandhas from the second to the fifth. Rupa is the abbreviation of rupa khandha."* 

The group of corporeality is composed of the four elements of nature, namely, earth, water, air and fire. This is experienced as the awareness of one's own body. On physical death, it appears that man leaves this body behind. He finds himself in another body with its own awareness. The groups of feelings are experiences of pleasure, pain, or indifference accompanying the individual's conscious life. They are produced mostly by one's reactions to feelings and thoughts. The group of perceptions comprise the process of perceiving. They are of six types. They are perceptions of forms, sounds, odours, tastes, bodily impressions and mental objects like thoughts, ideas, images and memories. The group of mental processes represents several factors such as instincts; urges, inclinations, desires and so on. It also includes such factors as attention, inattention and torpor. "The
individual elements of this structural unit are of varied duration, from a passing whim lasting for a moment to a deep rooted habit stuck to for years or to an instinct or a talent persisting through many lives. The whole structure is therefore constantly undergoing some change, while continuity is preserved not only during one life but throughout the entire sequence of lives of one individual\textsuperscript{40}.

The six groups of consciousness penetrate all parts of the individual personality. They pervade all the acts of awareness. Consciousness is a continuous process of being aware of forms, sounds, colours, shapes, tastes, odours and mental objects. It is always associated with one or more elements of the other groups of personality. Early Buddhism admits that consciousness survives physical death. Consciousness carries with it the whole mental framework (nāma) of the person. The mental framework includes the other three groups, namely, feelings, perception, and mental process or formations. It constitutes the personality devoid of the group of corporeality. "However, a new body or form is again acquired immediately after according to kārmic dispositions and the surroundings in which the person appears. And so the structure of the personality rolls on"\textsuperscript{41}.

Buddhism thus views the personality as phenomenal structure which is in constant change. It is a process devoid of any underlying
substantial core such as the Advaitic Soul (Atman). There is no strict identity between any two reborn personalities. Although there is an uninterrupted continuity of the personality, the reborn person is not the same as the previous one. Yet the reborn one is not totally different from the preceding person. This kind identity-in-difference of the personality applies to the person of any one single life. That is, during one's life, the individual can change beyond recognition both physically and psychologically. One's character may also change radically. Yet the continuity of the person goes on uninterruptedly.

Liberation, according to Pali Buddhism, is transcending the empirical personality constituted by the five khandhas. That is, the liberated person ceases to "exist". But it does not mean that the liberated is totally annihilated. Nor does he realize a permanent and unchanging substantial Self (Atman). Nirvana or liberation, according to the Buddha, is beyond the extremes of eternalism and annihilation. The nature of the liberated one, the Buddha stressed, was deep and unfathomable, to be understood only by the wise, meaning by a liberated one alone. 

Three hundred years after the Buddha's demise, his followers formulated the nature of personality in terms of the structural unity (pudgalavada) which is neither in the five akhadas, nor outside them, nor both in and outside them, nor neither in nor outside them. The
person fully exists both in the phenomenal and the ultimate sense. So the person is indefinable and is fully known only by the Buddhas.

THE PURPOSE OF YOGA

Yoga has the noble purpose of directly experiencing the supersensible reality. It is the means of having intuitive insight into what is conceptually known. The purpose of Yoga comes to light when Yoga is understood in its relation to philosophy, religion and mysticism. Yoga is the conscious and determined effort of an individual to achieve a supersensory experience. The experience gained through the practice of Yoga is extraordinary in the sense that it marks the realization of the ultimate reality. The realization is of great value to the individual, since it brings about a fundamental change of overcoming the sorrow of life and death. Experiencing of the final truth enables the individual, to function in a new dimension. Yoga is based on the practical concern of preparing the individual for a direct experience of the reality, a supra intellectual vision, direct knowledge of the truth itself.

Unlike Yoga, philosophy is conceptual and speculative in character. There is no practical means of directly arriving at the true knowledge of reality in philosophy. Philosophy uses concepts as its medium of knowing. It functions through reasoning and conceptual analysis. Speculation and analysis are not self sufficient means of
knowing. They are not independent means of gaining knowledge about reality. They make use of the material furnished by the means of sense perception. The intellect utilizes the sense data and formulates a conceptual picture about reality. In the course of further reasoning the intellect forms complex theories about the reality. We try to verify the advanced theories by further investigating into the additional sense data. However, philosophy can not hope to get to know with certainty the complex metaphysical theories it has created around the reality. So the philosopher often makes use of supra intellectual process of his mind. That is, he resorts to intuitional means of knowing with certainty what he has already conceptually circumscribed as the final truth. “This is a point at which speculative philosophy virtually transcends itself and touches upon a province which cannot be rationally explained or intellectually grasped”.  

Indian Yoga has been acknowledged throughout the ages as the means of practically grasping what is rationally conceived. In Yoga, concentration plays a predominant role. Meditation on what is conceptually conceived is the core of the practice of Yoga. There is no role of sense perception in it. There is no place for thinking in the sense of ratiocination. Yet the mind is attentive and alert in Yoga. It is awake and perceptive. Its awakening is suprarational. Its perception is the direct realization of the ultimate truth of the matter in question. In Yogic intuition the mind becomes one with the truth
that was hitherto conceptual only. Yoga comprises systematic methods of mind training that can be put into practice which brings the mind to the experiencing of the sphere of transcendence.

The intuitional insights of Yogic practice may also occur to philosophers who do not undergo any systematic training. They seem to happen to some of the gifted thinkers. Through these sporadic intuitions philosophers receive an inspiration to produce the works of genius. In ancient times, Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, in medieval times, Thomas Acquinas and St. Augustine, and in the modern times, Hegel, Husserl and many others may be said to have had such 'Yogic' inspiration. They seem to have a kind of intuitional vision as a channel to unravel reality. In the Indian tradition, starting from the Vedic and Upanisadic seers, the Kapila, the Buddha, Sankara, Nāgārjuna to Rāmaṇa Maharshi, Jiddu Krishnamurti and a host of many others certainly had yogic inspiration at the source of their philosophical teachings. All these thinkers have systematically utilized the Yogic intuitions for understanding the life-world. This shows that the purpose of Yoga is to realize the conceptually circumscribed knowledge of reality with definiteness and certitude which a mere philosopher can never hope to attain by the means available to him.

It is important to note here that the Rāja Yoga of Patanjali is recognized as philosophy also. The phrase "Yoga Philosophy" is quite
frequently used. This is so because Patanjali’s Yoga is closely associated with the philosophies of Sāṅkhya as well as Advaita Vedanta. The purpose of Sāṅkhya, namely, the realization of the Puruṣa is through pure knowledge only. In its syncretic from the purpose is fulfilled through the practice of Yoga. And some followers of Śaṅkara’s Advaita Vedanta interpreted their experiences in term of Yoga. Also the Yogis who were the followers of Advaita Vedanta interpreted their Yogic experiences in the light of Vedantic Philosophy, which is often highly speculative. “This, tendency still prevails among many Yoga followers in India and has been spread in the West as well especially by popular authors on Yoga. The expression “Yoga philosophy” that is so often used is quite frequently only another name for a popularized form of the world view elaborated in the system of Advaita Vedanta”.

Yet it is possible to distinguish between Yoga and Philosophy, although their purposes seem to be almost similar. As it has been mentioned earlier, the purpose of Yoga is to gain a definite and complete knowledge of the reality about which the philosophers had only incomplete and inadequate knowledge. The purpose of Yoga is to open the gates to a new vision of life and the world. Similar may be the purpose of philosophy. A philosopher may also have a preliminary outlook which implies that there is more to the world and life than what is immediately given to the average mind. But the purpose of
philosophy will be served only when the intellectually convincing ideas are "proved" by means of Yogic intuition. Otherwise they remain to be incomplete, indefinite and speculative. Devoid of Yogic insights, philosophy breeds more philosophy— an endless diffusion of speculation and conceptualization.

Yoga is closely associated not only with philosophy but with religion and mysticism also. Yogic intuition plays a significant role in religion also. An individual who is often "visited" by Yogic vision becomes an highly evolved religious personality. He may even become a founder of a new religion. The religious leaders are those who have had very strong Yogic inspirations in their lives. Such persons may also be called the prophets. They may be the leaders of strong spiritual movements. And a mystic is one who intuitively grasps the spiritual message of his religion. For instance, the Bhakti movement of Hinduism has produced a number of mystics. Bhakti Yoga is the path of directly experiencing the suprarational reality, namely, God or Isvara.

Yoga, religion and mysticism are closely related. Their purposes are also intimately connected. However, of the three disciplines, it is mysticism that is closest to Yoga. The purpose of both Yoga and mysticism is the suprarational encounter with the transcendent. The uniqueness of Yoga is that it is not confined to any particular religious
tradition. Yoga in its originality was independent of a religious garb. It avoided defining the supersensory reality in terms of any particular religious tradition. But mysticism in all its forms arose within a definite religious tradition. It defined the transcendent in terms of the religion to which the mystic belonged. However, there are some mystics who are an exception to this rule. They may be said to have reached the supersensible heights independent of the religious beliefs or symbols of the religion to which they belonged. For instance, Meister Eckhart, the mediaeval German mystic may be said to have had Yogic experience transcending his religion. He also expressed his vision in the language which is different from his tradition. In Indian tradition Jiddu Krishnamurti may be said to have had experienced Yogic insights transcending the religion in which he was born. He also formulated and articulated the mystic insights in a radically different language. He adopted the language that is different from the language of the Hindu tradition.

Thus purpose of Yoga is universal. It cannot be confined to a particular religious dogma or sect. Although Yoga in India is identified with Hinduism, Yoga has been recognized as an independent and an anonymous and autonomous search for truth. It has been a method of training the mind and whole personality of man without preconceived ideas. Yoga has been serving the purpose of preparing man for a breakthrough into the final freedom. It has been a secular-
religious practice adopted by all irrespective race, religion or nationality. It has been accepted as a potent means of crossing the troubles and travails of worldly life. That is, Yoga is a 'neutral' method of gaining intuitive experiences. But the intuitive experiences gained through the neutral methods of Yoga are found to coincide with the ideas and beliefs about the Divine held by a particular religion. That is why Yoga in one form or another has been incorporated in various sectarian movements. Yoga methods are being used by the religious groups outside India, like Christianity also.

Yoga can be used even by a modern scientific agnost. It serves the scientist's purpose of gaining knowledge that is certain and true. It helps him in having intuitive experiences of the scientific hypotheses. There is a spirit of discovery in Yoga that is similar to scientific research. Yoga shares with science the characteristics of a methodological and systematic approach. Thus the use or the purpose of Yoga is multi-dimensional. It could be secular, religious or even scientific. The elements of Yoga are found in Philosophy, religion, science, including mysticism. Yet Yoga has its own identity and distinct purpose. One can greatly be benefited by the practice of Yoga physically, psychologically and spiritually. It is therefore possible to study, and benefit from, the vast literature on Yoga from whatever school it comes and to experiment with it to follow its methodical
instructions without premature commitment to any particular religious creed or philosophical view. The purpose of Yoga is psychological and spiritual in character. Yoga is often called a system of spiritual psychology which is peculiar to India. There is a psycho-spiritual purpose behind the origin and growth of Yoga. Yoga is the science of the human psyche meant for its radical transformation. It aims at revealing the transcendental dimension of the psyche. It also seeks to unravel the mysterious and transempirical dimension of the reality as a whole. Thereby Yoga liberates the individual from the sorrow, the troubles and travails, of our everyday existence. The intuitive experience, technically known as Samādhi, is extremely fulfilling as it taps the creative source of life. Yoga thus may be said to be the means of satisfying the innate urge which compels man to attain a spiritual state by transcending the narrow vision of existence. The urge to transcend the limited and narrow view of life may be said to manifest itself predominantly in three ways.

Firstly, there is the sense of loneliness in man. The individual is not aware of this sense of loneliness as long as he feels at home with his relatives, friends and community. In some individuals the fact of being alone works under all conditions. Man in general in his heart of hearts feels extremely lonely. At times, when the individual is
separated from his environment, the feeling of loneliness becomes unbearable. He feels like coming into contact with some other person or entity and overcome the limitedness of the individuality. He may seek solace in a relationship of love with a partner, a friend, or children. Some may find fulfillment in some kind of vocations like social work, dedication for one's country or community. One may even seek to overcome loneliness by involving in revolutionary activities.

But these means of escaping loneliness cannot really annul the sense of loneliness. The experiences they give cannot totally abolish the sense of solitude. The satisfaction they give us cannot really put an end to the self-enclosedness of the human heart. So some individuals seek to adopt an altogether different means of overcoming loneliness. They seek to break the prison of their individuality and enter into the deeper and wider realm of reality. They feel like realizing the supreme reality in which they find full and ultimate happiness and fulfillment. It is here that they resort to the practice of Yoga, mysticism or religion. They strive for a direct experience of a higher and deeper reality.

Secondly, significance of Yoga may be felt by the individual who desires to seek more and more certain knowledge about the "self" and the world. The insatiable urge to seek wisdom, the ultimate truth about the entire universe, the physical and mental, makes the
individual to adopt the methods of Yoga. The purpose of Yoga is recognized by those who seek to penetrate into the reality. The incessant urge to solve the mystery of the life-world can be satisfied only through the means of Yoga. The universal view of the life-world is possible only through the practice of Yoga. The philosophical attitude of conceptually understanding the truth has often been practically grasped through a kind of Yogic insight. This is very much prevalent in Indian Philosophy. "Indian philosophy reached this stage several times and each time either Yoga played an important part in it or philosophy came very near to what Yoga strove for."^47.

And thirdly, the purpose of Yoga is evident in the lives of artists and religious people. Yoga helps these people to have intuitional contact with the deeper dimensions of Nature, Truth or God. They derive "inspiration" through Yogic insight into the beauty, majesty or mystery of the reality. Yoga opens a channel in the artist, the mystic or the sage through which he "perceives" the reality as a whole. It creates in them a climate of higher achievement and closer relatedness to the universe in which the individual feels completely at peace. Artists such as Picasso, Ravi Verma and many others are the product of the transcendental experience of the Yogic inspiration. Mystic religion like Suficism may be said to be the product of inspiration derived from Yogic intuition.
As it has been mentioned earlier, Yogic intuition plays a significant role even in philosophy. The whole of Indian philosophical system may be said to be the product of Yogic insights. Indian philosophers right from the Vedic and Upanisadic seers down to the contemporary thinkers like Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Krishnamurti were inspired by Yogic experiences. Mahatma Gandhi acknowledged that he had faint and occasional glimpses of the absolute truth. And it was to realize it in its totality that he followed the path of Karma Yoga. Outside India, the Taoist movement in China, Zen Buddhism in Japan and many such other movements are the offshoots of Yogic intuition. In ancient Western Philosophy, Plotinus may be said to have experienced some kind of Yogic vision. "Plotinus elaborated his whole system of philosophy as a result of four brief moments of spiritual vision which he happened to experience during his life."48 In modern times, Husserl's phenomenology is a good instance of taking recourse to intuition. Phenomenology is viewing of the essence (Wesenschau) through the mind's direct contact with the heart of things. It is a method of intuiting the essence of a thing by "bracketing out" their sensorially perceived qualities and conceptually defined character. It is "an attempt to get hold of inspiration or intuitive vision as a regular channel to reality in order to utilize it systematically for enlarging man's knowledge. This aim bears a strong resemblance to the purpose of Yoga."49
Thus, the purpose of Yoga is universal. Its use can be seen in almost all disciplines — philosophy, religion, mysticism and science. It is not confined to any particular region or time. The Indian as well as the Western people have adopted it as a means of their insights. And it has been followed from the ancient to the present times. It has an appeal for all people of all times. It has survived for several thousands of years because of its profound practical value. It has spread far and wide in several different forms. It has withstood the test of time and critical examination. It is applicable even to the modern conditions of the tremendous advancement of science and technology. The purpose of Yoga has been recognized even by the scientists like neurobiologists. Yogis too are open to the experiments being conducted on their experiences. Yoga is a unique "laboratory" of the mind, the psyche or the personality as a whole. Its ultimate purpose, however, is profound and noble. It liberates man from the sorrow of samsara by putting an end to the fluctuations of the mind. It brings about a radical transformation in the individual and thereby in society.
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