CHAPTER ONE

Concept of Soul in East and West: A Brief Historical Survey:

1.1 Introduction:

The concept of soul has been a subject of serious contemplation for scholars, philosophers, theologians, and prophets since hoary past. In religion and philosophy, the term 'soul' is used, in most comprehensive sense, as a 'non-material' and immortal substance housed in the physical body. In philosophy and religion, both East and West, the ultimate aim of life is to know the true nature of the 'self', and then to become a part and parcel of the divine. It is the essential principle of human nature, the basis of conscious and continuous individual existence. It is often analyzed in conjunction with such other terms as mind (nous), psyche, self and spirit.

1.2 The Greek concept of Soul:

The Greeks believe that soul is a spiritual substance, an unchangeable and permanent entity. The epic poet Homer holds that soul as a substance is identified with the last breath, the ghost which is invisible and hence generally avoided by man. The Greeks mark from the very beginning, the distinction between material/ transitory body and immortal soul. Once it is freed from the body, the soul has no 'heart' of its own, and so it has no consciousness without body.¹ According to Greeks, the

¹. Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics,
favourites of God go to the abode of the virtuous souls, whereas the sinning souls are punished in a gloomy, and barren region named 'the home of Aides' or Hades which is located in the far west.

The Homeric view(s) on soul can be taken together with that of Orphic religion/philosophy established by Orpheus. Orphic religion which relied on the doctrine of revelation was universal in the sense that like Christianity, it pointed to the 'fallen state' of man. It also talked about the pristine glory of men which is akin to gods. The fallen man can attain the original divine glory and can be united with God and hence become immortal. No doubt, Orphicism retains the old Bacchic faith that man might become a god through the process of purification of soul and spiritual ecstasy. In orphicism, body is considered to be the 'tomb' of the soul and it imprisons the soul in the 'wheel of birth', and hence Orphic philosophy/religion subscribes to the doctrine of 'transmigration of soul'. Since life is essentially full of suffering, Orphicism prescribes a method of purification and renunciation, and the soul objective of Orphic religion is not only to seek union with the God by means of mystic knowledge, but also to realize the mystic union with God after the release of the divine entity (soul) from the bondage of body, the seat of passions and appetites. Bertrand Russell puts it more exactly by saying that Orphic concept of mystic union means 'release' from the wheels of rebirths.

The divinity and immortality of the human soul, contempt for the body, the essential unity of the human and divine spirit are not only evident in Orphicism but also find their place in Greek Philosophy.

1.3 Doctrine of Soul in Greek Philosophy:

Among the pre-Socratic philosophers, Empedocles accepts the divinity of soul. To him, soul must expiate by a long process of pilgrimage in order to be finally delivered from the world of senses. Empedocles subscribes to the orphic system of purificatory rites as the most effective means of delivering the soul. Pythagoras, another Greek philosopher, was also a follower of orphicism, and surprisingly Plato is also considered 'the most eminent representative of the heretics' and the prophet of Orphic worship. Pythagoras is said to have been the follower of the Orphic idea that body is the tomb of the soul. Anaximander, a philosopher from Miletus, spoke like a cosmologist and for him the 'primary matter' — a formless infinite and eternal mass — is God, and therefore about soul he has nothing to say. Similarly, Thales, another cosmologist from Miletus, holds that 'water' is the fundamental stuff of the universe, and that earth is 'a disc floating on the water'. Where as Thales emphasized 'water,' and Anaximander talked about 'matter'; Anaximenes, regarded 'air' as the primary stuff of the universe, and thereby emphasized 'breath' as the fundamental thing.


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of all living beings. Significantly, air was considered to be the breath of the universe which was viewed as a 'living organism' perhaps pointing to the rise of soul as a life force in living entity.⁶

Socrates is credited as a genius in the western world who had perhaps for the first time a clear conception of soul.⁷ W.K.C. Guthrie⁸ rightly observes that for Socrates 'Psyche' is the true self and the body is its instrument only. Socrates strongly believed in the principle that 'Virtue is knowledge', and that true knowledge leads to the release of the soul from bondage of the senses. To him, soul is immortal. Keeping in mind the immortality of individual souls, he further observes that souls have perfect knowledge about their previous births and their pristine glory:

'...it (soul) is immortal and has been born many times and has seen all things both here and in the other world, has learned everything that is. So we need not be surprised if it can recall the knowledge of virtue or anything else which, as we see, it once possessed'⁹

It is now evident that like Pythagoras, Socrates also held the idea of immortality of soul and its pristine knowledge of equality, justice and goodness together with the knowledge about the fall of human beings into the world of

⁶. Ibid., P. 6.
⁹. Cited in Y, Masih, op. cit, P. 41 Also see Phaedo, 72-76.
ignorance, cycle of rebirths and of faint recollection of absolute knowledge in their pristine glory. To Socrates, knowledge lies not in sense impressions, but in reflection (Theaetetus, 186d). As a mystic, he tends to argue that knowledge is to be found in mystic intuition of the universals. Obviously, then senses are viewed as hindrances on the way of realizing universals. Therefore, the soul can best reflect when it remains free of all temptations from the world of senses. Soul should, according to Socrates, ignore the body and become as far as possible independent in its search for reality (Phaedo, 65c)

1.4 Platonic Doctrine of Soul:

The Platonic concept of soul encompasses his threefold chain of matter, form and Being. To him, the soul possesses three elements _appetite, heart and reason. Whereas reason desires spiritual good and a knowledge of the ideal and immutable form of things, the heart – the seat of passion _ aims at impulsive achievement of success, honour and spiritual good, and appetite impulsively desires for material possession/pleasure such as wealth, food and sexual satisfaction. This three fold division is further found in the Republic10 (IX, 588b) wherein Plato alludes to a composite creature with the head of a man, the heart of a lion and the body of a monster. Again, in Phaedrus he conceives the soul in terms of a chariot of which reason is the charioteer, the heart and the

appetite (body) being its white and black horses. It is this three fold division of a composite soul that determines the platonic concept of love as longing that operates through body, heart and reason. The duality between ideal and real, sense and spirit and between body and soul characterizes Platonic thought. Body is considered transitory and unreliable, whereas, soul is indestructible and it remains pure before and after the death. Therefore, Plato was a lover of the beauty of the soul rather than the niceties of human body.

In Platonic scheme of thought, the summum bonum of ethical life is not pleasure of the senses, but reason and release from the bondage of life thereby directing the soul for contemplation of the Good. To Plato, a soul is called healthy when its three pants, already stated above, abide by discipline and orderliness. Regular and disciplined working of the three parts of soul results in temperance (Gorgias, 504d); the temperate soul is good, whereas the intemperate one is evil (Gorgias, 507a). By orderliness of the soul, Plato means that reason should rule over desires and appetites so that a good soul can be happy (symposium, 204 c). Happiness then results from the harmonious functioning of all the three parts of the soul. The three parts of the soul correspond to the three classes in Plato's 'Ideal Republic,' and these are wise men (rational part), soldiers (spirited part) and money-makers and artisans corresponding to the appetitive part of the soul. For Plato, the true well-being of the soul is the ultimate standard of morality.
To be precise, Plato believes in the immortality of soul (Republic, X.608 c) and the cycle of birth and death. While being housed within the confine of the body, the soul transmigrates into countless rebirths, and finally gets its ultimate release by contemplating on the Idea of the Goods. God is good and wise. While creating man, his motive was to create a creature who should be as good and wise as He is himself. (Timaeus 30)\textsuperscript{11}. But, man through his craving for the body becomes responsible for his bondage. He is also responsible for his release (Republic, 10. 617 c). If the soul doesn't learn how to develop detachment from the body through purification, after death it takes the form of a ghost and seeks a body (Phaedo 8/b,d) and obviously the embodied soul remains in bondage. Instead of working out the release, the soul gives itself to the enjoyment of pleasure and pain. Every pleasure and pain has a sort of rivet with which it fastens the soul to the body and makes it corporeal. Therefore release can be won if the soul gets detached from bodily desires and becomes purified from every taint of the body (Phedo, 82d). No release is possible of impure body, and no soul, which is not absolutely pure at the time of death, can attain the Divine (Phaedo, 82c). The platonic discourse on body and soul reveals that soul is superior to body. Body is nothing but the shadow of the soul. However, since soul is immortal, it is responsible for the deeds committed by it and therefore it has to face judgement. The vile and wicked souls cultivating destructive pas-

\textsuperscript{11}. Y. Masih, op.cite, PP. 74-75
sions like gluttony or/and selfishness will assume the form of donkeys and other animals (Phaedo 81 e). On the other hand, pure and righteous souls will enjoy the company of gods (Phaedo, 108 c). Thus, Platonic thought is pre-occupied with the interaction between body and soul. But the fundamental fact concerning the duality between body and soul continuous to exercise tremendous influence on the Neoplatonic and Christian thought down the Middle Ages.

1.5 Aristotelian concept of Soul:

The platonic gulf between body and soul, between Ideal and the real is bridged up scientifically by Aristotle. In his hands, body and soul are taken in terms of hand and glove relationship.

To Aristotle, the soul is no more a separate element, but a logical entity. It moves the body as its actuality. It is the animating principle that vitalizes the function of the body's potential capacities. In other words, soul and body constitute a single substance, the former is the cause and origin of the latter. Aristotle holds that thought cannot be independent of body because it neither acts nor is acted upon without body. Soul and body are inseparable just as 'form' cannot exist without 'matter'. Aristotle, more logically than Plato binds the vegetative, appetitive and rational aspects of the soul as indispensable interacting elements.12

After the golden phase of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle in Greek philosophy, there came the stoics and Epicureans. Founded by Zeno of Athens, Stoicism maintained complete materialism and denied the reality of transcendental form. To a stoic, that which can be ‘known through the senses’ is alone real, and nothing incorporeal exists. Everything is matter, and hence God, Nature and even the souls of men are all material substance. Stoicism recognizes the Fire of Heraclitus as the primordial matter. Accordingly, God is Fire; the world follows from divine fire and the whole universe is permeated with fire including the soul of man. Just as the soul permeates the whole body and moves the body, so also material God permeates the whole world.\textsuperscript{13}

1.6 Concept of Soul in Neo-Platonism :

Neoplatonism is a religious mystic philosophy that imbibes the platonic doctrine of soul’s longing for the ‘Beautiful’ with feeling and emotional longing. Plotinus, Philo and Proclus were the leading Neoplatonic philosophers who combined the doctrine of ‘world-soul’ of stoics with platonic duality and Aristotelian ‘anima’ as an interacting threefold entity. In order to establish a relation between the Absolute God and the world, philo locates an intermediary in Logos – the divine ‘Reason’ in men. The ‘logos’ is otherwise known as ‘the first born son of God and the Image of God’.\textsuperscript{14} Plotinus, the leading Neoplatonist, ad-

\textsuperscript{13} Y. Masih, op, cit, P 126.
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid., P. 138
vances the doctrine of emanation rather than of creation. The universe is an emanation from God in much, the same way light is radiated from 'sun'. At the same time, Plotinus envisages a hierarchical world consisting of the Absolute, the intellect (nous) and the soul. The original creative act of the Absolute is Intellect (Nous) from which emanates 'soul' which regulates the material universe. Matter occupies the lowest rung of the hierarchy and to Plotinus, it represents evil. On the other hand, the soul works as an intermediary between the world of Intellect and the world of sense. Neoplatonism prescribes a process of purgation from the pleasure of senses, step by step. Strengthened by moral virtues, the soul rises up with the surging current of the impulse of return to the level of Intellect. And from there, the soul is illumined by the pure love of Intellect, and tends to its union with the Absolute in a state of mystical ecstasy. In that state of ecstatic union, the soul is molten into one with God.¹⁵

Neoplatonism is engulfed in religion. The supreme goal is the union of soul with the Absolute not by means of abstract speculation, but by virtue of emotional longing; sickening in separation. The platonic longing is suffused in Neoplatonism with emotion so that emotional longing culminates in ecstasy (Enneads, VI.9.11). The ecstatic union with God and the good (Enneads, V.5.12) tends the soul to be inseparably one. The earthly prototype of such a feeling is found in the urge of the lovers to become one flesh. But this does not mean that

Plotinus recommends to lapse into carnal love. To him, true love consists in contemplation of the beauty of God rather than of body or the world of senses. (Enneads, 111.5). However, Plotinus does not want the complete annihilation of natural impulses, but consistently fights for its conquest by the arousal of soul's in exorable passion for God (Enneads, 1.4.1)

The emphasis on emotional longing and sickening of the soul by Plotinus was extended further by Proclus. While imbibing the viewpoints of Plato and Plotinus, he tended to establish a causal connection and mutual attraction between God and the Soul. In Plato and Plotinus, the longing was from 'below' (soul) to 'above', but in Proclus one finds a 'chain of Eros' (love) that makes the longing mutual. The lower (soul) longs for the 'higher'; the 'higher' out of love, comes down to care for the lower and adorn it. Proclus' introduction of the 'chain of Eros' is an extension of the Plotinian hierarely of being. The chain intensifies the sickening of the soul for God. By virtue of the illumination received from Divine Eros, the soul experiences longing, sickening and the state of divine madness. Further stimulated by the divine light existing within itself, the soul finally attains ecstatic union with the Divine in a state of drunken frenzy. This conception of Proclus won acclamation in the riddle ages particularly from Thomas Acquinas.16

1.7 The Medieval Concept of Soul:

No doubt Platonism and Neoplatonism emphasized the duality between body and soul, and stressed the need for soul's purification and upward flight. But, Proclus' chain of Eros made the process of longing mutual rather than one-sided endeavour. To this, The Christian concept of 'God as Agape' (love) added a new dimension. The Holy Bible proclaims that 'God is love', and that He created the world out of love, and sent Christ, His only begotten son to love the world and redeem mankind. (I John, 4.7-8). Platonic and Neoplatonic concept of Eros emphasized soul's longing and acquisitive desire, but Christian Agape, symbolized by Christ's love and sacrifice for mankind, stands for benevolent sacrifice. In the former the soul is prompted to be united with the God and Good, but in latter, the Divine, comes down to love the soul.17

In the Apostolic Age, St. Paul devised a new notion of Agape – mystical union with Christ. Paul's idea is that if God reconciles the world unto Himself through Christ, men must tend to be reconciled to God through a mystical union with Christ (II Corinthians : 5-19). This union is, however, possible not in carnal body, but in spiritual body, and St. Paul was the first theologian in the Christian world to bring out the contrast between 'natural body' and 'spiritual body', between 'works of the flesh' and the 'fruits of the spirit'. To him, flesh bears the law of sin (Romans, 7.18-25), and hence there can be no compromise between:

'flesh' and spirit, and one has to denounce flesh in favour of a total transformation of the being, and the soul can be mystically united with Christ through purity and moral goodness. St. Paul's distinction between flesh and spirit exerted tremendous influence on the Middle Ages, and there came St. Augustine who forcefully developed the Pauline duality through the distinction between 'spiritual will' and 'carnal will' (De civitate Dei, X, IV-V), Charitas (well-directed love) and Cupiditas (ill-directed love). In his 'Confessions' (VIII. XVII), Augustine records the downward pull to Cupiditas (love of flesh) and upward longing for God. In De Civitate Dei (XXII, 24), Augustine holds that the muddy concupiscence of the flesh not only corrupts one's eyes, will and mind, but also diverts one from the love of God. In course of this conflict between body and soul, he tends to devise a formula of synthesis between Eros and Agape, between Neoplatonism and Christianity. Fitting Agape (down world love) into the fabric of Eros (upward longing) Augustine recommends that God's humiliates is the antidote to man's superbia. The ascent of Eros will not succeed unless the soul is set free from superbia under the influence of Agape – the humility of Christ.

Following the footsteps of Plato, Augustine considers soul superior to body. To him, soul uses organs of sense as its instrument. Soul pervades the whole body, and intensifies the latter's activities in a particular sense organ. What is important in Augustinian epistemology is that 'will' is an important function of soul. For, without 'active will' on the part of man, he will not be able to sense,
know and rise to the final vision of God. Unlike Neoplatonism in which the world emanates from God, Augustine believed in an Absolute Creator of all things—the world man and soul. Being the crown of all things, Man has a body and a soul as one unitary entity. Soul is considered superior because it moves any part of the body, and body cannot do this. Augustine teaches the immortality of soul. Since life is a continuous creation of God, life is extinguished by death, and death paves the path for a new life. And in this process, death of a man leads to another birth, though his body mingles with dust. Therefore the soul of a man is immortal as regards the question whether an individual soul is created every time it comes to the world, Augustine answers in the negative; To him, soul is transmitted from parents to children. His theory of 'transmission of soul' is grounded upon his theological belief in the 'original sin' of man and in the acceptance of the idea of pre-destination.18

Among other medieval theologians and philosophers who deliberated on the concept of soul, the names of Peter Abelard and St. Thomas Aquinas deserve mention. The conventional concept of Christian trinity—God—Father, God-son (Christ) and Holy-Ghost—is given a new interpretation by Abelard. To him, the 'holy trinity' is nothing but the trinity of three attributes. God-Father represents Goodness, whereas God-son is the logos (mind) of God, and the holy ghost represents the world-soul.

18. Y. Masih, op. cit., PP. 144-146.
Medieval thought of the 12th century not only witnessed the revival of Platonism and Neoplatonism but also looked for poetic expression of philosophy. And philosophers like St. Bernard and Hugh of St. Victor infused religion with ecstasy and passion besides patronizing platonic thought. They devised a new notion of love by virtue of pure passion while taking Christ's ascension as the model for mystical ascent of the soul, Bernard of Clairvaux declares that man, being created after the image of God, is prompted by a desire to ascend to God. Fired with Augustine's idea of passionate burning. St. Bernard laid emphasis on insatiable amorous desire of the soul for union with God. St. Victor holds that passion is satiated only in an ecstatic state of union with God. Erotic passion of the soul here becomes a divine emotion thereby overcoming the duality between body and soul. In this connection, St. Bernard devises twelve steps of humility and practical discipline that facilitate the process of the soul's ascent. Separated from the body, the soul enjoys a state of passionate intensity and ecstatic feeling. It enjoys a state of exaltation and deification in an intimate communion with the Divine. This is a stage which is as good as that of a red hot iron rod losing its own identity. Thus mystical love which is in essence an inner ascent of the soul to God is treated by St. Bernard in terms of humility, passion and emotion. This experience of the soul is non-rational and beyond all logical disputation.


St. Bernard, like St. Augustine and St. Paul observes that love for the gratification of bodily desires (cupiditas) is a sin. It is a 'war against soul'. Therefore, self-love must be metamorphosed into the spiritual under the guidance of various degrees of love and steps of humility through which the soul is purged of carnal things. The minnesingers (love poets) and minneymystics gave a new turn to medieval mysticism. In their hands, the relationship between soul and God which had so long been guided by principles of caritas, and humility, was imbued with romantic glow. They portrayed the 'soul' seeking fellowship with God as the beautiful bride. God yearns for the bride as a lover. Again, Christ is also conceived as the bridegroom who shoots his arrows of love. Christ and soul are presented as a pair of lovers pantaking each other's company with lovely chatter. Soul's love for God is not only symbolized by a yearning couple, but also conceived in terms of their spiritual marriage and physical union. Thus the sacred and profane, body, soul and God were admirably reconciled in Minнемysticism under the garb of romantic passion. Minne-piety and Bride-mysticism crept into the monasteries where monks and nuns went mad with ecstasy for Christ. The medieval women mystics like Hildegard of Bringer, Mary of ognies and Mechthild of Mag deburg languished in mystical trance with love-torn longing for Christ. With their bodies getting emaciated and their souls seized with ecstasy, these Minne-mysties continued their maddening quest for Christ.  

The above analysis shows that right from Plato to medieval mysticism through Neoplatonism the duality between body and soul, between sacred and profane constitute the seminal point of discussion, through conflicts and classes to final reconciliation between the human and the divine.

1.8 Concept of Soul in Hinduism:

The earliest analysis of soul in Hinduism is found in the Vedas and Upanishad. Rig Veda declares: "Truth is one; sages call it by different names." Besides, the Upanishads read; "That all the paths lead to the same goal just as cows of variegated colours yield the same white milk."22 virtually the philosophy of Hinduism means a guide to the right path of life. The soul of man is the pivot on which the philosophy of the Upanishads revolves. The Upanishads prescribe to worship and revere the Atman within rather than to worship the innumerable gods. The Atman is gained not by the knowledge of books, nor by learning and the power of genius. It is attained in moments of brightness and illumination. The soul when it once seizes its reality then it loses itself in its enjoyment and contemplation. He becomes one with his God. Really this is an unexplainable vision. A realized soul will say: "God put it into my head and I can not put it into yours," kena Upanishads declares: " It is unknown to those who know and known to those who don't know."

It is obvious that there is one reality and there is no other reality except Atman. It means that Atman is the supreme, universal and the all-pervading spirit which includes everything. "The Atman, of which we are in search, is not the object of knowledge but the basis of knowledge."23 Now it is evident

that there is one supreme being who is worthy to be worshiped with profound faith, love and reverence. "The Upanishad holds that the absolute and the God are identical, we name it Supreme Brahma to emphasize its transcendence of the finite, its in explicability and its all comprehensiveness. We call it Ishwara to emphasize the personal aspect so necessary for religious devotion." 24

The concept of rebirth has become essentially conspicuous by the Upanishads. Their strong argument is that soul can not be destroyed at any moment under any circumstances, even at death.

There is a continuity of life. It is seen that these is a corollary to the law of Karma. There is the inference (result) to the law of Karma. In this sorrowful worldly existence each and every jiva obtained his body according to his karma. The body goes on changing with each birth, but the atman which is within man, remains unchanged and immortal. Because it is a part and parcel of Brahman. 25

The soul can achieve its salvation only through bhakti which means the continuous remembrance of Almighty God. It is like the incessant flow of oil in a burning lamp. Virtually bhakti is single-minded devotion, faith and love to God. Bhakti is also knowledge which is also taken in conjunction with Upasana and dhyana (Bhagavad Gita)

For achieving mukti, Ramanuja recommends jnana-karma-bhakti-samuccaya. He expresses the following channels for mukti. Seeking refuge at the foot of the supreme person.

Then acquiring knowledge of reality through the studies of scripture and instructions of holy teachers and this knowledge enriches the soul. There is the state of prapatti in which the bhakti completely surrenders himself to Ishwara and Ishwara accepts him.


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as such and extends to him His refuge. The devotee cannot live in separation from God's being, qualities, acts and dominion, and God too cannot maintain Himself without His devotee.\textsuperscript{26}

We find in the Upanishads that the belief is transformed into the doctrine of rebirth in the universe, in contrast to the belief in the Brahmanas of birth in the next world. The highest kind of immortality is becoming one with Brahman. So life is eternal, which is union with Brahman. The undelivered soul is subject to the law of birth and deaths and has to work out its destiny by lives on earth. Vedanta holds that a knower of Brahman becomes Brahman.

The concept of rebirth has occupied a dominant position in the Upanishads. The kind of birth depends upon the kinds of work. According to the law of karma there is nothing indefinite or accidental. We reap as we sow, and every thought, every action produces an effect on character.

In fact, the essence of spirit is freedom. By performing selfless actions we can liberate ourselves from the preceding conditions. According to Upanishads karma changes but the universal self does not change. Their view is that the soul cannot be annihilated at death. The Gita and the Upanishads agree that the soul is –

Unborn, eternal, everlasting, primeval,

It is not killed when the body is killed.\textsuperscript{27}

It shows that soul is eternal and indestructible. To attain the perfection there are three different paths. The karma yoga i.e. the path of work. The

\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., Op. Cit. p. 185.

jnana yoga, it is the path of knowledge. The Bhakti yoga which is the path of devotion.

In the beginning the Gita explains the nature of the immortal self. The self is differentiated from the non-self. It is said “The imperishable self which inhabits impermanent bodies, pervades the whole universe; Him no weapons cut, no fire can burn, no water can wet, no wind can dry. Thou art that permanent Imperishable self and not the ever changing ever perishing vestment of the self, called the body.”28 (The Gita 11-23) Yamaraja the king of Death has portrayed the characteristic features of the soul to Nachiketa: That soul is much thinner than even ethereal body, it is the largest of the large. It remains in the core of the heart of every living person. It implies that it is . Its own centre and has the truth in Itself. Only the man will understand It whose heart is pure and clear, and will not grieve. In fact the persons who are free from pride and delusion, who have conquered all kinds of evils, who are devoted to the Almighty God. Whose desires disappeared and who are free from dualities known as pleasure and pain go to that indestructible Supreme State.

The delusion of ‘mine’ and ‘thine’ is caused because one identifies the self with the perishing self- It is one’s attachment to the physical self that makes one lament the death and destruction of things which are foredoomed to perish. One should therefore detach oneself from the false sense of the ‘I’, destroy ignorance and with unswerving faith and devotion attach himself to that Imperishable self and thus attain freedom from bondage. The tendency of a person determines his desires, his desire determines his action, his activities determine his birth into another being after death. In the Upanishads and Gita” soul (Atman) is described as a part, a divine spark of the absolute (Paramatman) which is eternal and immutable.

The Gita reads “Triple is the gate of this hell leading to the ruin of the soul and they are lust, anger and greed, and therefore one should abandon these.”

**Sri Sankaracharya**:

Sri Sankaracharya said regarding Nescience or Avidya in the Vivekchudamani that “There is no Ignorance (Avidya) outside the mind. The mind alone is Avidya, the cause of the bondage of transmigration. When that is destroyed, all else is destroyed, and when it is manifested, everything is manifested.”

It is evident from Vedanta that self is by nature pure and perfect and it has no change. And that ignorance has covered Its vision and It appears as limited and subject to change. This ignorance is laid in the mind. When the mind becomes entirely purified by discipline and sadhana, the majestic of Atman manifests itself. This is called liberation. However, it cannot get rid of Nescience due to their inferior illumination but by following this way it can be only lesson. For producing the desired result the combination of knowledge, devotion and action is a must to work together.

According to Honore de Balzac, intellect are of three stages. They are instinct (simple consciousness), abstraction (self consciousness) and specialism (cosmic consciousness). The greater part of visible humanity is the weaker part which are born, work and die without rising to the next one. They are not self moved or-self-balanced like the animals. They are balanced by the natural forces and moved by external influences. Another sphere is of abstraction. In the society man with abstraction judges good, evil, crime, virtue and he can distinguish the sphere of .... activity from the


sphere of instinctivity.

He is self-centered. By and large, a man with simple consciousness is just like a straw floating on a river, according to situation it moves freely. But in case of abstractivity, the man is like a needle pivoted by its centre.

Next but last is the sphere of specialism where the supreme human genius begins from the abstraction. It proceeded to the spiritual light of the state of cosmic consciousness. Undoubtedly, this sphere carries with it intuition which is a faculty of the inner man. This is evident that cosmic sense are achieved specially by those people who have the highest moral character.

Sri Ramkrishna:

According to the view of Sri Ramkrishna if the human mind is attached to the consciousness of the outward world it observes only gross objects and abides in the Annamayakosa, the corporeal sheath of the soul, it depends on food. But when the mind attaches in ward, it is just like shutting the door of a house and entiring its in ward apartments. And so to say, it turns from the gross into the subtype, thereafter into the causal, until it reaches the final causal plight. Particularly in that plight the mind is mingled in the Absolute and nothing can be told about it. Additionally he said that our body is constituted of the ‘fine elements’ which is called the gross body. The subtle body consists of Buddhi, Chitta, Manas and Ahamkara. The body by which we can realize the bliss of God-vision and continue to enjoy His union, is called causal body ——. Beyond all is the Mahakarana — The First Cause31.

On day Sri Ramkrishna stated his experience before his disciples regarding the state of trance, “when I was about ten or twelve years old,

31. Ibid., p. 200.

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and used to live in my village, I had experienced a state of trance while wandering in the fields near my house one day, I was spell bound at what I beheld. A divine vision has certain signs. One sees a halo, he feels happy and from his heart a wind wave rises like the ascending flames of a ‘tubri’ (fire works).”

Once Sri Ramkrishna told Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, one of the most versatile men, “when one realizes Brahman, one is silent. Reasoning lasts only up to realization. So long as the butter has not reached the boiling point, it simmers no more. When a pitcher is dipped into a pond, it makes a gurgle noise, when full, it makes no more sound.” (from life of Sri Rama Krishna).

1.9 Concept of soul in Buddhism:

Although Buddhism declares life to be sorrowful yet it is free from pessimism. It is highly praised for its morality. Buddhism denies ‘I’ the soul but yet it instructs the responsibility for our duties and obligations through rebirth. This religion does not have faith in God but yet shows the path of salvation.

According to Buddhism life is full of sufferings and everything is transient. There is nothing in this world which is permanent. He observes that if Atma or self is permanent then nothing is self on the earth. All things are not self. To him all are impermanent, body, perception, sensation, sanskaras and consciousness. Truly speaking, all these are sorrows; since they can not be self.

Buddhism does not preach annihilation and death. Rather it preaches about salvation and life. He said himself, “Verily I say unto you. The Blessed

32. Ibid., p. 207.
33. Ibid., 208.
one has not come to teach death, but to teach life, and thou does not discern the nature of living and dying.

This body will be dissolved and no amount of sacrifice will save it. Therefore, seek thou life that is of mind. Where self is, truth can not be; yet when truth comes, self will disappear. Therefore, let thy mind rest in the truth, propagate the truth, put thy whole soul in it and let it spread. In truth thou shall live for ever. Self is death and truth is life. The clinging to self is a perpetual dying while moving in truth is partaking of Nirvana which is life everlasting.” It enjoins the right way of living. Its aim is Nirvana, the abandonment of selfhood but reading a life of truth which is attainable here upon earth in this life of ours.\textsuperscript{34}

The Buddha teaches us to handle a life of sacred or purity and detachment to objects.

There are two Buddhist sects i.e. Hinajana and Mahajana. The former has no conception of soul. They hold that soul is a changeable mental process. They don’t believe in the existence of soul. They apparently believe in the doctrine of karma.

On the other hand the Mahajana sect believed Buddha as their Lord. They hold that Buddha is an incarnation of the Absolute. They believed in the existence of soul. To them, vital force is false and the universal soul is true. Vital forces enter into the universal soul for salvation.\textsuperscript{35}

Buddha holds that the things which is transitory, evil and liable to change can not be eternal soul. The main principle of all life is transitoriness. When Buddha was asked about the permanent soul, then he maintained silence and disputed the reality of superficial self. The object by which we


\textsuperscript{35} Baruah, Dr. Girish, Bharatya Darshan 4th Published 2001-2002. pp. 222, 223.
identify ourselves are not the true self.

Nagarjuna says in his commentary: "He taught the existence of Atman (soul) when he wanted to impart his hearers the conventional doctrine; he taught the doctrine of An-atman (non-soul) when he wanted to impart to them the transcendental doctrine. Buddhism deals with the individual life and it is indifferent to the immortality of the soul. It does not attach importance to the permanent self of which we know little and is abstruse. Who so ever is originated will be dissolved again. All worry about the permanent self is vain, the ego is like a mirage and all tribulations that touch it will pass away. They will vanish like nightmare when the sleeper awakes."  

There are ten ideal virtues which are charity, patience, intelligence, resoluteness, strenuousness, purity of thought, meditation, strength and knowledge. "According to Buddhist doctrine the way of knowledge is narrow. It is quite possible for every person to obtain eternal Salvation. Freedom is merging with Supreme consciousness and spreading the benevolence and sympathy among every being. "The disciple lets his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thought of love and so the second __ and these pervade the wide world."

For Buddhists the conception of the consciousness is quite different. They claim that there are three kinds in samsara corresponding to three types or consciousness. They are the consequence of previous ‘karma’, endeavour. They are (1) The sense desire sphere (Kama Loka)(2) The Fine-material sphere (Rupa Loka) and the Immaterial sphere (Formless). It is explained in the book, 'Gods and the universe' (page-16). It is described there, "The world of human beings and animals is physically the same

36. Sing K.V. An Insight into World Religions, p. 55.
world, and forms part of sense-desires sphere. Below it, but still in the same category, are the realms of beings in states of deeper misery, while above it are the realms of the sense-desire Devas. The boundaries between the human world and those immediately above and below it are not always sharp, and there is possibility of communication between them; the boundary is purely psychological. This fact gives us the key to the truth that the reality of all the separate sphere of being lies in the realm of consciousness rather than in that of objectivity.

According to Buddha man was psychophysical complex of rupa (matter) vedana (sensation, emotion) Samjna (perception) samskara (predisposition due to past accumulation of karmas) and vijnana (consciousness). Each of the fire skandhas, is itself complex.37

Nevertheless, man has an illusion concerning himself.

According to Lord Buddha the whole human life is an unmixed evil and suffering. All those human sufferings caused by the jivas themselves in their past lives. They are responsible themselves for the evil. So they will have to remove their sufferings by dint of their own endeavours. Lord Buddha did not want divine power to remove those sufferings.

Buddhism believed in the doctrine of karma-samsara-jnana Muti as its weltanschaung! The wheel of transmigration will go on till the attainment of nirvana.

The human being who conquers all passions and desires and get their ego dissolved by achieving knowledge through Samadhi may enter nirvana, but a large amount of people remain outside the pale of nirvana.

Lord Buddha follows a middle path between the nihilist and eternalist. The

37. Ibid., p. 56.
nihilist are generally materialist, Lord that there is total extinction (Ucohedvada) of the man after his death. In contrary, the eternalist hold that there is a substantial soul which servives death. But Buddha renounced both the views. There is no sound argument of the immortality of the soul. More over, this vi ew is not supported by any sound knowledge. In the same manner, the nihilist view is equally devoid of true knowledge. So most probably it is like wise fraught with moral depravity. Rather Buddha completely believed in transmigration.38

1.10 **Concept of soul in Jainism**:

The word Jainism is derived from 'jina' which means 'conqueror'. Here conqueror implies that person who conquered his passions and desires. Particularly it signifies the liberated souls.39 Who have conquered passions, desires and karmas and obtained emancipation. Mahavira was the exponent of Jainism who gave a new orientation to the faith of Jainism to make it modern.

His great message was to mankind that birth and caste are of no consequence, and that karma is all in all, which must be sacrificed to attain the perfect state. According to Jainism, there are two main divisions in the world, the sentient beings and the non-sentient beings. Since time immemorial they have been interplaying. In a living being, the soul, which is a divine spark is capable of thinking, feeling and knowing. Being infinite every soul holds its individuality since time immemorial. It is self existing and eternal. Every soul is full of consciousness. As the soul transmigrates, it passes through various evolutions. The sentient and the non-sentient interact and cause diversities in the world which cause evolution.

38. Ibid., 61.

39. Sharma, Chandradhar, A critical survey of Indian philosophy, Jainendra Prakash Jain at Shri Jainendra Press, Naraina Industrial Area Phase and Published by Narendra Prakash Jain for Matilal Banarsidass Publishers Private Limited Delhi, p. 48
For Jainism, all living beings are classed under two heads: (1) The souls who have been freed from the bondage, are pure and have attained perfection. The souls who are bound down in the chain of karma are called the bound souls. These souls are sub-divided into two kinds: (1) The First is "Sthavara" (Immobile) and the second is "Tras" (Mobile).

The immobile souls are devoid of all power of locomotion and possess only one organ of sense that of touch. Water, air, earth, fire and all things which are under the range of the vegetable kingdom belong to this kind. The mobile souls have power of moving and grouped into four classes according to the nature and number of sense-organs they have. They are: (a) Those that possess the organs of touch and taste (e.g. worms) (b) Those that possess three organs such as touch, smell and taste (e.g. ants) (c) Those that are possessing the organ of sight in addition to the above three organs (e.g. bees). (d) Those that are possessing all the above four organs in addition to that of hearing (e.g. birds, animals and human beings).

According to Jainism there are five gateways of knowledge. They are: (1) 'Sruti Jnana' ___ the clear knowledge which is formed on the basis of some verbal testimony of the omniscient,

(2) 'Mana Paryaya Jnana' ___ That form of knowledge of which is in others thought, originating as it does from the removal of the obstructions to the formation of such knowledge, (3) 'Mati Jnana' ___ such kind of knowledge by which a soul can recognize an object by the operation of the sense organs. (4) 'Avadhi Jnana' ___ that knowledge in the form of recognition of particular physical occurrences which happened some time past,

(5) 'Keval Jnana' ___ Completely pure knowledge that precedes
the attainment of 'Nirvana'. It is characterized by omniscience.\textsuperscript{40}

Soul under the influence of some karma is in bondage and suffers from various kinds of disabilities. Hence so long as karmas are not eradicated, men will suffer continuously. So to stop sufferings karmas have to be entirely destroyed.

Buddhism holds that nothing is substantial and that everything is momentary. But Jainism holds the doctrine of compromise on the ground that things are both transient and substantial. In conformity with Jainism, the soul of man is eternal but the frame of man is ephemeral. Nevertheless, Jainism considers the world as real and eternal.

In the life after death two things may be occurred to man. If a man has practised tapas (austerities) pan Ca mahavarata (five vows) dhyanas and gunasthanas under a particular guru, then he may achieve the old glory of omniscience. He becomes immortal, so he will not have to enter into the cycle of rebirths. But innumerable jivas are to transmigrate from one birth into another, in an endless chain.

It is seen that the jainas are the first in maintaining the doctrine of karma-samsara jnana-mukti.\textsuperscript{41} They classified the karmas in detail which lead to the rebirths of a jiva either in a higher or lower rebirths. Only man's karmas can determine the Specific body and their organs, age, family and pleasure pain in later lines. It is very important to note that man alone can work out his liberation by his own endeavours.

The most outstanding moral view in Jainism in Ahimsa (non-injury). It is not carried out in Buddhism as strictly as in jainism. According to Jainism

\textsuperscript{40} Sing, K.V. An Insight into World Religions Vista International Publishing House, New Delhi, 1st Ed. 2005.

all particles of matter are inhabited by souls. Hence they are very precautious against annihilating any life in earth, air and water. They are not willing to have their meal after sun-set for abstaining the killing of insects attracted by the lamp light. Virtually it means the profound respect for any life.

1.11 Concept of Soul in Christianity

Christianity was at first a reformed form of Judaism and the early Christian concept was influenced by Greek philosophy, though it remained to the last moment more Herabic than Greek. The jews being more practical, they thought in the beginning that the soul of man was nothing but breath. The “Holy Bible” reads:

“So And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul”

In fact ‘soul’ is meant life and death which is oozing out of the life of the animal. As life and soul were understood precious, so blood which is found in the sacrificial animal was understood sacred. Hence soul meant ‘blood’:

“Only be sure that thou eat not the blood; for the blood is the life, and thou may set not eat the life with flesh”. (Deut 12:23)

The term for 'soul' was Ruah' and it means the dynamic, moving and animating state of human being, which is conspicuously seen in strong emotions. Again this is called "the breath of God's nostril'.

In Hebraism, man is moved by flesh and animal desires, so man as


a creature of flesh was the lower and carnal man. Hence, man had to realize his spiritual being by carrying war on his carnal passions. Thus the ethical and spiritual part, and lower and carnal part of the soul are distinguishable but inseparable in man. For gaining immortality, the lower man has to be subjugated, conquered and transformed into a spiritual man. When Spinoza talks of conquering passions and when Kant presents the case of immortality for achieving 'holy will,' then they really think in terms of the old Hebraic and Pauline teaching of man as an inseparable psychophysical being.

For St. Paul therefore, immortality does not mean the escape of the soul from the prison house of the body. In fact, he meant the sanctification and redemption of the body. But other notions have also to be mentioned in order to clarify the concept of immortality.

The Christian theologians and philosophers from St. Paul and St. Augustine to St. Gregory, Peter Lombard and St. Thomas and Scotus Erigena emphasized the Holy Trinity and soul's redemption, since Christ came down to sacrifice his blood for the redemption, the soul should follow the principle of 'Agape'- mystical union with God through His son. To St. Paul, this union is not possible in the carnal body in which the spirit is suffocated. He draws a distinction between 'carnal body' and 'spiritual body'. St. Augustine, following Plato, makes soul superior to body and says that soul has three important aspects, i.e., Being knowledge and will. He preached the immortality of soul and does not grant the pre existence of soul.

Christianity believes that the essence of the soul is hidden. Besides, emphasis is also given on transmigration of soul, and the doctrine of immortality. The Greeks took soul as pre-existent, but Christianity does not think of the soul as pre-existent. Because God created the world and
Christianity believes in pious souls that attain salvation. There is resurrection of souls and day of judgment for them. On the day of resurrection the souls return and enter into their renovated material frame and after judgment God allows them entrance either to paradise or Hell. Besides, it is interesting to note that there are body soul, soul-God, incarnation, Immortality, God-evil connections in religious and philosophical thought of Christianity.

The Platonic and Aristotlelian tradition exerted immense influence on the history of western thought, particularly the doctrine of soul. Plato's doctrine of the soul rooted in the history – the ghost soul in the pre-Homeric time. In Olympian religion (the Homeric epic) the soul was understood to be a shadowy image living in the body. And it departs by the mouth or open wound of the dying. The soul in the mystery-religions played an important role in schemes of personal redemption and mystic union with the Gods. Orphics set forth a theology teaching the doctrine of its distinct nature. The pythagoreans set forth the purification rites. According to Plato the soul is immortal self moving, which comprehends to eternal truth and is independent of the fluctuations of the senses.

According to Aristotle, all material things are be souled. Soul is a vital principle pervading the world of life and mind. The world is not a split sepatation between two things of soul and body; the two are intermingled.

It is noteworthy that the religious philosophical cults in the Graeco-Roman world gave more emphasis on the practical than on the theoritical interests. Stoicism taught the doctrine of the logos, the world-reason, the soul being an off shoot of five material substance. The word pheuma, a kind of pervasive spirit was introduced by the stoics. Thus a trichotomy

(32)
was re-introduced into the stream of thought. The Hebrew and Greek thought began to be mingled in the third century B.C. specially among the jews of Alexandria in Egypt. Philo, a liberal theologian as well as the forerunner of the platonic mystic Plotinus (204-269) joined Platonism and stoicism. The Pentateuch adopted the view of pre-existence of souls and he believed that the logos was the intermediary between the Supreme Being and the world, speaking of the sojourn in human flesh as an unfortunate descent of the soul. He identified the stoic preuma with the breath of the Hebrew God and the reason of Plato and of Aristotle in a manner of dichotomous doctrine. An author of the Fourth Gospel identified Jesus as intermediary logos. The N.T. does not provide a clear statement of theoretical human psychology. Passage in the Pauline writings instruct a division into two parts; and others a trichotomy (e.g.i. Thess. 5.23 of also Hebrews 4.12). In the Gospels psyche and pneuma are used synonymously. The psyche emphasized on the idea of individual personatily. F-c. Porter writes, “The present body which does not rise, Paul calls not physical or material but psychical, a body filled for the human soul, psyche, the word of honour in Plato’s hope, is lowered in Paul, and made inseparable from the physical, to which in Plato it is absolutely contrasted; and the word spirit pneuma, which to the Greeks was more material and less personal than psyche, and contained less promise and potency of immortality for man, is exalted and becomes the essential nature of the risen Christ and so of risen Christians; it becomes also – the expression for that present experience of the indwelling Christ – It would seen that to Paul the word “body” means individual personality, and is essential in his thought to the distinction and the permanence of the separate self.”

The Hebraic and Greek ideas of the soul were mixed by early Christian thought in various forms and degrees. (of the synthetic philosophical theology of element of Alexandria and the systematic theology of origine who wedded tradition and speculation into a vast structure) Influenced by Neoplatonism (which had taught the attributeless one producing in a Nous or clear intelligence that in turn, originates a world-soul from which, in turn arises individual immaterial souls whose essence is the spark of Divinity.

St. Augustine taught the divine origin, unique character of human soul, its immortal destiny and its created beginning. So he established a standard for later Christian orthodoxy. Aquinas influenced St. Augustine in later catholic thought. The platonic and Neoplatonic conceptions showed a clear way to the Aristotelian. Aquinas followed Aristotle's naturalism because he holds that soul is the form of the body; but the doctrine of Aristotle was denied by him. The doctrine held that the active reason is separable. To Acquinas, the soul was a whole and is an immaterial substance but it is well connected with nature and it is the form of the body (Aristotelianism).

According to the Aquinas there is a hierarchy of soul, reaching from the lowest (those souls bound up with matter without the capacity to dominate) crossing through degrees and reaching the higher stages in the intellection of human being. This higher quality assures its supremacy, independence, its character of separability and immortality. The hierarchy continued in forms higher than men, other than angels to the form of forms, God. Man's soul possesses some common qualities with the lower forms although it is higher, but his soul is lower with regard to the world of spirits. Man's souls posses both natural and super natural setting. Man's soul does not pre-exist. The state for man is the re-union of body and soul.
According to the influence in Catholic thought of the Aristotelian naturalism (the close union of soul and body) the soul is regarded as a distinct entity. For Christianity the soul seeks release from mundane connection and its redemption out of the world is sought with emphasis upon other worldliness and the promise of heaven, redemption which marks the soul as a wholly unique and its nature as the supreme end of life's adventure.

There remains, in Catholicism, alternate emphasis upon the platonic and Aristotelian thought. In modern thought, Descartes proclaimed that both soul and body are separate entity although having strange commerce with each other during the brief span of life. The protestant and Catholic orthodox circles found the platonic concept to their liking.

Definition of Soul:

According to the most historians of religion the soul is the basic ingredient of religion. To the founder of modern anthropology, E.B. Tylor, the conception of the soul was, as he states, "the very fons et origo of the conceptions of spirit and deity in general."\(^{45}\)

From the practical point of view it is seen that everyone has followed Tylor's footsteps. A.E. Crowley, was very insistent that we owe to it the idea of "an order of spiritual beings and of a spiritual world existing now and here after"\(^{46}\) and he quotes the Dutch Sinologist, de Groot, to the effect that the human soul is the original form of all kinds of beings of higher order.

\(^{45}\) Primitive Religion, Its nature and origin, Copyright (C) 1937 by Paul Radin. Copyright (C) 1957 by Dover Publication, INC New York, p. 268.

\(^{46}\) Ibid., p. 268.
Classification of Soul:

According to Bacon there are two kinds of souls, one is divine which is meant for religion and the other is irrational which is meant for scientific study. Such soul is known as invisible, material, living in the head and moving along the nerves to the different parts of the body. This is the seat of mental functions.\(^\text{47}\) (Radhakrishnan p-182)

Soul not body and mind is the real personality in man:

It is commonly believed that man's personality is identified with his physical body. But Islam, Christianity and Hinduism refute this assumption. The "Holy Bible" has stated with the argumentation that soul is the real personality in man and not the body. 'The Bible' speaks:

"Tribulation and anguish upon every

Soul of man that does evil". (Room 2:9)\(^\text{48}\)

If all the functions are said to be effectuated by the soul, it implies that the real person in man is the soul which is within him.

Theosophists present their view that body is not man, because it changes continuously; mind is not man, because mind is frequently changed. But there is a permanence in man which is the main identity among all kinds of embodiments. And there is no change in the identity from the infancy till the date. The body and the surroundings may change, but the identity given by soul will remain the same. On the whole, all things are changeable in this dappled and variegated world. But one thing is unchanging which is within us and it is the real. A changeable thing can not be real. Only it can

\(^{47}\) Radhakrishnan p. 182 cited in Departed soul in the land of mystery, Das De, Gourmohan 1916 Calcutta Rupa 1981, p. 179

\(^{48}\) The Bible (2:9) cited in All about the soul, Madhava, Niseema Printers 1998, p. 30.
be the real which perceives change. Change can not perceive change. Only the permanent or constant element within can perceive the change.

It is a mystery to note that this unchanging, immortal and constant thing is present in every being or particle. We have come from the same source and we are proceeding towards the same goal.49

The ancients are said to have told that the Divine self is present in all beings. But it does not shine forth in all beings. The real thing is concealed in man and it may be realized by any human being within himself. Everybody should realize that reality in order to shine forth and experience Almighty God within him.

Madhava said "the entity who knows sensations and causes actions is the soul. Sensations grasped and enjoyed/suffered by the soul." Some rationalists advance their argument that man can cognize all sensations by their brain only. Again scientists state that there are some particular separate centres in the brain with which each sensory organs are related and to which it transmits the sensations collected by it. In this connection Madhava recited that "all sensations are received and cognized by one entity within the body". In this connection Bhagavad Gita (15:9) demonstrated that the real entity is the soul50:

"Depending on the ear, eyes, skin, tongue, nose, and the mind, his soul experiences the sensations."

So it appears that only one entity within the body receives and cognizes all sensations. Besides, the philosophers expound that first the sensations enter the sensory organs and these sensations are transmitted to the brain from those organs, again from the brain to the mind, and from


the mind to the intellect, again from the intellect to the soul and then the soul cognizes and experiences them.

Virtually, the body – even including the brain has no ability to cognize or experience any sensation. It is only an insentient matter which is designed for receiving various sensations from various objects and to convey them to the soul. Only the soul is able to cognize and experience sensations. After the soul has left the physical body, sensations are not cognized or experienced by the body. It is the only entity which can receive sensations and functions in the body can be considered as the person in a human being. So only the soul is the person in man but not the body and his brain.

Soul behaves like a person. Virtually the soul is an incorporeal person which is much more than a power. Every human being can do according to his sweet will, because the soul within him wishes to act so.

According to Bhagavad Gita (2:22) the corporal body is only a covering for the soul, soul discards this transient body and accepts a new fresh body when it becomes old or worn-out. In this way a new life begins. We can observe this from the verse of 'Bhagavad Gita' :

"As a person, casting off worn-out clothes, 
Takes on other fresh clothes, so does the 
Soul, casting off worn-out bodies takes on other fresh bodies".51

However it means that the physical body is just like a covering to the soul and the soul is only the living entity in a man. It is conspicuous that life consumes body after body, and body assumes life and life bearing a fresh name.

51. Ibid., p. 29.
Dr. Jan Stevenson has confirmed the above mentioned phenomenon in a scientific way. Soul is the eternal thing and the body is its external covering for a scheduled period. The covering can not be taken as the real thing, it is only the thing covered by it.

Thinking men, in all times and in all climes, have become inquisitive of the mystery of life and death, of body and soul. And the inquiry is being continued by them mainly by the western scientists. The primitive thinkers who tried to know the secrets of life and death, have reached the conclusion that within the material body of man, there is an invisible entity which is called soul and that life implies the presence of the soul in the body and death denotes the departure of soul from body. It is significant to note that soul is the real personality in man. But rationalists deny the existence of an invisible soul in man. They argue that man is his body and life is a kind of energy which is maintained by the body for working. Till 1960, the medical science held material body as the functional unit which collects force from food, stores energy with it and circulates energy to its different organs for divers works and denies any extra agent like soul dwelling in the body to activate it. But now a days the majority of men believe in the existence of soul in every living man and its survival even after death of the body.

**Soul is an entity distinct from body:**

The soul does not feel that the body is sick, tired and weak. It implies that the soul is not the part of body. It is such an entity that which is quite distinct from the body. By and large, the soul remains in a physical body for a stipulated time. After the immediate death and before disintegration of the body, if the entity soul re-inters into the body, it revives to life. The

old Testament express it thus.

"And he cried unto the Lord and said..............

I pray thee, Let this child's soul come

Into him again. And the Lord heard the voice

Of Elijah, and the soul of the child came

Into him again, and he revived".53 (1 kings 17:21,22)

Bhagavatham (6:16:1-22) describes that, when king Chitra Ketu's son expired. He became disheartened and so Narada came to console him.

And on being requested by him the soul of the son re-entered his body. However the revived son consoled the king whose heart was full of grief by delicate speeches. After that the soul departed from the body again.

Life after life (p-79,83) narrates that patients revived in modern hospitals in America stated that they are revived when their souls re-entered their (dead) bodies. Twenty cases suggestive of Reincarnation (p-34-52) tells death of a boy of 3½ years and his revival a few hours later with the soul of a married man who died a few days before. The revived body reveals fastes, talents and memories of the new soul in him. These assertions demand that the soul can enter a body, remain in the body, and can discard the body. It denotes that the soul is an entity distinct from the material body and it can behave or act like a free being.

The unity of God:

Christianity holds that there is a universal influx from God into the

53. The Old Testament (1 Kings of 21, 22) Recited in Madhava All about soul/Madhava rev. ed Kochi; p. 12.
souls of men of the truth that there is a God, and that He is one. The entire Holy Scripture, and all the Christian world, teach that there is a God and that He is one."^{54}

Now it is obvious that the entire Holy scripture teaches us that there is only a God, because in its in mosts it is nothing but God, and that it is nothing but the divine which goes forth from Almighty God; because it was dictated by God. Jesus said :-

\textit{Without Me you are unable to do anything (John xv.5);}

Anything which pertains to charity and faith. This influx which is into the souls of men because the human soul is the highest part of man, and the influx from Almighty God which enters into the things that are below.

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Anything which pertains to charity and faith. This influx which is into the souls of men because the human soul is the highest part of man, and the influx from Almighty God which enters into the things that are below.

The truth which constitute faith flow in, it is true, through the hearing, and are implanted in the mind, that is below the soul. However, by means of such truths human being receives the influx from God through the soul. However, by means of such truths human being receives the influx from God through the soul.

As a consequence of the Divine influx into the human souls, there is in every man an internal dictate about a God and that He is only one. But, still, there are some persons who deny God, and some persons who confess nature as god, and some persons who acknowledge many gods, and some persons who worship images as gods. However, Christians acknowledge one God; and it is evident from their established creed in the following manner:

The catholic faith is that we worship one God in trinity, and the trinity in unity.\(^55\)

There are three Divine persons, Father, Son, and the Holy spirit but yet there are not three Gods, there is only one God. We see one person of the Father, another person of the Son, again, another of the Holy Spirit but their God-head is one, and their majesty and glory is equal. Thus it is obvious that the Father is God, the son is God, and the Holy spirit is God. We are forbidden to say by the Catholic religion that there are three Gods or three Lords. So we see the principle of unity in diversity in Christianity. Such is the faith of Christianity to respect the unity of God.3 Christ, God\(^56\) and human are not two but one person; again as the flush and the rational soul are one man, Hence, God and man are one Jesus Christ.

The Relation of soul to body:

There is a deep relation between soul and body. Soul can not be identified without body and body can not be active without soul. Body is entirely functionless if there is not soul within it. On the whole, with the relation or union of soul and body human being is constituted.

Bhagwan Dev Atma holds that soul can never exist and function

\(^{55}\) Ibid., p. 9.

\(^{56}\) Ibid., p. 10.
without a living body having brain and nervous system. Soul can never be conscious of anything without such a living body. It can not gather knowledge without this medium. It can not feel love and hatred, pain and pleasure in case of anything or object, nor manifest any other activity. So, if the soul is not able to construct its body and is not able to remain within it, then it certainly dies and even its living body dies. Thus the entire human being becomes extinct.

Similarly, if at the time of death of the gross body, the human soul can not build a subtle body for the sake of it in which it can live like it lived in respect of the gross body, then the whole being of man dies.

But at the time of death if the soul is able to build from its entire gross body -- the finer living cells or particles which are stored there in and construct out of them, by means of its constructive power, a body is clearly identical in form to its gross body, it is finer in its essence, which lives closely related to it and continues the pilgrimage of life.

The mortal persons have three kinds of bodies of their own. They are casual, subtle and gross. The first is known as Nescience or ignorance, the second is subtle or etherial body and the third is the body of ours. And the soul lies except them all.

Material or our gross bodies which are with flesh and blood are nothing except the vehicles or instruments for all the activities of the soul. We function during our mental, emotional and spiritual levels through these vehicles and instruments in our every birth. They are very finer materials. During our span of life higher ambition and right living gradually enhance our consciousness to act. Then the souls will handle us to higher planes, the realm of love and beauty.

57. Das De, Gour Mohan, 1916 Departed soul in the land of mystery, Calcutta etc. Rupa 198/it was quoted from the Mandula U.P. verse III - 105 Rig. Veda says about this truth in the verses 1. 24. 12 and 1.133.
But it is quite impossible for them who don't care regarding higher thought and right living. In respect of them the hidden power of their souls lie inactive and stationary. So, there is a little possibility for them to go to the higher level in their next births.

If we persist on going on the path of higher thought and right living in our every birth, then we will positively reach a state in which we may achieve the eternal truth. So our material bodies are not inferior.

The ethereal body consists of Seventeenth things. Five sensory organs, five motor organs, five elements (vital force, they are Prana, Udana, Apana, Vyana and Samana. They are named, as their diversity of functions and modifications).

These are very delightful and then mind and conscience (Buddhi) and it carries the merits of present and previous births.

It is surrounded by stratum of sheaths in which all rest. The sheaths are in the same shape and one inside the other. The ethereal body's sense objects (sense-pleasures) as Sankaracharya holds are even more poisonous in their evil effects than the poison of cobra. Its poison can kill a person if he is bitten by it. But the sense objects can kill a person who even looks at them (vivekehdumani, verse-77). Even the man who is well-versed in shastras (the Hindu Scriptures) feels it very difficult to get rid of these sense-objects.

Although the conscience of the ethereal body controls it and desire to put it in a legitimate way and check it from going to evil path with the help of the light of the soul. It is very troublesome for it to achieve the goal. If those sense-objects are not controlled. When work is completed

58. Ibid., p. 173.
59. Ibid., p. 173.
by the conscience, the soul stands a loof.

Next is the causal body or Nescience that is known as unmanifested. We must have to enter-into it to unfold it properly as it is the last hindrance before reaching the door of a room where it lives.

Through higher thought and right living man can increase his conscience and can reach to the door of that room but can not enter inside the room as Nescience is the barrier for him. But man with his supramental power and the blessings of the soul (Atman) can remove obstruction (Nescience) and then unfold the inward hidden power of his soul to achieve his goal.

The relation of Soul to God:

The relation of soul to God is just like the relation of rays to Sun. We can stand in a common point that God is the source of souls as the sun is the source of rays or beams. So it is comprehensive that there is an inseparable and burning relation between soul and God.

However, we can come to the moot point that what is the use of knowing about the world when we don't know ourselves. Every human being is alone. Because he has come alone and will go alone. He belongs to nobody and nobody belongs to him, nor does he see anything which is his.

Nevertheless, it is our first and foremost duty to know ourselves. The Upanishads read: "know thyself then to know this world. The self is to be known or won by the truth and integral knowledge." There is a significant saying that one who knows himself he knows his God.3 The Upanishads

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60. Das De, Gour Mohan, 1916 Departed soul in the land of mystery, Calcutta etc. Rupa1981, It was quoted from the Mandula up verse III-1.5 Rig Veda says about this truth in the verses 1, 24, 12 and 1.133.
therefore rightly observe that this soul is Brahman (God).

Jesus Christ was son as well as incarnation of God. But he was called "spirit" of God. Being son or incarnation he was the 'spirit of God'. So our common intellect can easily grasp the real relation between soul and God. Although soul is created by God Himself, still there are some common qualities found in God and soul: (1) Soul is eternal like God (2) Soul is indivisible like God. (3) Soul is unmeasurable like God. So here appears the manifestation of relation between soul and God.

However, soul is the strongest element in man as well as in the world. Because without soul man as well as the whole universe is inactive and invain. So soul is the most valuable thing among all the creations of God. However according to Christianity there is deep relation between soul and God.

In Christian thought the relation of the soul to God demands the rejection of any form of monistic absorption, as clearly as of naturalistic degradation. In spite of the quasi pantheism of some forms of Christian mysticism. And the taking of quasi-Pantheistic system by some Christian thinkers the normal testimony of the Christians consciousness is to a clear cut individuality, carrying with it a real freedom, in upward as well as downward relation.

Besides, the experience of Christian fellowship with God point to a relation of the soul to Him so intimate that the completer the surrender of the soul to its creator and redeemer, the fuller and richer is the soul's individual life.

**Immortality of soul:**

From the collection of evidences by Dr. Raymond Moody and Dr.
Ian Stevenson\textsuperscript{61} it is obvious that when a person dies, then his soul
continues like a separate invisible being and it may reincarnate as a new
living person in various times. It shows that soul is an eternal and immortal
being and it becomes a living being again and again, at various intervals.

In case of immortality St. Thomas followed the old Platonic arguments
which was the common view of the Christian and Arabian world. After being
differentiated from the body human soul can not be dissolved. The soul of
man knows universals and is, therefore, immaterial and if it is real form (a
living principle) it can not be destroyed, because reality (life) implies the
continued existence.\textsuperscript{62}

Man has sensuous desire or will corresponding to sensible
knowledge. He is not firmly determined in his wills and actions by sense
impressions, but he has a faculty of self-determination, whereby he is able
to act or not to act, that the will may decide. Intelligence moves the will by
placing before it an object, a purpose or an end. On the other hand, the
will is "the prime mover in the kingdom of the soul" because it prompts
sensibility and intelligence to action. Therefore, will and intelligence
determine mutually one-another. for St. Thomas, but the intellect takes
precedence over the will. Man is free because he is intelligent and rational.
Man is not driven to act anything by an external cause without his consent.

Plato advances the arguments for immortality of soul in the Phaedo
are here based on the idea that everything has some peculiar evil or vicious
state which destroys it. But in case of soul we see the opposite of its
peculiar excellence or goodness, which is illustrated earlier. The peculiar
evil of soul is moral evil or vice. And anything could annihilate the soul, it


\textsuperscript{62} Thilly Frank, Revised by Ledger Wood, A History of philosophy, Printed in India, at
the Indian University Press. Allahabad and Published by Central Book Depot, Allahabad, p. 232.
would be this refusal of its real being. But vice does not actually cause death.

The destruction of the body is caused by the body's evils, but these evils can not destruct the soul. The soul has been described earlier as possessing several 'parts'. But it is improper to think of it as like a material thing made up of some parts into which it can be destroyed. Both Plato and Aristotle are of the opinion that reason (nous) is man's true self and this is eternal essence. But it is evident that the conjoint soul with the body entails the desires and functions which are absolutely necessary to moral life. But it is seen that these 'forms' or 'aspects' of soul disappear with the destruction of the body, provided that the soul has become 'purified' by cordial devotion to the pursuit of wisdom. So from the speech of Aristotle and Plato it is evident that our soul is immortal and never perishes.

According to Christianity soul is eternal. But nothing can be eternal which has been created. Jesus indicates that "Don't be afraid of those who kill the body but can not kill the soul: rather be afraid of God, who can destroy both body and soul in Hell." (Matl- 10, 28) However it is evident that the doctrine of immortality is very clear in Christianity.

Many Christian Philosophers believed that after resurrection soul lives eternally, so soul is immortal. St. Augustine holds that the soul is immortal, Because, it is living and immutable for him. After death it directs and forms its destiny.

Berkeley thinks that the soul is invisible, indestructible, in corporal, unscattered and immortal.

God created nature, angels and human souls. Angels are of so many species as there are individual. Angels are purely immaterial spirits. But natural objects are corporeal. There are plant souls and animal souls also.
But they are not possessing any existence apart from matter. Man is both matter and pure spirit, he is one person having two principles of being in the unity of a complete substance. The human soul is an immaterial "subsistent" form, the entelechy of physical body, which is sensitive, organic and intelligent. The one soul, the vital principle of the body, which has three separate functions: They are the sensitive function, the moving function and the intellectual function. The embryo has the organic and sensitive soul; at birth the intellectual soul is added. Almighty God originates the soul when the body is ready to receive it. Will and intellegence compose the essence of human soul and separate it from other souls. Although it conspicuously combined with an organic body, its intellectual countenance is hyperorganic, which is free from the body. The soul is a sensitive, intelligent and vital principle, a trinity that forms and moves the body for various actions.

Hence, the intelligent soul can exercise its activities without a body and it is obviously immortal." After the dissolution of the body it can remain active." As the Arabians held there is not one universal intelligence: although there were, man who will not be rational and moral being, his willing and thinking will be the work of something distinct from him. After death, the individual soul continues to exist in all its parts, as intellect soul and organic soul - for these compose one single soul and forms a fresh and new body for itself like its old one.

Knowledge is the highest function of human soul and the highest stage of this knowledge is superrational. The soul desires to become one with its object, God through super natural contemplation.

The soul contains a divine "uncreated spark"; and thus its mingling

63. Ibid., pp. 231, 323.
with the divine mind is not man's own act but an act of God within man's soul. The complete process of knowledge is an act rising from particulars to unity; it is not stopped till it is passed beyond all differences and has entered "the silent desert into which no difference has ever penetrated which is immovable and supreme over all oppositions and divisions."

Morality brings the soul back to God. In performing this, man must reject his individuality, that is only accident and nothing more, "put off the nothing, and all creatures are one". "who ever would see God must be dead to himself and buried in God, in the unrevealed desert Godhead, to become again what he was before he was." "The highest degree of self-estrangement is poverty. He is poor who knows nothing, desires nothing, and has nothing so long as a man still has the will to do God's will or craves God or eternity or any particular thing whatsoever, he is not yet quite poor, and not yet quite perfect." "Act for the sake of acting, love for the sake of loving; and even if there were no heaven or hell, love God for His goodness." "Morality consists not in doing, but in being." Love is the principle of all virtues. Right action is the consequence of the spirit of love. Salvation is not dependent upon the outward forms of conduct as fasting and mortifying the flesh. Goodness mainly depends on the spirit in which the action is done. There are no degrees of virtues, because all virtues are one, if any body acts contrary to God's will, it implies that he does not possess the love of God.

By contemplation, a person should not pass his all time, because the contemplation would be selfish if it is beyond moral action. Man becomes reunited with God through grace, help and love. As a man, he contributes to God's goodness by coming back to him and thus enabling him to communicate with himself. Beyond the help of individual soul God can not

64. Ibid., p. 252.
know Himself. Man can effectuate his work through Him. In returning to God, man becomes united with God again. Almighty God enters into man's being in order that he, in tern, may become God.

"Man is endowed with self Consciousness, and must make the most possible of it before he can rise above it ---- Jesus in the parable, says : God has given to each man the self conscious faculties in varying measure, whether he (an given individual) shall rise beyond self consciousness into the kingdom of heaven (cosmic consciousness) depends not so much upon the measure of these faculties as upon the use made of them. That there is much truth in this preposition is certain. It, on the other hand, the cultivation of these faculties is neglected the 'man remains hopelessly on the self conscious plant; there has been is and always will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."65

When a man reaches the state of cosmic consciousness. He sees a spiritual light, becomes very happy and feels a kind of toy in his heart, which he can not describe in detail. Ordinary human eyes are not made to see it, which is the supreme Lord Himself. That man can only see its outword form. The inner soul is perceived only by the eyes of the spirits. The God vision is not made by mental thought. It is a God-gifted one. It is a great bliss from Him for the disclosure of the truth from beyond the infinite mind.

Some of the saint like men who saw the spiritual light have uttered in this way, "joy always joy. The deep, deep ocean of joy within, singing joy unending."66

Jesus Christ attained the state of cosmic consciousness. But in his teachings he never referred to it. When Pontius Pilate asked him as to the

65. Das De, Gour Mohan, 1916 Departed soul in the land of mystery, Calcutta Rupa 1981 p. 201
nature of the truth, he kept silence, He did not answer anything. (Ibid - 202)

1.12 Modern Concept of Soul:

The Modern period begins with the British domination in India. From the last decade of the mediaeval period to the commencement of modern era, Indian thought is found to be in the grip of darkness.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, and Dr. S. Radhakrishnan were the most prominent thinkers of modern India deal with the problem of man's nature and destiny in a comprehensive way and take full account of man's spiritual as well as empirical existence. The Indian philosophy of twentieth century is traditional. It reinterprets the classical Indian thought in a new form and with a new orientation. According to Tilak, Gandhiji, Tagore and Radhakrishnan, man is essentially spiritual. The modern thinkers conceive man as a psychophysical being. He is subject to the sufferings of life and to death. But as a spirit or atman, he is eternally free from sufferings and death, from the bondage of nature and enjoys eternal bliss. The arousing of Atman and the spiritualization of human being lead to the emancipation of the entire human being.

The self is quite distinct from the Aggregate itself. It is not perceivable like other things of the world. Considering that we can not deny the existence of self. The Atman is a knower itself. Hence, it is not the subject matter of knowledge, Tilak holds "one has to come to the ultimate conclusion, that there exists in this activated living Body some comprehensive and potient power which is more powerful and more comprehensive than the various dependent and onesided workmen in the body who work in grades rising from organs ........ to life, Activity, Mind and Reason"67

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Lokamanya Tilak (1856-1920)

Tilak acknowledges the Gita's conception of the consideration of the body and the (Atman) and holds that the question of Atman has to be considered from two points of view. The first, man's bodily and mental actions are to be examined. From the examination, man is to know the existence of the Atman as an owner of the body. This method is known as the consideration of the body and the Atman as told by the 'Gita'. The Atman which controls the body with all its components. This is called the purusa of the Samkhya and the Ksetrajna of the Vedanta systems. The word 'I am' is the "most excellent proof" for the existence of the Atman. Tilak holds that it is improper to accept matter as aksara or imperishable or immutable" though it may be avyakta, (imperceptible)". The Atman is aksara whereas the body is ksara. By examining the two primary principles arrived at through the consideration of the body and the Atman, and the mutable and the Immutable, we become conscious of the fundamental element from which both these elements have evolved. This is known as Absolute self (Paramatman) Tilak points out, "The fundamental element which we discover by further examining these two elementary principles arrived at by the consideration of the body and the Atman and of the Mutable and the Immutable, and which is the Element from which both these elements have been envolved and which is beyond (para) both of them, and is the Root Element of everything, is called the Absolute self (Paramatman) or the purusottamah."\(^{68}\)

The Vedanta philosophy also affirms the parabrahman as askara and avyakta. Tilak admitted his debt to the "Bhagavadgita" by saying that All these ideas are to be found in the Bhagavadgita.

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According to Tilak the meaning of the word yoga is very complex. The conception of the yoga is the control of the mental impulses by means of control of the breath. The "Bhagavadgita" does not support this view. Yuj is the root of yoga which means to Join. Its exact meaning is union, addition, combination or staying together. In such manner, the word yoga is being used in the "Bhagavadgita". Tilak opines that "in order to explain.

What particular skill, means, method, or process is principally signified in the Gita by the use of the word 'yoga', this word has intentionally been clearly defined in the Gita itself as, " yogah karmasu kausalam", i.e, "yoga' means some special skill, device, intelligent method, or graceful way of performing Actions". The term karma is derived from the root ky, it means doing or activity. Bhagavad Gita prescribes that karma comprises all types of activities which a man performs, — it does not matter whether these activities are bodily or mental or vocal.

Rabindranath Tagore: (1861-1941)

Tagore feels the reality and freedom of the soul in human being. But there is the divine spirit in man, which is the part of God. It is organically connected with God. Tagore thinks that all selves have distinct reality, and they are related with God. Rabindranath differentiates the empirical self of man from the spirit. But man has the ever-changing empirical self. As Tagore holds, " On the surface of our being we have the ever changing phases of the individual self, but in the depth there dwells the Eternal Spirit of human unity beyond our direct knowledge.

Man's ego-centric motive obstruct his clear vision of the soul; for these egoistic motives refer merely to the limited self in man. "when we",

69. Ibid., p. 28, 29.
70. SharmaNilima, 20th century Indian philosophy, Bhartiya Vidya Prakasana, Delhi (India) Varanasi p. 80.
Tagore writes, "are conscious of our soul, we perceive the inner being that transcends our ego and has its deeper affinity with the All." When man's soul is mingled with the egoistic self then the former loses all its identifications. The soul knows its truth by its unity with others. When man fails to understand the law of uniformity in nature. This law of uniformity is that lies between human soul and the workings of the world. The realization of this unity among man and the world provides him joy. This unity that he obtains with a greater world by understanding is partial, when that which has been achieved through love is complete. All kinds of barriers and differences are vanished and man's soul finds its fulfillment in it by transcending the barriers of his own life. In this way, the human soul feels the immortal touch of the infinite. Through love man realizes and understands other self and discovers that he has unity with the All. "In love the sense of difference is obliterated and the human soul fulfils its purpose in perfection, transcending the limits of itself and reaching across the threshold of the infinite."\(^\text{71}\)

The law of unity that man has discovered within his soul, and it extends its relations through the medium of art, literature and science, religion and society. The contemplators of the world exposes this inward unity of the soul fully. Says Tagore, "the life of the soul, not of the self, and thus they prove to us the ultimate truth of humanity. We call them Mahatma, "the men of the great soul." In this way, man can find the soul within him. Tagore observes that man has an intuitive vision of the Infinite in his soul. It is not achieved by his reasoning capacity, and not by his gradual aggregation of knowledge. Intuition can originate union of the soul with the supreme. "we can not attain," says Tagore," the supreme soul by successive addition of knowledge acquired bit by bit even through all eternity, because

\(^{71}\) Ibid., p. 81.
he is one, he is not made up of parts; we can only know him as heart of our hearts and soul of our soul; we can only know him in the love and joy we feel when we give up our self and stand before him face to face.\textsuperscript{72}

Tagore has accepted the doctrine of rebirth like the upanisadic thinkers. Rabindranath has used the word rebirth in a figurative sense. It denotes the attainment of new life by the attainment of unity with the divine and the whole of creation. This is the rebirth of man. Tagore says, “the man —— who has gone through the ceremony of the discipline of self restraint and high thinking for a period of at least twelve years; who has come out simple in wants, pure in heart, and ready to take up all the responsibilities of life in a disinterested largeness of spirit. He is considered to have had his rebirth from the blind envelopment of self to the freedom of soul life; to have come into living relation with his surroundings to have become at one with the all.\textsuperscript{73} According to Tagore, human soul is immortal. It exhibits itself in a finite body after death it goes to infinitive. Tagore observes, “(...) Life is dualistic; it has an appearance, as well as truth; and death is that appearance, that maya, which is an inseparable companion to life. Our self to live must go through a continual change and growth of form which may be formed a continual death and a continual life going on at the same time. It is really courting death when we refuse to accept death; when we wish to give the form of the self some fixed changelessness; when the self feels no impulse which urges it to grow out of itself; when it treats its limits as final and acts accordingly. Then comes our teacher’s call to die to this death; not a call to annihilation but to eternal life——— It is really asking us consciously to give effect to the inner most wish that we have in the depths of our nature.”

Both rebirth and immortality are active in their own fields. Selfish

\textsuperscript{72} Ibid., p. 82.

\textsuperscript{73} RNT, Sadhana, P. 31 cited in 20th century Indian philosophy. N. Sharma, p. 84.
human being can not gain final attainment in one life. So he has to be born again and again till he reaches the final goal. After final attainment he becomes united with the Supreme and there will be no difference between his life and universal life.

**Mahatma Gandhi : (1869-1948)**

Mahatma Gandhi is the most prominent personality of the twentieth century. Gandhiji holds that realization of "Truth or God" is the ultimate goal of the men. Therefore, man's life is to undergo certain ethical and spiritual disciplines for attaining that end. According to Gandhiji the disciplines like ahimsa, brahmacharya, fearlessness, bread-labour, non-possession, removal of social prejudices, swadeshi, and equality of all religions constitute very structure of satyagraha or Truth force or Source-force. Soul force is the greatest weapon to conquer political freedom as to attain spiritual destiny.

Gandhiji holds that there must be some law higher than destruction. This is the "Law of Life," — the law of ahimsa, the law that makes the life worth — living, the law which is responsible for the construction of well ordered human society.

To Gandhiji it is the law of love. "If love was Gandhiji declares, "not the law of life, life would not have persisted in the midst of death. Life is a perpetual triumph over the grave."74 so every man should work out of this law in his daily life. It is very hard for an ordinary man to achieve the mental state of non-violence.75 Non-violence is not mechanical but it is the pure quality of heart and soul and is to be acquired by strenuous training. Gandhiji declares, "The men who discovered for us the law of love were greater scientists than any of our modern scientists." In literature ahimsa means

75. Ibid., p. 113.
non-killing. The non-violence is the common religion to all men. It is not matter whether he is a rishi or a layman. If violence is of the brute, so non-violence is the law of human spirit. "The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law-to the strength of the spirit.

Gandhiji acknowledges the transmigration, rebirth and immortality of soul. Gandhiji believes that death is not the cessation of human life. Therefore, man should not fear death. After death another new life is started. But we don't remember the previous life. Human body is perishable, but soul is imperishable and eternal. The body is limited when it will reach its last ridge, the body destroys and new one takes its place. The eternal soul transmigrates from one form to another form to carry on its destiny. Gandhiji points out "A body that has outlived its usefulness will perish giving place to a new one. The soul is imperishable and continues to take on new forms for working out its salvation through acts of service, "The soul is one, but the bodies which she animates are many. We can not reduce the number of bodies; yet we recognize the unity of the soul.

Optimistically Gandhiji told, if he fails to establish the World-fellowship in this birth, he would attain the same in some other births —"Believing-in the theory of rebirth, I live, in the hope that if not in this birth, in some other birth, I shall be able to hug all humanity in friendly embrace". Anticipating rebirth, Gandhiji further says, "I once thought that I could finish the wheel of rebirth in this incarnation. I know now that I can not, and that I shall have to return to it. We can not escape it, but I hope it will only be once more that I come back to it".⁷⁶

Sri Aurobindo:

For Aurobindo life is nothing but veiled consciousness as matter is nothing but veiled life. Human consciousness is not the last stage in evolution. The potentiality for a higher life within lies is called the level of super mind by him. Aurobindo told in his book, The Life Divine, “The Absolute reality of the Absolute must not be a rigid indeterminable oneness, not an infinity vacant of all that is not our self-existence.” He told in another place of the same book,” The complete individual is the cosmic individual.”

He realized that matter contains within itself the potentiality of life and life for that of consciousness virtually the world and the individual are not illusory as both are expressions of the Supreme Lord. Because matter can easily untold life which can unfold consciousness.

Man can reach to the super mind through the four stages. They are Higher mind, illuminated mind, Intuitive mind and over mind. And except them stays supermind.

In ordinary level human mind is a mixture of both reason and unreason and both light and darkness. Purity of thought develops when it ascends to Higher Mind. Thus Higher mind intensifies the working condition of the ordinary mind. The man of the Higher Mind will ascend next to the second stage and this is called illuminated mind and it is illuminated by the light of the spiritual truth. In this stage one can see the inwardly visible light and it is known as the manifestation of Divine Reality. It is a spiritual light that comes from the supreme Lord.

Its next stage is that stage of Intuitive Mind. As Aurobindo holds,“Intuition is a power of consciousness nearer and more intimate to the

78. Ibid., p. 196, 197.
original knowledge by identity; for it is always, something that leaps out
direct from a concealed identity." He said again in this book, "Intuition is
always an edge or ray or out leap of a superior light." 79

Next and the last stage is the stage of over mind. In this stage ego-
sense is not present. It is completely lost in the Absolute. Over mind is a
power of cosmic consciousness which is the last of all stages. Cosmic
truth and knowledge can be implanted through this stage. Still it is observed
that the basis of ignorance cannot be removed totally. While man reaches
above this stage, which is supermind, can totally remove that Nescience
of that man. To Sri Aurobindo "only the supramental Force can entirely
overcome this difficulty of the fundamental Nescience." 80

Dr. S. Radhakrishnan : (born – 1888)

Dr. Radhakrishnan was one of the greatest religious philosophers of the
modern world. He has contributed immensely to the twentieth century Indian
philosophy.

Human self is a "living experience" which continues even after death.
Self's purpose is to develop individuality. It is not possible in one life to gain all
the values he strives for. Human soul which passes through the cycle of birth
and death. "Throughout nature life is preserved and continued through incessant
renewal. Life is a perpetual going on, never resting, always straining forward for
something that has not been but should be." 81

"Rebirth is change," Radhakrishnan writes, "within a general structural
progression. Death is not a unique event in our progress. It is part of a continually
recurring rhythm of nature, marking a crisis in the history of the individual. It is

79. The life divine, page 796 cited in Das De, Gour Mohan p. 197.
80. Ibid., p. 197.
81. Ibid., p. 231.
the moment when the self assumes a new set of conditions. 82

The soul uses the body according to its necessity. Radhakrishnan does not hold that human souls migrate to animal bodies after death. If each human being is characterized by its unity, then there must be an intimate bond between the body and the soul. So the soul acquired the body after death can not be completely different from the body it has left. According to Hinduism, the human soul can take rebirth in animal bodies. Radhakrishnan holds that the Hindu scriptures admit this idea of rebirth in a figurative sense. Here references are given to rebirth with animal qualities and not to rebirth with animal bodies. "It is possible that rebirth in animal form is a figure of speech for rebirth with animal qualities.

The Theory of rebirth apparently seems to be irreconciliable with the heredity. A man inherits his psycho-physical organism from his parents. If his physical existence is expounded clearly in terms of heredity, then there is no room for the doctrine of rebirth. Because, in that case it "is unnecessary to assume that it comes from another life." 83

But Hindu view holds that man is not only a body-mind organism, but he is self or spirit also. The self exceeds the limits of human's present existence, it has a long history. Hence, it can not be explained in terms of heredity. In this case, radhakrishnan observes, "It is simpler to hold that the self seeking for rebirth obtains embodiment in the frame offering the necessary conditions. The physical body derived from the parents according to the laws of heredity is appropriated by the conscious self." The soul chooses the body which is suitably fitted for it.

The most popular and logical argument against the theory of rebirth is the absence of memory of one's past life. In this case it is believed that the lack

82. Ibid., p. 231.
83. Ibid., p. 232.
of memory denotes the fact that death effaces the first personality and birth starts a second personality with similar character. Radhakrishnan holds that the continuous nature of the self is not at all touched by the absence of memory. "The metaphysical question of the continuity of the self is not in any way affected by the discontinuity of memory."\(^{84}\)

Man spontaneously admits that the previous stages of his life is mother's womb though he has no memory of that stage. Like present life, the future life is also valuable, though it lacks the memory of the past. In a sense, this lack of memory is a kind of bliss to man-kind, for reminiscence of his past life would have made his present life more complex.

84. Ibid., p. 233.