CHAPTER IV

THE VENAL CYCLE: AN EPILOGUE INTO THE ENUFESCENCE
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But thought's the slave of life, and life's time's fool,
And time, that takes survey of all the world,
 Must Have a Stop. 1
(Shakespeare)

In an essay on Shakespeare and Religion Huxley says:

And what about 'Religion'? The word is used to
 designate things as different from one another
 as 'Colonial and Octor', as 'fated-worship and
 the enlightenment of a Church, as the vast
 politics-theological financial organizations
 known as Churches and the intensely private
 visions of an ecstatic. AMonitor silence is
 a religion as is Verdi's Requiem. A sense of
 the blessed All Rightness of the universe is a
 religious experience and so is the sick soul's
 sense of self-loathing, of despair, of sin, in
 a world that is the scene of perpetual perishing
 and inevitable death. 2

1. In Search of Perennial Religion.

The unceasing questioning spirit of Aldous Huxley delves
into every aspect of human consciousness in quest of
answers to ultimate questions. As an artist and intellectual
he seems to be searching for a confident and affirmative
message to restore serenity and fulfillment to a frustrating
world. The search takes the form of a self-quest, a general
preoccupation with the self which distinguishes him from Blake
and other Christian mystics and establishes his affinity with
the mysticism of the Spaniards.

1. Time Must Have A Stop, p.209.

2. Julian Huxley (ed.), Aldous Huxley: A Memorial Volume,
    cit., pp.165-166.
Huxley had made an extensive study of different religious traditions of the world and seemed to have absorbed only those parts or systems congenial to his mind and adaptable to his own pattern of thinking. But of all the diverse thought and intellectual movements which had moulded him, the most influential in the shaping of his mind and art was Vedanta. His torn soul was tormented by doubts and uncertainties and struggling to free itself from its own cravings. His basic problem was how to overcome dualism and achieve unity in nature and consciousness. He was in need of some clue, some guidance or some philosophy which would aid and precipitate the inner activity of his mind. His personality had to be reintegrated, his inner self to be unified: And this would not be achieved so long as the sense of duality continued. Vedantic philosophy answered to his deepest craving and offered him a solution he had been struggling to find. It offered him a light at a time when he was passing through a spiritual crisis.

Fortunately, it was in 1937 that Huxley and Gerald Heard moved from Europe to settle in California and formed a group which included Charlie Chaplin, Krishnamurti, Anita Loos, Paulette Goddard, Christopher Isherwood, Edwin Hubble and Greta Garbo. Huxley became a distinguished member of Vedantic society and directed his entire energies to the exposition of Vedantic philosophy. In California he was directly exposed to yoga and Vedantic philosophy under the guidance of
Swami Prabhavananda of the Ramakrishna Mission who developed his personality more and more along the positive line of spiritual faith. Those were the years of intense spiritual activity. His writings of this period, though literary compositions, were of immense significance for their spiritual theme.

It is a fact that Vedantic mysticism has been more systematically developed in Huxley's later writings, but is not a feature altogether new in those works. It is rather a return to his former way of thinking. From the first volume of poems published under the title, The Burning Wheel, to his last essay Shakespeare and Religion, the Vedantic ideas are pervasively present in his works. The title of The Burning Wheel, significantly enough, seems to be an allusion from the Vedantic conception of an *alatchakra* (Manduka, Karika, Gauda pada). However, in his later works there is a growing inwardness, a mellowing of nature seeking solace in eternal being. He has elaborated the Vedantic concepts of *Tat-Tvam-Asi* (Thou Art That) and *Atmanam-Viditti* (Know thyself) and Buddhistic concept of *Tatha* or suchness in his later novels and non-fictional works: *Eoeds and Means*, *Perennial Philosophy*, *Themes and Variations*, *Eyeless in Gaza*, *After Many A Summer*, *The Time Must Have A Stop*, *Devils of Loudun*, *Island*, and his essays published in *Vedanta for the Western World*, and *Vedanta for the Modern Man*.

There are certain biographical incidents which show Huxley's pronounced understanding and deep love for Vedanta.
While describing Huxley's personality, Hans Beerman says:

His style of walk reminded me somewhat of the way Indian rishis with their highly developed kinesthetic sense move around in their ashrams. 1

Secondly, when Hans Beerman came to interview Huxley the first question he asked to the interviewer was about his "interest in The Bhagavad Gita, and the influence of this Vedic classic on the literary works of Herman Hesse, German Noble Prize Laureate." 2

Huxley has absorbed the Vedantic ideas and attitudes not accidentally but his complex personality goes through a process of evolution in discovering the truths of all the religions. He approaches religion with a scientific spirit, because for him religion is science-grounded and hence amenable to research. By research in the sphere of religion he means "pure intellectual intuition into nonsensuous, non-psychic, pure spiritual reality." 3

Huxley is against dogmatic Christianity because it exalts rituals and rites over immediate experience. He repudiates the vast "politico-theologico financial organization known" as religious churches. He finds the sects of Calvinism and

2. Ibid.
3. Time Must Have A Stop, p. 288
Puritanism most unsatisfactory because they have encouraged
dogmatism, tension, war and persecution as against compassion,
love, tolerance and understanding. He writes:

The Puritan was free to range the world,
blighting and persecuting as he went, free
to make life poisonous, not only for himself,
but for all who came near him. The Puritan
was and is a social danger, a public and
private nuisance of the most odious kind.
Baudelaire was a puritan inside out. Instead
of asceticism and respectability he practised
debauchery. The means he used were the
opposite of those employed by the puritans;
but his motives and theirs, the ends that he
and they achieved, were the same. He hated
life as much as they did, and was as
successful in destroying it. 1

In Ape and Essence, Huxley has projected an abysmal
picture of man because of man's deification, superstitious
rites and commitment to religious idolatry. He writes:

The brass bands give place to the most
glutinous of Wurlitzers, Land of Hope
and Glory to Onward, Christian Soldiers.
Followed by his Very Reverend Dean and
Chapter, the Right Reverend the Baboon-
Bishop of the Bronx advances majestic,
his crozier in his jeweled paw, to
pronounce benediction upon the two
Field Marshalissimos and their patriotic
proceedings. 2

Huxley abhors Christianity for its intolerance of heresy
and its contempt for secular truth. He bemoans the cruelty
of organized Catholicism towards their own priest because he
is not prepared to admit that he is in communion with the devil.
The crude institution of the inquisition is a powerful weapon

2. Ape and Essence, p.33.
for declaring the unbelievers to be heretics. In *The Devils of Loudun*, he writes:

Ecclesiastical history exhibits a hierarchy of hatred descending by orderly degrees from the church's official and ecumenical hatred of heretics and infidels to the particular hatreds of order for order, school for school, province for province and theologian for theologian. 1

Huxley extols Catholicism for many reasons, but he observes that this--too--is not free from certain shortcomings. The most serious drawback of this sect is that it does not give liberty to the individual. He writes:

Catholicism is probably the most realistic of all Western religions. Its practice is based on a profound knowledge of human nature on all its varieties and gradations. From the fetish worshipper to the metaphysician, from the tired business man to the mystic, from the sentimentalist and the sensualist to the intellectual, every type of human being can find in Catholicism the spiritual nourishment which he or she requires. For the sociable, unspiritual man Catholicism is duly sociable and unspiritual. For the solitary man it provides a hermitage and the most exquisite, the profoundest models of religious meditation; it gives the silence of monasteries and the bareness of the Carthusians and the devotional introspection of a Kenyon and St. Theresa, the subtleties of Pascal and Newman, the poetry of Crashaw and St. John of the Cross and a hundred others. The only people for whom it does not cater, are those possessed by that rare, dangerous and uneasy passion, the passion for liberty. 2

Huxley has portrayed ministers like Reverend Bodhidam in *Crome Yellow*, Reverend Pelvey in *Antic Hay*, and Mr. Thursley in *Eyeless in Gaza* who are ineffectual and incompetent:

1. *The Devils of Loudun*, p.22
a great gulf yawns between what they preach and what they actually practice. They propose to reform the world by tolerance, compassion and sincerity but in their private life they are arrogant and disgusting creatures.

Huxley also disapproves of Christianity because its founder St. Paul does not give any opportunity for the realization of the self.

Huxley came to conclusion that for every seeker of truth there must be a minimum working hypothesis as a starting point which he has elaborated in Time Must Have A Stop. He states them as follows:

He insists that the first requirement is a firm belief in the ultimate Ground which is the unmanifested principle of all manifestation. This idea, he directly borrows from the Chhandogya Upanishad. It is expressed in the saying of Tadjalan etc. that all living beings and things have come out of the ultimate source, are sustained by that very source, and get reabsorbed in that source.

The second requirement that he insists upon is that the Divine Ground is not merely transcendent but also immanent. This idea, again, is upanishadic. This also

1. Island, p.96.

"The man who invented Christianity - St. Paul"
"You see", she said "the highest possible ideals, and no methods for realizing them".

2. एको देवः सर्वोत्तमं गुणं: सर्वव्यापी सर्वप्रवृत्तान्तरात्मा.
   (Eko devah sarvabhutesu gudhah sarvavyāpi sarvabhūtāntarātma)
provides a base for the concept of incarnation which is possible only when we regard the Godhead as immanent. It is here that Hindu falls apart from the Semitic tradition of Judaism, Christianity and Islam because they advocate the absolute transcendence of God.

The third requirement relates to the faith in the possibility of establishing cognitive and effective relationship with the Godhead and ultimately to be identified with It. Since the Semitic tradition is based on a dualistic hypothesis, there has always been an unbridgeable gulf between the Creator and the Created, but in the Vedantic tradition, the individual is co-eval and co-eternal with the absolute. This opens up the possibility for the human being to know, love and finally to be identified with the Godhead. The dualistic assumption in the Semitic tradition can be accounted for in the western approach to reality which starts from the experiential diversity and rational unity. But if we start with diversity and try to culminate in a unity, it becomes difficult to fill up the cleavages, once they are admitted. The Vedantic tradition, on the other hand, escapes from this intriguing position by taking up a psychological approach to the problem. It starts with a unitary principle and explains the entire multiplicity as emanating from that unitary principle. In Chhandogya Upanishad, we come across many illustrations explaining the idea of unity amidst diversity. These explanations are based upon our day-to-day empirical
experiences (such as, from one seed a tree with many branches may emerge).

The fourth requisite pertains to the realisation of unitive knowledge and the ultimate identity of the individual with the Divine Ground. In the Semitic tradition, human being has been conceived in a deterministic way which rules out the possibility of human will and purpose. This idea does not

1. Perennial Philosophy, pp. 9-10.

When Svetaketu was twelve years old he was sent to a teacher, with whom he studied until he was twenty-four. "What is that knowledge, Sir? asked Svetaketu. His father replied, 'As by knowing one lump of clay all that is made of clay is known, the difference being only in name, but the truth being that all is clay. So, my child, is that knowledge, knowing which we know all'...

The father said, 'My son, that subtle essence which you do not perceive there - that very essence stands the being of the huge myagrodha tree. In that which is the subtle essence of all that exists has its self. That is the True, that is the Self, and thou, Svetaketu, art That'...

'Here likewise in this body of yours, my son, you do not perceive the True; but there in fact it is. In that which is the subtle essence, all that exists has its self. That is the True, that is the Self, and though, Svetaketu, art That.

(From the Chhandogy Upanishad)
merely enslave the individual but denies the spark of divinity with which he is impregnated. But in the Vedantic tradition, the purpose of human existence does not consist in the gratification of the lower material self but in its complete transformation into a higher self. In the Upanishad, the individual existence has been conceived as one with the Cosmic existence: *Aham Brahmasmi* (I am Brahma) and *Tat Tyam Asi* (That Art Thou), and the cosmic existence is described as *Sat-Cid-Ananda* (Perfect existence, Perfect knowledge and Perfect bliss). According to Vedanta, the goal of the individual is to achieve this supreme knowledge and supreme bliss. Huxley also believes that the realization of this knowledge should be the aim of each individual.

Lastly, Huxley emphasizes that the attainment of this final goal is not a matter of either learned deliberation or intellectual understanding or wishful thinking, but it is a matter of direct realization, which means unflinching adherence to a particular way of life based on Dharma. The idea of Dharma which Huxley suggests is based upon the Buddhistic and Vedantic "law of mortification and self-transcending awareness."

1. *Time Must Have A Stop*, p.289.
In the Semitic tradition, though we have the idea of crucifixion, which may approximate to mortification, but that idea is present only in Christianity. In Judæo-Christo-Islamic tradition, what is demanded of an individual is complete faith in a Saviour and one is not expected to advance one's own higher self by sacrificing one's lower self. Even in the idea of crucifixion it is someone else (the Christ Saviour) who suffers for us, while the element of self transcendence is peculiar to the Indian philosophical tradition. These are some of the causes which have occasioned Huxley's departure from Judæo-Christian tradition. Thus his general position in regard to all outstanding metaphysical questions is much the same as that of Vedanta. The impact of Vedanta in the formulation of Huxley's thought can be studied under the following broad heads: Epistemological, Ontological, Cosmological, Psychological, Ethical, Escatological, and Axiological.

II. The Dynamic Self.

The real life of man is transcendental and eludes the grasp of the empirical mind. Though it is transcendent to thought, it is not unknowable. Nothing presents more baffling to the human mind than its own nature. Though man feels himself nearest to his self, still he is so far away from it that he is unable to unfold its mysteries. The materialists' view of the world is an object utterly insignificant in the vast magnitude of time and space. They interpret man as a machine and an automaton and understand it on the pattern...
of matter which is atomic and discreet. This not only relegates man's sublimity and spirituality to the level of material passivity, but completely denies the possibilities of integral living and a unitive approach to knowledge.

Huxley finds that the materialistic interpretation of man has resulted in his enslavement by science and technology. "With his growing interest in technological development man has forgotten his true self". Under the glitter of technological advancement he has lost sight of the fundamental fact that matter is only a means for his fructification and not his goal. "He has forgotten that happiness is a state of mind" not dependent on material objects but only on the realization of the inherent potentialities of self. It is this dilemma of disquieting scientific modernism which turns Huxley from naturalism to Vedantic Mysticism. He realizes that "the ascent to the divine life is the human journey... This alone is man's real business in the world and the justification of his existence, without which he would be only an insect crawling among other ephemeral insects".

Huxley points out that present man is too much absorbed in gross materialism and he can seek his salvation from the

2. Ibid.
Sway of materialism only in the spiritual world. He believes that all the miseries and sufferings of the human being are because of his false identification with the material body and all its evolutes. Man has erected a completely deluding material structure upon his spiritual infrastructure and therefore finds "no rest in his wanderings in the Valley of False Glimmer, the labyrinths of illusion, unreality and appearance". Though he is one with the universal reality, but he feels himself completely alienated and consequently caught in the grip of misery and suffering. He wants to find satisfaction in things which are themselves momentary and vanishing.

Man must decide what or who he is. The question of Hamlet, 'to be or not to be', is not as fundamental as the question of 'what to be'. Until the man is freed from the narrow bonds of the finite material world and enters the realm of spiritual time and space he cannot know the answer. Huxley is of the opinion that the failure to realize one's own self is mainly due to a false sense of individuality and to a feeling of 'I'ness which keeps one entangled in the warp and woof of fickle diverse relationship. The individual starts thinking of himself as something separate from the external world and from other people rather being who lives in it. It is this attitude which gives rise to the feeling of malice, hatred, and cruelty etc. resulting in conflicts,

misery and sorrows. The cessation of this sorrow can be achieved by the elimination of the feeling of 'I'ness.

Thus the only way out of the labyrinth is to look within and realize that man's real self does not lie in the discrete outer reality, but in that ultimate reality, which is one both within as well as outside. This idea is all-pervasive in the Buddhistic and Vedantic philosophy. The clue to this enigma Huxley finds in the Upanishadic thought which states that the self is pure in spirit. Each individual is a spark from a great flame, a ray of the one light undifferentiated within the body of cosmic spirit. The self is supra-rational, undeterminate and transcendental. He is one with the cosmos.

Huxley's essentially mystical thinking would be opposed to any doctrine that accords to the individual but a dependent and inferior position. He insists that the individual should struggle tenaciously for realizing his true self: this is what the Upanishads mean when they exhort Atmanam-vidhi ('know thyself'). The Upanishads also advocate the unison of the individual self with the cosmic self. The Upanishadic phrases of Tat-Tvam-Asi (That Art Thou), Aham Brahmasmi (I am Brahman) are the expressions of the realization of this truth. 'Know thyself' is the advice given by every master of the spiritual life. To help us towards this indispensable self-knowledge is the purpose and prime function of life. "Self-knowledge is always an awareness

of first order experience" but "whose excellence does not require to be proved by reference to anything beyond itself. But though self-knowledge is an absolute good, to be pursued for its own sake, it can in fact be justified on ethical grounds*. The self-knowledge is the only way to truth, freedom and harmonious living. With the attainment of the knowledge of self one does not feel any opposition, for all sense of opposition is false. As a result of self-realization and the consequent expulsion of all contrary elements the individual feels an ineffable sense of fruition and fulness. From this self-knowledge proceeds all creative activity. The theme of self-realization runs pervasive in Huxley's writings.

In Those Barren Leaves, Huxley, in a questioning form advocates that the individual should emancipate himself from his false sense of egotism. He insists that we must cease to be mechanical and become conscious of what we are.

He says:

All you have got to do is to pause for a moment in your work and ask yourself: Why am I doing this? What is it all for? Did I come into the world supplied with a soul which may very likely be immortal for the sole purpose of sitting everyday at this desk? Ask yourself these questions thoughtfully, seriously. Reflect even for a moment on their significance - and I can guarantee that, firmly seated though you may be in your hard or your paddled chair, you will feel all at once that the void has opened beneath you, that you are sliding headlong, fast and faster into nothingness.

2. Ibid., p.18.
3. Those Barren Leaves, p.106.
In *Eyeless in Gaza*, Huxley has portrayed Anthony Beavis who by constant meditation and by the practice of discrimination comes to know his real self. He realizes that the individual should transcend his desires, emotions and intellect because they lead to egocentricity. Spiritual knowledge starts with this self-awareness, the power to discriminate between the finite and the eternal, the apparent and the real. With the attainment of spiritual consciousness Anthony Beavis integrates all his faculties and consequently experiences an inner unity or peace. In *Perennial Philosophy*, while drawing the common characteristics of the mystics of all the religions, he contends that all these mystics have claimed to have transcended their empirical self and broken into a new layer of spiritual consciousness.

The theme of self-awareness is pervasively present in his last novel *Island*. The inhabitants of Pala give much importance to self-knowledge. They affirm that "knowing who in fact we are results in Good Being and Good Being results in the most appropriate kind of good doing". They believe that self-knowledge facilitates the individual identity with God:

So be aware - aware in every context, at all times ... This is the only genuine yoga, the only spiritual exercise worth practising.

The more a man knows about individual objects, the more he knows about God...

1. *Island*, p.39.
Viewed from the angle of totality, man's individuality becomes superfluous when he comes to realize that he is only a part of the cosmic whole. This realization eradicates the false sense of egotism. Huxley therefore insists that self-realization should be the aim of all human endeavours.

He profusely quotes the upanishadic maxim of 'Know thyself'. To him, the self alone is, in the ultimate analysis, reality. When man comes to know that his own self is the infinite, universal brahman, all dualism is ended, and all oppositions annulled. In the Upanishadic thought one sees that the real self-integration is possible only through the realization of the universal nature of the self. Upanishads enjoin on us that self-knowledge is the knowledge of the identity of the individual and the universal self, it results in universal identification because according to upanishadic thesis microcosm and macrocosm are identical in the ultimate analysis (Yatha pinde tatha brahmande).

This does not mean that man should not care for his body and bodily self. This only means that even while catering to the needs of body, he should always keep in view that the individual material life is meaningful only in relation to something more and higher. The three-fold conception of man as body, mind and spirit implies an important truth: that man is not a mere object, that his spiritual nature is not on the same level as the psychic and corporeal, that his soul and body can participate in a new order of spiritual existence. Huxley advocates that man should lead a parallel life of
catering to the needs of the body through the pursuit of
science and technology and a life of spirit through the
pursuit of self-awareness. However, he emphasizes that
the material life should claim only a minor and secondary
place and be made subservient to the life of spirit. He
desires that science should solve the economic and social
problems of the world and provide the means to increase the
aesthetic and religious perceptions.

In Themes and Variations, Tomorrow and Tomorrow, Brave
New World Revisited, The Doors of Perception and Heaven and
Hell, Human Potentialities, Island, Literature and Science
and in his various essays, Huxley has advocated that science
should facilitate the achievement of aesthetic and spiritual
awareness. He firmly affirms the theme of the Gita, which
states that action is not the cause of bondage, but action
binds the individual when it is done with the materialistic
consideration or with the spirit of attachment. In Island,
he has portrayed Ranga who advocates the ideal of non-attachment
which is pervasively present in the Bhagavad Gita. Ranga
affirms his faith in the Gita doctrine of not the renunciation
of action but renunciation in action. He maintains that matter
and egotism in themselves are not bad, the evil enters into
them when they are taken in isolation. But if they are employed
as means to realize spiritual ends, they would acquire immense
value and significance. In respect to this fundamental
metaphysical position Huxley comes nearest to the Vedanta.
Vedanta holds that the world is real, that is, it has existence,
but it is not ultimate. Temporal existence is not false; but by itself it has no absolute reality. Like Vedanta Huxley recognizes two planes of existence, or rather two standards of evaluation, the one relative, the other absolute, the one phenomenal and other metaphysical.

According to Huxley, mind is the source of all evils and, therefore, he emphasizes the cultivation of equanimity of mind through yogic practices which will enable the individual to lead a life with full awareness. Huxley is fully convinced that the human potentialities are far larger which, he believes, be actualized by the proper disciplining of our body and educating our mind. One of his favourite quotations is from William Blake: "If the doors of perception were cleansed, every thing will appear to man as it is, infinite." Throughout his life, he struggles constantly for means to cleanse the "doors of perception." He believes that suffering is the result of the individual alienation from reality and once the real knowledge of self is acquired all the struggles and sufferings will disappear. With the attainment of self-knowledge the individual thinks cosmically and feels cosmically, his thoughts coincide with the thoughts of the world. This is what Upanishads advocate: "Of all these, the self alone is to be realized, for one knows all these through it."  

1. The Doors of Perception and Heaven and Hell, title page.
2. Ibid.
3. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, 1.4.7.
III. Theistic Hypothesis Versus Immediate Experience.

Huxley's basic problem is how to overcome dualism and to achieve unity in nature and consciousness. True knowledge is the non-dual knowledge of the real. It is a knowledge devoid of distinctions (Jinam advayam). While thought is a unity-in-difference, it cannot reach the principle of immediacy within itself. The Upanishads teach that we possess a power more interior than intellect by which we come into contact with the real. The most striking feature of Vedantic philosophy is that it advocates the possibility of direct intercourse with the central reality by a species of intuitive identification. There is a principle of unity involved in all our experience and we can know it in a state of pure immediacy. Chhandogya Upanishad says: "Where one perceives no other, hears no other, there is fulness". Brihadaranyakya Upanishad says:

For, where there is duality as it were, there one smells another, there one sees another, there one hears another, there one speaks to another, there one thinks to another, there one understands another. Where, verily, everything has become the self, then by what and whom should one smell, then by what and whom should one see ... by what, should one know that by which all this is known? By what, my dear, should one know the knower.

Huxley insists on immediate experience because he believes that real and absolute knowledge can be gained only by immediate experience. Intellect and reason do play a

2. Brihadaranyakya Upanishad, 2.4.14.
prominent role in human knowledge, but by their very nature they are discursive, analytic and abstract and therefore cannot give the vision of the whole, *a unified synoptic vision of reality*, in which the inner and the outer, the one and the many, the individual and the universal are perceived as one. It is only through intuition that we can grasp this knowledge. In intuition all dualities are dissolved. In *Foreword to Mystics and Society*, Huxley stresses the importance of experienced states as against "metaphysical or theistic words" for understanding the supreme reality. He says:

Nobody was ever saved or enlightened by assent to proposition, only by an immediate experience on the non-verbal level. The value of the metaphysical or theistic words is merely instrumental; that of the experienced states is absolute, self-evident and intrinsic. 2

In his essay on "Human potentialities" published in *The Humanist Frame*, Huxley gives much importance to 'perception' and 'uninterrupted experience' for integral knowing. He writes:

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Perceiving is the root of all our thinking, feeling, willing and acting. It is therefore with perception that any systematic training on the non-verbal level must begin. 'Make the mind-body capable of doing many things'. Make it capable, first of all, of perceiving much, perceiving accurately, perceiving discriminately, perceiving with the fewest possible notional preconceptions. This perceptual awareness will 'help you to perfect the mind' ... it will also help you 'to come to the intellectual love of God'-in other words, it will help you to go beyond discursive reasoning in terms of symbols and come to what Buddhists call 'the wisdom of the other shore', to the unitive knowledge, obscure but self-evident, wordless and therefore profound, of the oneness in diversity, of ...
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2. Ibid.
And a Heaven in a wild Flower.

The value of systematic training in perception as a true yoga a preparation for enlightenment here and now in the everyday was stressed many centuries ago by Buddhist and Vedantic philosophers.

Huxley was so much fascinated by the intuitive identity and spiritual oneness of being that it became the major theme of his work and the key-note of his philosophy. He believed that totality of reality could be grasped only through intuitive experience which was the intense heightening of perception. The reality was only to be felt and not to be thought out; that was why all the mystics of the world had laid emphasis on the direct experience of reality.

Huxley has portrayed a few characters like Mary Thirplow and Calamy, in *Those Barren Leaves*, Anthony Beavis, in *Eyeless in Gaza*, Bruno Rontini, in *Time Must Have A Stop*, and Palanese, in *Island*, who insist on perception in the realization of ultimate knowledge. They show their distrust of discursive knowledge, and believe in intuition which gives insight into the harmony underlying the multifarious show, the unity beneath multiplicity.

Though Huxley insists on the primacy of experience, he does not subscribe to each and every type of knowledge. He advocates only that knowledge which is immediate, aparoksa. The knowledge which is not dual, in which subject and object become one, and where essence and existence coincide. The empirical experiences are always individual but the reality is supra-individual and supra-rational, for the knowledge to

be gained is of unity and not of difference, thus it is only through direct perception that the wholeness of reality can be revealed and not through reason and senses which work on differences. Many idealistic thinkers have advocated the immediacy of uninterrupted experience for the realization of reality. When Spinoza speaks of the intellectual love of God, and Kant insists on the intellectual intuition or noumena and Fichte puts forth intellectual intuition as the means of self-consciousness, and Plotinus contends that the Absolute is presented not as an object but in an immediate contact which is above discursive knowledge. But only the Vedantic thinkers have asserted the possibility of direct intercourse with the central reality by a species of intuitive identification. The reality has been described as Ananda (bliss) which can be experienced intuitively and can never be thought out.

Huxley's insistence on pure and genuine experience can be explained from what he says in Island, under the caption of "Notes on what's what". He does not approve of art because it depends on dualism, and dualism according to him is fatal to right living. He advocates that the integral approach to reality is incompatible with dualism and therefore any experience of reality is possible only when duality is overcome. Since the intellect operates through dualism of knower and known, the reality thus becomes amenable to intellect. He rejects the feeling of I'AM' a sense of egotism which lies at the basis
of all intellectual apprehensions. He writes:

"I" affirms a separate and abiding no-
substance, "we" denies the fact that all
existence is relationship and change.
"I am" Two tiny words, but what an
everness of untruth! 1

In the Polynesian scheme of education Huxley gives top
priority to immediate experience to understand the ultimate
reality. It is a non-verbal system of education where the main
stress is laid on perceptual awareness as against conceptual
thinking. Like the mystics of Upanishads, Huxley also
maintains the identity of knowing and being. In Island,
he says: "The real thing isn't a proposition; it's a state
of being" 2...

Huxley has recommended the use of drugs like mescaline,
moksha medicine, Psilocybin and LSD because he believes
that these drugs greatly assist us in the elimination of
our empirical thinking and in the enhancement of our
perceptual awareness. With the help of these drugs man
realizes his affinity of self with all the elements of
nature. One who transcends the limitations of individuality
is no mere a separate self-centred individual but becomes a
part and parcel of the universal spirit. Through this self-
transcendence he establishes the unity of within and without,
the microcosm in him becomes one with the macrocosm without,
and he experiences a unique feeling of infinite joy and
infinite bliss.

1. Island, p.175.
2. Ibid., p.160.
Huxley was so much fascinated by the demands of genuine experiences that he himself swallowed four-tenths of a gramme mescaline to experience the mystical consciousness. He reported that in that state he was in communion with 'isness of things' and experienced a state of consciousness akin to the Upanishadic expression of experience of reality as \textit{Sat-Cid-Ananda} which he also described as 'beatific vision'. These experiences illuminate the personality of the individual, enable him to realize the true significance of his own self and of the surrounding environment. Secondly, these experiences result in complete transformation of the individual, a sort of self-transcendence, and the unity with the ultimate.

These experiences cannot be communicated in human language nor can they be transferred to other individuals. They elude the grasp of human intellect and human expression, so much so that they cannot even be communicated to one's own self. Like the Upanishadic thinkers, Huxley also maintains that silence is the language of this experience. In the \textit{Kena Upanishad} we find: "The eye does not see there, nor speech, nor mind; we do not know that, we do not know how to instruct one about it. It is distinct from the known and above the unknown."  

\textbf{4. Upanishadic ideas of neti, neti which \textit{Yajnana Valkya} expounds in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad. He points out the unknowability and ineffability of the mystic experience. The same idea is further illustrated when Bhahva was requested by \textit{Vashkali} to expound the nature of Brahman. Bhahva who maintained a silence — when the request was repeated. He answered "I teach indeed but you don't understand, the Atman is Silence".}

\textit{Brahma Sutra — Shankara Bhasya II — II — 17.}

\textit{I. Kena Upanishad, 1.3.}
IV. The Paradox of Reality.

There is an irrepressible urge in all mankind to seek a clear and final pronouncement on the nature of reality. All approaches to reality start from the facts of experience but our experience is never homogeneous. There is a set of experiences which demands us to recognize the plurality of existence; but equally convincing is another set of experiences which proclaims that reality is supra-intellectual and a coherent whole. Since reality has not been conceived in one uniform way, different interpretations have been offered to explain this paradox of reality. There are thinkers who believe in a unified vision of reality, an undifferentiated whole, in which the inner and the outer, the one and the many are perceived as one. Such is the conception of reality that is systematically developed in the mystical verses of the Upanishads. The Upanishadic system conceives reality on the pattern of the inner core or atman, the permanent substance which remains immutable and identical amidst the changing panorama of the outer world. The atman or soul is the internal atman of all created things (Sarvabhu tantaratma) and as such the only unifying principle in the world. But there are other thinkers who under the influence of empirical thinking regard temporal existence as real and advocate plurality as the only reality, discarding unity as a figment of mind, and an abstract projected by mind upon concrete reality.
The idea of unity, an immutable essence, the original unity at the base of shifting shows and material is deeply embedded in Huxley's philosophical thought. He believes that the world is a unity and that as a result of dividing and deluding habit of mind things are seen as different and multiple, while in fact they are One. He looks for harmony underlying the multifarious show of the world, the unity beneath multiplicity. He believes that the Vedantic concept of unity-in-diversity can be held as a valid concept only when diversity is made the condition of unity. Huxley's interpretation of reality comes very near to Bradley's and Sankara's and it would not be presumptuous to regard him a monist no less than Bradley and Sankara. But he believes that Sankara's monism is superior to Bradley's. In Time Must Have A Stop, he approvingly quotes Bradley's and Sankara's interpretation of reality as supra-intellectual, a supreme unity and coherent whole. He writes:

The difference between metaphysics now and metaphysics in the past is the difference between world spinning which makes no difference to any body and a system of thought associated with a transforming discipline. 'Short of the Absolute, God cannot rest, and having reached that goal He is lost and religion with Him'. That is Bradley's view, the modern view. Sankara was as strenuously an Absolutionist as Bradley - but with what an enormous difference! For him, there is not only discursive knowledge about the Absolute, but the possibility (and the final necessity) of a direct intellectual intuition, leading the liberated spirit to identification with the object of its knowledge. 'Among all means of liberation, Bhakti or devotion is supreme. To seek earnestly to know one's real nature - this is said to be devotion. In other words, devotion can be defined as the search for the reality of one's own Atman. And the Atman, of course, is the spiritual principle in us, which is identical with the Absolute. The older metaphysicians did not lose religion; they found it in the highest and purest of all possible forms. 1

1. Time Must Have A Stop, pp. 274-275.
Huxley has portrayed some characters like Calamy in *Those Barren Leaves*, Anthony Beavis and Dr. Miller, in *Eyeless in Gaza*, Bruno Rontini and Sebastian in *Time Must Have A Stop* and Palanese in *Island*, whose all embracing vision of Oneness transcends multiplicity and particularity. There are other characters who tenaciously struggle to transcend the barriers of multiplicity in order to realize the values of Oneness, harmony and synthesis in supreme reality.

In *Eyeless in Gaza*, regenerate Anthony Beavis does not recognize the division of existence into sensible and supra-sensible. The sensible resolves itself unto the supra-sensible. He reiterates over and over again that each individual aspect in itself is the whole of reality and expresses its fullest meaning. He advocates the principles of "unity of mankind, unity of all life, all beings even". He recognizes the importance of Cosmic order which demands the restoration of the harmony of diverse facets of reality. He pleads for the unity at all levels of existence: unity between man and man, man and nature, and man and God. Dr. Miller, in the same novel, propounds the thesis of essential unity underlying all multiplicities. He advocates the desirability of realizing unity with the other lives and other modes of being: of experiencing it in acts of love and compassion and through the insight of direct intuition. In *Time Must Have A Stop*, Huxley advocates the same idea when he alludes to Sankara,

Plotinus, Eckhart and Boehme. He writes:

There was the ultimate all embracing field -
the Brahma of Sankara, the One of Plotinus,
the Ground of Eckhart and Boehme. 1

Bruno Rontini in spite of many sufferings and privations
maintains a joyful mood of serenity and feels the presence
of timeless and infinite reality amidst all separations and
divisions.

In After Many A Summer, Propter proclaims that the
ultimate goal of all human existence is to acquire the state
of unison with God - such a state consists in realizing the
unity behind all apparent diversities. He extols the virtue
of selfless search for good and the practice of virtue,
manifestly with a view to realizing the ultimate unison.

In Island, Huxley aims at the portrayal of perfect
harmony in which all contradictions and paradoxes are resolved
and unity becomes all pervasive. He writes:

"But wisdom never puts enmity anywhere. All those
senseless, pointless cockfights between Man and
Nature, between Nature and God, between the
Flesh and the Spirit! Wisdom doesn't make those
insane separations." 2

Huxley believes in Oneness amidst changing panorama
of life. This is typically Vedantic way of conceiving human
existence. He writes:

"Life bringing order out of chaos and ugliness, life
performing its miracles of birth and growth. ...
Beauty and horror, beauty," he repeated "and horror ...
reconciliation. And not merely a reconciliation.
A fusion, an identity. Beauty made one with horror ...

1. Time Must Have A Stop, p. 92.
Life reconciled with the perpetual immanence of death ... Emptiness, identified with selfhood ... "the One in plurality, the Emptiness that is all, the Suchness totally present in every appearance, at every point and instant". 1

In the interpretation of reality, Huxley realizes that in the ultimate analysis all reality is one single unity - it is unity at the start, it is unity at the end, but in the middle it expresses itself through multiplicity. When he is puzzled by the apparent paradoxes of reality he comes to the conclusion that reality is characterised both by unity and multiplicity. It is quite likely that his acquaintance with the Bhagavad Gita might have helped him to reconcile these apparently incompatible experiences as a way out. In the Gita, it has been emphasized that reality is unmanifest in the beginning, manifest in the middle but again unmanifest at the end. In Eyeless in Gaza, Anthony Beavis expresses a similar idea when he says:

And now at last it was clear, by some kind of immediate experience he knew that the point was in the paradox, in the fact that the unity was the beginning and unity the end, and that in the meantime the condition of life and all existence was separation, which was equivalent to evil. 2

In Perennial Philosophy, Huxley describes the complex character of reality expressing itself in the form of unity beneath multiplicity. He endorses the words of Plotinus who

1. Island, p.166.
2. Eyeless in Gaza, p.616.
declares that:

Each being contains in itself the whole intelligible world. Therefore All is everywhere. Each is there All, and All is each - Man as he now is has ceased to be the All. But when he ceases to be an individual, he raises himself again and penetrates the whole world. 1

The idea of unity being the ground and principle of all multiplicity has also been expressed by the Vedanta, and Huxley profusely quotes Viveka-chudamani (The Crest-Jewel of Wisdom) a Vedantic text to substantiate his thesis.

He writes:

The philosophy of the Upanishad reappears, developed and enriched, in the Bhagavad-Gita and was finally systematized in the ninth century of our era by Sankara. Shankara's teachings (Simultaneously theoretical and practical, as is that of all true exponents of the Perennial philosophy), is summarized in his versified treatise Viveka-chudamani (The Crest-Jewel of Wisdom). 2

The theme of unity-in-diversity runs as pervasive in Huxley's work. He writes:

That which is demanded, that which man come finally to demand of themselves, is the realization of union between beings who would be nothing if they were not separate. 3

1. Perennial Philosophy, p.11
2. Ibid.
3. Eyeless in Gaza, p.615.
Further he writes:

The same peace for all, continuous between mind and mind. At the surface, the separate waves, the whirlpools, the spray; but below them the continuous and undifferentiated expanse of sea, becoming calmer as it deepens, till at last there is an absolute stillness. 1

Huxley realizes that if we begin to believe that the universe is a microcosm containing within itself the nature and meaning of the entire all inclusive macrocosm, all our conflicts, all our lopsidedness and exclusiveness will be resolved. As a consequence of which life will assume true meaning and significance. In Those Barren Leaves, Calamy Huxley's first 'sketch of salvationist' while explaining the significance of a hand to Mary Thirplow points out that the understanding of the same hand can be done from different angles, like physical, chemical, biological and metaphysical. This clearly demonstrates Huxley's multiple approach to reality.

Calamy says:

'... all the different ways in which these five fingers'... 'have reality and exist. All the different ways'... 'if you think of that, even, for five minutes, you find yourself plunged up to the eyes in the most portentous mysteries.'

He further says:

'Well then', Calamy went on, 'I have to imagine an almost inconceivable number of atoms, each consisting of a greater or lesser number of units of negative electricity whirling several million times a minute round a nucleus of positive electricity. The vibrations of the atom lying near the surface sift out, so to speak, the electro-magnetic radiations which fall upon them, permitting only those waves to reach our eyes which give us the sensation of a brownish pink colour. In passing it may be remarked that the behaviour of light is satisfactorily explained, according to one theory of electro dynamics, while the behaviour of the electron in the atom can be explained on a theory that is entirely inconsistent with it. Inside the atom, they tell us now, electrons move from one orbit to another without taking any time to accomplish their journey and without covering any space. Indeed, within the atom there is neither space nor time. And so on and so on ... 'Then there's the chemical way. These atoms consisting of more or fewer electrons whizzing round a nucleus of greater or lesser charge are atoms of different elements that build themselves up in certain architectural patterns into complicated molecules...

Seen by a biologist, it reveals itself as a collection of cells, having each its appointed function, and existing harmoniously together, never trespassing upon one another, never proliferating into wild adventures of growth, but living, dying and growing to one end - and the whole which they compose may fulfill its purpose - and as though in accordance with a preordained plan.'

In Point Counter Point, Philip Quarles desires to capture a total view of reality through the eyes of a biologist, a chemist, a physician and a historian. He betrays Huxley's synthetic and

all-comprehensive approach to reality. He says:

'The essence of the new way of looking is multiplicity. Multiplicity of eyes and multiplicity of aspects seen. For instance, one person interprets events in terms of history; and another in terms of the price of flannel canaries; another like that young lady from Bulmers' ... 'thinks of it in terms of good times. And then there's the biologist, the
chemist, the physicist, the historian. Each sees, professionally, a different aspect of the event, a different layer of reality. 
What I want to do is to look at all these
eyes at once. With religious eyes, scientific eyes, economic eyes, homeoven sensual eyes...'

Huxley's vision of unity amidst multiplicity is not only
not only the outcome of his faith at a humanist, nor based on the contemplation of an utopian idealist but also of the experience of a natural scientist. This idea emerges more vividly when Anthony
Bosia, in Eyeless in Gaza, focuses our attention on the
three of unity amidst diversity.

Unity, he repeated. Unity
Unity of mankind, unity of all life, all being even.
Physical unity, first of all. Unity even in
diversity, each in isolation. Separate patterns, but every where alike. Everywhere the same
constellations of the ultimate units of energy.
The same on the surface of the sun as in the living
flesh warmed by the sun's radiance; in the scented
cluster of buddhas flowers, as in the blue sea
and the crowns on the horizon; in the drunken
Mexican's pistol as in the dark, dried blood on
that mangled face among the rocks, the fresh blood
scattered scarlet over Helen's naked body, the
cross cozing from the sun contusion on Mark's knee.

Identical patterns, and identical patterning of
patterns. We hold the thought of them in his mind, and, along with it, the thought of life incessantly, moving among the patterns, selecting and rejecting for its own purposes. Life building up simpler into
more complex patterns - identically complex through
vast ranges of animate being.

1. Point Counter Point, p.266.
The sperm enters the egg, the cell divides and divides, to become at last this man, that rat or horse. A cow's pituitary will make frogs breed out of season. Urine of a pregnant woman brings the mouse on heat. Sheep's thyroid transforms the axolotl from a gilled larva into an air-breathing salamander, the cretinous dwarf into a well grown and intelligent human being. Between one form of animal life and other, patterns are interchangeable. Interchangeable also between animal and plant, plant and the inanimate world. Patterns in seed and leaf and root, patterns built up from simpler patterns existant in the air and soil - these can be assimilated and transformed by insect, reptile, mammal, fish.

The unity of life. Unity demonstrated even in the destruction of one life by another. Life and all being are one - otherwise no living thing could ever derive sustenance from another or from the unliving substances around it. One even in destruction, one in spite of separation. Each organism is unique. Unique and yet united with all other organisms in the sameness of its ultimate parts; unique above a substratum of physical identity. 1

Huxley's portrayal of absolute reality as unity in diversity has its identification with the Divine Godhead. In Grey Eminence, he writes:

Ultimate reality is at once transcendent and immanent. God is the creator and sustainer of the world; yet the kingdom of God is also within us. 2

In the Perennial Philosophy, he writes:

Only the transcendent, the completely other, can be immanent without being modified by the becoming of that in which it dwells. The Perennial Philosophy teaches that it is desirable and indeed necessary to know the spiritual Ground of things, not only within the soul, but also outside in the world and, beyond world and soul, in its transcendent otherness - 'in heaven'. 3

2. Grey Eminence, p.56.
The Divine Ground of all existence is a spiritual Absolute which is described by Huxley as 'God without form'. But he also refers to Ishavara of Hindu Pantheon. He also believes in the incarnation of God in human being and refers to Christ, Krishna, three 'incarnations of the Buddha'. Thus His immanent transcendent Absolute reality is both personal as well as impersonal. It can be worshipped and contemplated in any of its aspects. In his essay on *Man and Reality*, Huxley remarks that "the realization of divine immanence and transcendence" is possible only to one who is enlightened. Granting these two different interpretations of reality, both as 'One spiritual unity' and 'multiplicity', are real, the problem would be how to reconcile these two apparently incompatible positions. In other words, what place does multiplicity occupy in the scheme of the unified vision of reality. What is the relationship between the world of animate beings and inanimate things in this scheme of reality? Imbued with an intense desire for seeking a solution to this dilemma Sankara puts forth the concept of *Maya* and Huxley also does the same manifestly with the same end in view. Both of them make use of the concept of *Maya* in order to supply a missing link between the transcendental absolute and the immanent world. Both of them are so desperately eager to safeguard the unity of the absolute and also the reality of the multiple world, that they cannot afford to sacrifice either of the two. In order to resolve this paradox of reality

they introduce the concept of Maya which preserves the empirical reality of the multiple universe, without at the same time disturbing the transcendental unity of the absolute.

The term Maya has been variously used in the Vedantic literature. Its history goes back to the Rig Veda. It was understood, as a kind of magical or a mysterious power. In the Upanishads and later in Vedantic literature, it acquired the associated meaning of deception and illusion. Realistically conceived, it has been identified with the principle of energy, but idealistically it stands for a 'cosmic illusion'. Huxley also calls it 'cosmic illusion'. In this sense Maya comes to mean phenomena, attachment and bondage. Etymologically it means that which is 'not' (YA MAA SE MAYA).

The idea of Maya does not make out that the world is non-existent that it is an unreal phantasmagoria. No where do the Upanishads suggest that the external world and the individual psychological selves are absolutely false. Sankha makes the Vedantic position very clear when he advocates:

The whole multiplicity of production existing under the name and in so far as it is being itself is true, of itself it is untrue.

The Upanishads describe the brahman "a real of the real' Verily the breathing creatures are the Real. He is their Real. All these creatures have their root in Being, they reside in Being and rest in Being.  

1. Sankha Commentary On Chhandogya, 6.3.2
2. Satyasya Satyam, Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, 2.3.6.
According to Vedanta, temporal existence is not false, it is not anybody's conception. But by itself it has no absolute reality. Name and form are valid empirically. The world has an empirical, but not metaphysical validity.

Huxley seems to be perfectly in accord with Sankara in his interpretation of the concept of Maya. In his essay on *Shakespeare and Religion*, Huxley says:

> Prospero is here enunciating the doctrine of Maya. The world is an illusion, but it is an illusion which we must take seriously, because it is real as far as it goes, and in those aspects of the reality which we are capable of apprehending. Our business is to wake up. We have to find ways in which to detect the whole of reality in the one illusory part which our self-centred consciousness permits us to see. We must not live thoughtlessly, taking our illusion for the complete reality, but at the same time we must not live too thoughtfully in the sense of trying to escape from the dream state. We must continually be on our watch for ways in which we may enlarge our consciousness. We must not attempt to live outside the world, which is given us, but we must somehow learn how to transform it and transfigure it. 1

Thus Huxley seems to recognize two distinct planes of existence - the one phenomenal, the other metaphysical. He seems in his evaluation of life to view things from two different stand points - from the point of view of enlightened individual, and that of those who are unenlightened, and who live on the empirical level.

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Huxley has portrayed characters who show their strong acquaintance with the concept of Maya. They believe that the eternal life is man's true destination and the material world has only an instrumental and pragmatic value. It is valued not for its own sake but for the indispensibility of its meaning. In Those Barren Leaves, Calamy marks the distinction between appearance and reality, permanence and transitoriness, and mutability and immutability. He says:

The sense that everything's perfectly provisional and temporary - everything, from social institutions to what we've hitherto regarded as the most sacred scientific truths - the feeling that nothing, from Treaty of Versailles to the rationally explicable universe, is really safe. 1

Cardan and Calamy are engaged in a dialogue about the ultimate constituents of reality. Cardan believes in the multiplicity of reality. His existence is only confined to the empirical level and he is unable to perceive ultimate reality as the duality haunts him and blurs his vision. But Calamy who has gained an insight into the nature of ultimate reality hardly knows any distinction between appearance and reality. He tells Cardan that though it is difficult to go beyond the limitations of ordinary existence, this can be achieved with constant efforts, through disciplining our body and educating our mind. Calamy advocates that reality exists and it has a permanent character, though its realization may involve a

1. Those Barren Leaves, p.34.
life-long process. He says:

'You can't help behaving as if things really were as they seem to be. At the same time, there is reality which is totally different and which a change in our physical environment, a removal of our bodily limitations would enable us to get nearer to. Perhaps by thinking hard enough ... He paused shaking his head. 'How many days did Gautma spend under the bo-tree? Perhaps if you spend long enough and your mind is the right sort of mind, perhaps you really do get in some queer sort of the way beyond the limitations of ordinary existence. And you see that everything that seems real is in fact entirely illusory - maya, in fact, the cosmic illusion - behind it you catch a glimpse of reality.'

Calamy is much disturbed because the majority of the people prefer to live in the phenomenal world of Maya. They are 'contented with appearance' and delight in "Harrow Road or Cafe de la Rotanda" and hardly make any endeavour to grasp the true nature of ultimate reality. He says:

The fools, the innumerable fools, take it all for granted, skate about cheerfully on the surface and never think of inquiring what's underneath. They're content with appearances, such as your Harrow Road or Cafe de la Rotonda, call them realities and proceed to abuse any one who takes an interest in what lies underneath these superficial symbols, as a romantic imbecile.

1. Those Barren Leaves, p.368.
2. Ibid., p.370.
3. Ibid.
In *Eyeless in Gaza*, Anthony Beavis advocates that this empirical world should not be denied but viewed in a new light and with a transformed vision. Like Vedantists he does not want to negate it but wants to transform and transfigure it. He says:

> How to combine the belief that the world is to a great extent illusory with the belief that it is nonetheless essential to improve the illusion? 1

Huxley advocates the Vedantic idea of non-attachment. He writes:

> To live contemplatively is not to live in some deliciously voluptuous or flattering Poona; it is to live in London, but to live there in a non-cockney style. 2

In *After Many A Summer*, Jo Stoyte, Dr. Obispo, Jeremy Pordage, and Peter's existence is purely confined to the empirical world. They believe that temporal existence is the only reality. They are working for the prolongation of human life in order to perpetuate more evil in the world. Propter decries their activities and advocates that the present human world is a world of imperfections, whereas the world we aim at is an eternal world, pervaded by goodness, peace, prosperity and harmony. It is eternal life in that world alone that is worth living and not the eternal life in this miserable and mundane world. The present human being harbours in appearance only, and it is only by all round transmutation that we can emancipate ourselves from the clutches of appearances.

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1. *Eyeless in Gaza*, p.86.
2. Ibid., p.503.
He, therefore, insists that instead of labouring for the perpetuation of human existence, we should devote our energies to the transformation of man. He says:

You seem to imagine that people can remain as they are and yet be the inhabitants of a world conspicuously better than the world we live in. But the world we live in is a consequence of what men have been and a projection of what they are now. If men continue to be like what they are now and have been in the past, it's obvious that the world they live in can't become better...

"It's the kind of pessimism and the kind of optimism you find in all the great religions," he added.

"Pessimism about the world at large and human nature as it displays itself in the majority of men and women. Optimism about the things that can be achieved by anyone who wants to and knows how."... "Well, that's the pessimistic side of the Gospel teaching," he went on. "And, more systematically and philosophically, you'll find the same things set forth in the Buddhist and Hindu scriptures." 1

The disparity between the mundane life of imperfection and the transmuted life of spirit is vividly experienced by Sebastian in Time Must Have A Stop:

Those fifteen weeks ... The most memorable and in a certain sense, the happiest. There had been sadness, of course, and the pain of having to watch the endurance of a suffering which he was powerless to alleviate. And along with that pain and sadness had gone the gnawing sense of guilt, the dread and the anticipation of an irreparable loss. But there had also been the spectacle of Bruno's joyful serenity, and even, at once remove, a kind of participation in the knowledge of which that joy was the natural and inevitable expression - the knowledge of a timeless and infinite presence; the intuition, direct and infallible, that apart from the desire to be separate there was no separation, but an essential identity. 2

2. Time Must Have A Stop, pp. 280-281.
In *Island*, Will Farnaby who undergoes the essential horrors of empirical life which he calls murder, war, starvation and ignorance, craves for perfection and sets on a visit to Pala, a forbidden Island, in search of something new and significant. There the 'mynah bird' articulates 'Attention - Attention', but since he is confronted with duality he fails to grasp the real significance of these utterances, which are meaningful to those who can understand them but meaningless to those who are ignorant. Huxley describes the Pala as made up of rugged mountains, rivers and snakes, which have got symbolic significance. To those who are blind they stand for illusion and horror but to the wise they are real. Thus Huxley, through these elements, depicts the image of anti-thesis, reality and illusion, truth and falsehood, revelation and concealment, harmony and discord, spirit and matter, significance and triviality, being and seeming. Will, after being exposed to various institutions of the Palanese, gets the glimpse of ultimate reality, and the exterior reality in which he had harboured so far cracks down leading to the resolution of duality in him.

All these characters exhibit Huxley's approach to reality which appears to be thoroughly Vedantic. According to Huxley, the present empirical universe bound by space, time and causation is only a matter of name and form, and is an outcome of *Maya*. *Maya* is nothing but a paradox of real and unreal which is inherent in the universe. He also points out that the entire phenomena of the universe are relative and hence an appearance of One absolute Reality. It is the appearance
which deceives man, renders him ignorant and lends him in bondage. Maya is a recognition of the fact of human limitations and bondage. Man is in bondage for he is not what he wants to be. His goal is to seek liberation from this bondage. This goal can be achieved not by renouncing the world but by being detached from the world. This ideal state is experienced by Huxley's characters like Anthony Beavis and Dr. Miller, in *Eyeless in Gaza*, Propter, in *After Many A Summer*, Bruno Rontini and Sebastian, in *Time Must Have A Stop*, and Palanese, in *Island*. This means deifying or transmuting the human soul: this is the only real way to overcome Maya and to experience a new awareness and timeless goal. This freedom is not a new attainment but only a realization of non-duality.

V. Forms of Bondage.

Huxley does not stop with a mere interpretation of reality but examines the realm of phenomena in the light of his theory of reality. According to him man's present life is an intolerable bondage. He like other thinkers such as Marx, Dostoevsky, Nietzsche, Freud and Kierkegaard, appears to have had deep insight into the suffering of human creatures and his analysis of modern man's suffering is far more subtle and profound. He believes that in this empirical world, it is evil which has caused ceaseless desires, inflated egotism, entanglement of sex, ignoble technological advancements, lust for political power and poverty of soul, etc.
Huxley finds that the individuality of modern man is being threatened by social pressures and coercions. In the advanced technological societies, individuals are being regimented in what they think and feel and do, not through ominous threats of punishment and death, but through subtle psychological conditioning by television and other mass media of communication. The present man seems to be under the strong bondage of these impersonal forces. Man is disunited with himself and the world lacks unity and lies broken.

Huxley, like Vedantist and Buddhist thinkers, makes an analysis of the various forms of human bondage. He focusses our attention on the bondage of ignorance, matter, money, sex, intellectual institutions: intellect and technological, social, economic and political.

The root evil according to Huxley is the metaphysical evil, that is ignorance, avidya. The soul is the transcendental self, the "I", the surface consciousness or the empirical ego - which is falsely identified with the objects and experiences of the world. Ignorance consists in confounding the one with the other, in the superposition of the object on the subject. In its unenlightened state human behaviour is driven and rigidly constrained by unconscious motives. Man relishes the things of the world, taking them to be real and lasting, and creates a craving for them. Because of ignorance he fails to view the true nature of reality and its existence. Though every human being feels his existence, he is never aware of the real nature and purpose of this existence. Self-awareness is the supreme end of life, for only then man can conquer
dualism and achieve unity in nature and consciousness. Spiritual knowledge starts with self-awareness, this power enables a man to discriminate between the finite and the eternal, the apparent and the real - as leading up to and preparing for the eternal life to come.

The theme of self-awareness runs pervasive in Huxley's work. He believes that if man would make himself the object of his analysis, soon he would realize his own impermanence. In *Those Barren Leaves*, he says:

> All you have got to do is to pause for a moment in your work and ask yourself: Why I am doing this? What is it all for? Did I come into the world supplied with a soul which may very likely be immortal, for the sole purpose of sitting every day at this desk?  

The ignorance of one's true self is the major theme of *Ape and Essence*. It is because of ignorance that men have become zombies and puppets with nothing in their heart but anger or nothing in their hands but hydrogen bombs. Man does seeing things unconsciously and does not know what happens to his fellow men and in the last analysis to himself. Borrowing a citation from Shakespeare, Huxley insists that constant vigilance should be our watchword in this mad world. He reiterates that it is only by leading a life with self-awareness that we can enlarge our consciousness:

> But man proud man,  
> Drest in a little brief authority,  
> Most ignorant of what he is most assured  
> His glassy essence like an angry ape,  
> Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven  
> As make the angels weep.  

2. *Ape and Essence*, p.25.
In *After Many A Summer*, Propter tells Jo Stoyte that it is the ignorance, which activates a man in the small universe of petty desires. Jo's idiotic universe, as Propter calls it, has been brilliantly sketched by Jeremy Pordage's first impression on the day of his arrival. Propter shows his complete disgust with Jo's Stoyte activities of prolonging his life on the mundane level. In *Eyeless in Gaza*, Dr. Miller tells Anthony Beavis that we perpetuate evil in the world because most of the time we are swayed by stupidity.

In *Time Must Have A Stop*, Bruno Rontini suggests Sebastian that it is by leading a life of awareness that we can break the shackles of bondage and emancipate ourselves.

Finite beings, in fact, are part and parcel of one infinite reality, but inattention, or ignorance of this fact leads them to believe that they are independent beings. It is because of this 'inattention' that they maintain a false relationship with God and one another. Huxley maintains that we fail to attain our true relation with ultimate reality because we prefer to attend to our animal nature and to the allurement of empirical existence. He derives this idea from Buddhist and Vedantic thought. Buddhist insists that we are half asleep most of the time - 'enlightenment is a total awareness'. In *Island*, Huxley has concretized this idea by the ever present 'mynah birds' which have been trained to sing two words and a phrase - 'Attention!' *Karuna* (compassion) and "Here and now boys".

1. *Island*, p.12.
In his analysis of human situation, Huxley regards matter as an important source of bondage. According to him every individual soul in its ultimate essence is a pure consciousness and "that consciousness and beings are not different from each other, but all being is a Supreme consciousness, all consciousness is self-existence, eternal in itself." But in the empirical life this transcendental purity of the individual is disturbed because of his association with the material objects. The impact of the matter on the individual become so powerful that he completely forgets his divine essence. This sway of the matter over the spirit is called bondage. It is under the strong-hold of matter that "we speak of the evolution of life in Matter, the evolution of Mind in Matter." In essence matter is a form of veiled life. It expresses itself eventually as a formulation of some unknown force. The materialist regards this matter as reality, "the relative world as the sole thing of which we can in some sort be sure and the beyond as wholly unknowable ... a dream of the mind, an abstraction of thought" ... It is ignorance that determines whole outlook of a man upon earth: "We work or enjoy under the impulsion of a material energy

2. Ibid., p.5.
3. Ibid., p.18.
which deceives us with the brief delusion of life". We delight in the "fictitious character of the individual ego, the unreality and purposelessness of human existence" and are totally unconscious of our supreme being. It is only by an "extension of our consciousness" that we can perceive the difference between matter and spirit. This experience of cosmic consciousness enables the individual to "enter into the world transcending consciousness," and the individual becomes "superior to all cosmic existence".

Huxley has portrayed some characters in his novels like Mrs. Wimbush in Crome Yellow, Myra Viveash in Antic Hay, Mrs. Aldwinkle, Barbara, and Cardan in Those Barren Leaves, Mary, and Helen Amberley in Eyeless in Gaza, Jo Stoyte, Dr. Obispo, Pordage and Pete in After Many A Summer, Eustace Barnack and Mrs. Thwale in Time Must Have A Stop and Jo Aldehyde in Island, who are completely under the influence of matter and believe that material universe is an eternal self-existent. They are totally unconscious of the supreme purpose of human life. Matter is the only reality for them, and regard the sensible as only a figment of mind and an abstraction of thought. There are some other characters who experience that the spirit is more important than matter and believe that the problem of

1. Aurobindo, *op. cit.*, p.21
existence is essentially the problem of harmony. But they are unable to dissociate themselves from the overwhelming influence of matter and consequently experience discord and disharmony. This causes a split in their personality and they experience a divided allegiance. This dualism between body and soul is the cause of the individual suffering and bondage.

Since the individual soul forgets its existence, and identifies itself with the body it hankers after all bodily pleasures. Man becomes totally committed to body and bodily goals. This makes it difficult for him to transcend the material forces which lead him to bondage. Body is a product of matter, and matter is finite and imperfect. This gives rise to unending cravings in human beings. It is under the impulsion of these cravings that the individual performs activities resulting in the emergence of subliminal impressions. These impressions make the individual a victim of Karma. The peculiarity of Karma is that it is subtle and inexorable; no one can escape from its operation and clutches. Since every action generates reaction, and that reaction in turn gives rise to another reaction, the series of Karma thus becomes endless. This process perpetuates empirical existence. So as in the Buddhist diagnosis, Huxley also regards cravings as the cause of bondage. In *Time Must Have A Stop*, Huxley has portrayed Sebastian who labours under a fruitless effort to secure a


Pull devil, pull baker; pull flesh, pull spirit;
pull love, pull duty; pull reason and pull hollowed prejudice.
dinner jacket for Tom Boveney's party. Being swayed by the intensity of cravings for a dinner jacket, he undergoes all sorts of trials and tribulations including the theft of 'Degas paintings' and telling lies, etc. At the end he realizes his folly and repents:

It had all been for nothing - all these miseries he had gone through, all this guilt, and Bruno's arrest, and this wretched little dog. And meanwhile there was the problem of Tom Boveney's party still unsolved and growing more agonizingly urgent with every passing day. 1

Huxley believes that in the empirical world, man yearns for the maximum enjoyment of life. His desires are ceaseless and remain unfulfilled. He feels that there is something missing and consequently he suffers pain and frustration in his life. In After Many A Summer, Huxley disapproves of the whole programme of longevity by describing the horrors of mundane existence.

Jo Stoyte is a rich industrialist who takes delight in empirical allurement and ephemeral values ("fascinato nugacitatis" - the magic of triviality). He craves for the prolongation of earthly life, as he is incessantly haunted by the fear of death. He commissions Dr. Obispo and Jeremy Pordage, to carry out research and conduct experiments in the field of longevity. Huxley denounces these futile activities and advocates that any attempt in the direction of such prolongation would obstruct our transcending the ego. He believes that spiritual activity begins with a dissatisfaction with the

1. Time Must Have A Stop, p.269.
transient values of the world and a craving for the permanent. The individual who can discriminate between the eternal and non-eternal views the world and beholds things in their true perspective. The self gets to know itself and eradicates the wrong belief in its limitation. He establishes unity with the all. Upanishads say:

The Whole is all That,
The Whole is born out of the Whole.
When the Whole is absorbed into the Whole
the Whole alone remains. 1

Apart from craving for perpetuation of mundane life, Huxley recognizes another common form of craving which consists in the lure of money and possessions. Money symbolises man's hankering after what is finite and perishable; worldly possessions are limitations upon the spirit. In his essay on "Ethics in Andalusia" published in Musics At Night, Huxley writes:

In large section of contemporary society the importance of sexual acts has been minimized unduly, even. At the same time, a certain tenderness of conscience with regard to the manifestations of avarice and love of money is beginning to be noticeable. The mediaeval Catholic Church professed a passionate hatred for the love of money and used all the weapons in both its spiritual and temporal armouries to prevent men from indulging too freely in this sin. Under Calvin and the later Protestants the Christian attitude towards money underwent a great change. The Old Testament notion, that prosperity was a sign of virtue (which indeed it is, if you limit virtue to prudence, industry, thrift and the like), was revived. Today, under the influence of Socialists, Tolstoyans, William Morrisites, and the various other modern protestants against industrialism, a certain reaction towards the mediaeval standards of economic morality has begun to set in. The time, it may be, is not so very far distant when the most hateful heresies, in the eyes of all right-thinking people, will be, not amorous but economic heresies ... 2

Huxley denounces the craving for money. In *Those Barren Leaves*, he portrays Mrs. Aldwinkle who is mad after the acquisition of money and mundane objects. Sarcastically he writes:

For the view was now her property. It was therefore the finest in the world; ... With the palace Mrs. Aldwinkle had purchased vast domains unmentioned in the contact. She had bought, to begin with, the Cybo Malaspina and their history ... It was the same with the landscape. It was hers down to the remote horizon, and nobody but she could really give it its due. And then, how she appreciated the Italians! Ever since she had bought a house in Italy, she had become the one foreigner who knew them intimately. The whole peninsula and everything it contained were her property and her secret. She had bought its art, its music, its melodic language, its literature, its wine and cooking, the beauty of its women and the virility of its Fascists. She had acquired Italian passion: *Cuoro amore and dolore* were hers. Nor had she forgotten to buy the climate the finest in Europe - the fauna - and how proud she was.  

In *Point Counter Point*, Philip Quarles takes up an attitude of repulsion towards money, which he emphasizes is more dangerous than the craving for sex. He says:

The instinct of acquisitiveness has more perverts, I believe, than the instinct of sex. At any rate, people seem to me odder about money than even their amours ... there's a physiological satisfaction possible in the sexual matters, while there's none where money's concerned. When the body's satiated, the mind stops thinking about food or women. But the hunger for money and possession is an almost purely mental thing. There's no physical satisfaction possible. That would account for the excesses and perversities of acquisitiveness ... But perhaps the word 'perversion' is meaningless in this context. For perversion implies the existence of a norm from which it departs. What is the norm of acquisitiveness? ... In any case I find myself uninterested in possession and rather unsympathetic with, and without understanding of, those who are.

No predominantly acquisitive character has appeared in any one of my stories. It is a defect; for acquisitives are obviously very common in real life. But I doubt if I could make such a character interesting - not being interested myself in the acquisitive passion. Balzac could; circumstances and heredity had made him passionately interested in money. But when one finds a thing boring, one's apt to be boring about it. 1

In *After Many A Summer*, Huxley has portrayed Jo Stoyte as a personification of one of the Seven Deadly Sins of life. He cherishes an instinct of acquisitiveness and intends to acquire everything that can be acquired on earth. He does not have any education but what comes in his way from China to Peru he has collected without showing the slightest discrimination, and in the course of these collections he has purchased Hauberk Papers, the name of which he is unable to pronounce. Frowningly he speaks of his acquisitiveness:

'I'm head of an oil company here', he said. 'Got two thousand filling-stations in California alone. And not one man in any of those filling-stations that isn't a college graduate! He brayed, again, triumphantly. 'Go and talk foreign languages to them'. He was silent for a moment; then, pursuing, an unexplicit association of ideas, 'My agent in London', he went on, 'the man who picks up things for me there - he gave me your name. Told me you were the right man for those - what do you call them? You know, those papers I bought this summer. Roebuck? Hobuck?' 2

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1. *Point Counter Point*, pp.410-411.
2. *After Many A Summer*, p.25.
Huxley refers to Jo.'s idiot universe which constitutes only his craving for money:

What a morning! The arrival at dawn. The negro retainer. The interminable suburb. The Beverly Pantheon. The object among the orange trees, and his meeting with William Propter and this really dreadful Stoyte. Then, inside the castle, the Rubens and the great El Greco in the Hall, the Vermeer in the elevator, the Rembrandt etching along the corridors the winter halter in the butler's pantry.

Then Miss Maunciple's Louis XV boudoir, with the watteau and the two lancrets and the fully equipped soda-fountain in a rococo embrasure, and Miss Maunciple herself, in an orange Kimono, drinking a raspberry and peppermint ice-cream soda at her own counter. He had been introduced, had refused the offer of Sundae and has hurried on again, always at top speed ... to see the other sights of the castle. The Rumpus Room, for example ... The library, with its wood work by Grinling Gibbons, but with no books, because Mr. Stoyte had not yet brought himself to buy any. The small dinning-room with its Fra Angelico and its furniture from Brighton Pavillion. The large dining room, modelled on the interior of the mosque at Fatehpur Sikri ... The thirteenth century stained-glass in the eleventh-floor W.C. ... The chapel, imported in fragments from Goa, with the walnut confessional used by St. Francois de Sales at Annecy. The functional billiard-room. The indoor swimming pool. The second Empire bar ... The Christian Science Reading Room, dedicated to the memory of the late Mrs. Stoyte. The dentist's office. The Turkish bath. Then down, with Vermeer, into the bowels of the hill, to look at the cellar in which the Hauberk Papers had been stored. Down again yet deeper, to the safe deposits vaults, the power-house, the air conditioning plant, the well and pumping station. Then up once more to ground level and the kitchens where the Chinese chief had shown Mr. Stoyte the newly arrived consignment of turtles from the Carribean. Up again to the fourteenth, to the bedroom which Jeremy was to occupy during his stay. Then up another six stories to the business office, where Mr. Stoyte gave orders to his Secretary, dictated a couple of letters and had a long telephonic conversation with his brokers in Amsterdam. And when that was finished, it had been time to go to the hospital. 1

1. After Many A Summer, pp.29-30.
Propter shows his deep concern with Jo Stoyte's unhealthy appetite for money. Propter finds that the Stoyte is afflicted with a poverty of soul and, therefore, he is unable to appreciate the worthlessness of worldly pursuits. It is his failure to grasp the distinction between the eternal and the ephemeral, that he remains confined to the objects of transient value. Propter, in the manner of Nachiketa of the Katha Upanishad, refuses to be tempted by the lures of worldly wealth and happiness. In the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, Maitreya refuses to accept the earthly possessions; on the other hand, he requests her husband Yajnavalkya to impart her the knowledge of immortality as the material possession can never lead one to immortality.

In Island, Joe Aldehyde is one of those happy tycoons who takes delight in money and all that money can buy. He is a man of affairs, a great captain of industry. He is an embodiment of craving and desires. His excessive preoccupation with money has completely blurred his vision. He commissions Will Farnaby for the furtherance of his business interest in Pala. But in association with the Palanese, Will soon realizes the ephemeral nature of money and shows his disgust with the entire project of Joe Aldehyde and people like him who are bent upon destroying the spiritual and moral fibre of that chaste Island. Huxley believes that it is because of man's wrong identification that he cherishes false values for the materialistic objects. But when the veil of ignorance is cleared, the sway of Maya is also dispersed and one no longer suffers from any enchantment of wealth and possession. The spirit of renunciation draws upon the individual which consists in the rejection of
everything that is unstable and mutable. Huxley in the treatment of the problem of craving for wealth seems to have been influenced considerably by *Katha Unished*:

> The childish go after outward pleasure
> They walk into the net of widespread death
> But the wise, knowing immortality
> Seek not the stable among things which are unstable here

Like other cravings, the craving for wealth has also been treated disparagingly in Huxley's work. His attitude to the problem of sex is determined by ethical imperative and he regards sex as leading to bondage and frustration. Sex distorts our consciousness and causes dualism in man. Man's soul longs for luminous bliss but the pull of carnal desires thwart his goal at every step. Thus the struggle between the temptation of physical desires and love of spirit becomes intensely powerful and merciless in his work.

The history of mankind starts with the story of a temptation of sex leading to man's fall. It is Eve who blurs the vision of Adam and makes him disobey the command of God. Since then the temptation of sex has been looked down upon as a sin against the Holy Ghost. It is a truism that nothing is more natural to man than the impulse of sex, and at the same time nothing is more degrading than this impulse. Man stands on the horns of a dilemma: whether to follow the promptings of sex or to mortify them. The materialists and hedonists have accepted the inevitability of sexual impulse and advocated for its fullest satisfaction. But the ascetics have treated sex impulse disparagingly and pleaded for its complete mortification. But there are

*1. Katha Unished, 4.1.*
others who have avoided these extremes and followed a middle path. They regard sex as natural but advocate a restrained attitude towards sex satisfaction. Huxley adheres to this middle course. He believes that "sexual love is to be looked upon as a kind of inevitable evil, an evil which is most effectively combated either by continence and sublimation or by careful restraints of the sexual impulse". It seems that in the treatment of sex he has been much influenced by Buddhistic thinking. In the Bhagvad Gita, too, there has been an advocacy of restrained sex fulfilment. Lord Krishna declares that he is the supreme 'Kama' (sex desire) of all the Kamas.


   In itself, no doubt, the natural and moderate satisfaction of the sexual instincts is a matter quite indifferent to morality. It is only in relation to something else that the satisfaction of a natural instinct can be said to be good or bad. It might be bad, for example, if it involved deceit or cruelty. It is certainly bad when it enslaves a mind that feels, within itself, that it ought to be free - free to contemplate and recollect itself.


3. Kamanam Sarvakamosmi
Huxley has portrayed some characters like Myra Viveash, in *Antic Hay*, Mrs. Aldwinkle, in *Those Barren Leaves*, Lucy Tantamount, in *Point Counter Point*, Mary and Helen Ambereley, in *Eyeless in Gaza*, and Eustace Barnack, in *Time Must Have A Stop*, who are strongly under the bondage of carnal desires and hardly show any perception of higher values of life. They seek to find in sex "the essence of being, the essence of power, the essence of conscious existence, the essence of delight, but receives instead a crowd of contradictory touches and impressions". But there are some other characters who realize that sex is a bondage and the individual should try to transcend it.

In *Those Barren Leaves*, Huxley portrays Calamy who experiences a duality between the temptation of sex and the yearning of spirit. Finally, he realizes that sex is a bondage and it ought to be transcended for the understanding of true knowledge. He abandons all mundane pursuits and retires to a mountain in search of supreme reality.

In *Eyeless in Gaza*, Huxley demonstrates the transient nature of sex through the relationship of Anthony Beavis and Helen. While Anthony Beavis and Helen are having a sex affair on the roof, a dead dog falls on them, bespattering them with blood. Anthony realizes the evanescence of physical passions and experiences moral degeneracy and futility of life. But finally he overcomes the bondage of sex through mystical contemplation. In *Devils of Loudun*, Huxley has portrayed Urban

Gandier who is torn between the pull of spirit and the temptation of carnal desires. But he surrenders to temptations which bring about his down-fall and consequently sufferings. He struggles constantly to transcend his baser desires in order to achieve unity with Godhead. Huxley feels a repugnance for sex, not because in itself it is an evil, but because it involves a physical element which gives rise to evil. That is why all love making has been regarded as sin in his novels and marked with physical decay and moral degeneracy. But he approves of that type of love which is spiritual, and gives vitality, value and meaning to life.\(^1\) However, Huxley is not completely puritan in his approach to the problem of sex, though he seems to have maintained such an attitude in some of his writings. In Island, he has advocated 'maithuna yoga' which is a pure and chaste form of sex satisfaction. He maintains that restrained love can be a source of self-transcendence. The addiction to sex degenerates a man, but if it is employed for union with other people and for promoting mystical kinship with divine essence this becomes an ideal sex behaviour. He has depicted cases of ideal marriages in Island.' In Island, love making is no longer considered either shameful or lustful or misery mongering but a path "to

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1. *Antic Hay*, p.179.

Somewhere there must be love like music. Love harmonious and ordered; two spirits, two bodies moving contrapuntally together. Somewhere, the stupid brutish act must be made to make sense, must be enriched, must be made significant.
beatific enlightenment and union with the Godhead. Huxley treats intellect as another form of bondage. He believes that the empirical man is essentially rational, but man as such is spiritual and hence supra-rational. To apprehend a reality that is unknowable by the intellect, and to realize the unity and harmony at the root of things, a form of cognition is required which is at once unitive and immediate. Intellect works a division between man and nature, causing an internal fissure and fastening attention on single aspects.

Intellect is always dualistic, it moves through distinctions and discriminations. It starts with the basic distinction of the knower and the known and holds up an unbridgeable gulf between the two. But the reality is one unitary and all-pervasive, spiritual whole, and that is why intellect fails to understand the real essence of reality. So long as man is under the sway of intellect, he is unable to realize the all-pervading basic unity. But there is a continuous awareness of absence of something in all his intellectual approaches to life. Through his intellect man constantly struggles to apprehend the totality of reality, but not only he fails even to approximate the reality but also falls into exclusiveness, antinomies, contraries, dichotomies and paradoxes. He gets entangled in a dilemma of 'To be or not to be'.

Reason always functions through abstractions, though it tries to meet the reality but always turns back from the surface, being unable to penetrate the inner core of reality. By its very nature, reason cannot overcome duality. Reality is an indivisible unity and can be grasped only through an intuitive knowledge. Therefore those who realize this fact also become aware of the inadequacy of intellect. They believe in the concept of an intuitive principle, 'the intellect receptive' which is prior and presupposed in all mental activity or thought construction and which is a union with things known.

There is another peculiarity of the functioning of reason, for it has a fixed movement and a singular direction. The Reality is multifaceted and the reason cannot grasp all the facets of reality at once and at the same time. It has to concentrate on one facet at a time. This exclusiveness in its operation results in specialization. Though this sort of specialization reveals reality, but such a revelation is always of a very small fragment of reality. Thus intellect cannot give a direct insight into the harmony underlying multifarious show of the world, the unity beneath the multiplicity.


Mind, even at its highest stages far beyond our present mentality, acts yet in its nature by division it takes the aspect of the Eternal and treats each aspect as if it were the whole truth of the Eternal Being and can find in each its own perfect fulfilment.
Since the intellect has a circumscribed role, it erects an artificial barrier between the different aspects of reality. It also binds the vision of knower and gives rise to the ego feeling. The emergent ego conceives man as the master and measure of all things. The man sees the ego as ultimate reality and the world as its creation. It is this egocentricity which leads him to bondage.

Man is miserable simply because he is a thinking being. His thinking gives rise to a false glimmer, a labyrinth of illusion and unreality and he gropes under their baffling glitter. He finds no rest and like an angry ape plays such fantastic tricks which make the angels weep. In a sense all his problems begin and end with intellect which has been described as a 'reality killer'.

Huxley believes that mental activity or thought construction does not give a direct insight into the ultimate reality. But there is a power in the constitution of every man beyond intellect which can perceive the unity beneath multiplicity. He calls that power 'intuitive vision' which enables the individual to penetrate into the spiritual centre and discover the ultimate reality. With the attainment of this knowledge the real self appears to be different from the fettered ego. He therefore advocates that the individual should strive to transcend the barriers of discursive knowledge in order to attain the true knowledge of reality.
Huxley has portrayed characters like Scogan in *Crome Yellow*, Shearwater in *Antic Hay*, Cardan in *Those Barren Leaves*, Edward Tantamount in *Point Counter Point*, Brian in *Eyeless in Gaza* and Henry Maarten in *The Genius and Goddess*, who are under the dominance of empirical thinking and contemplate love, sex, beauty and God intellectually, and for the sake of intellectual pursuits they are prepared to sacrifice even their innate human qualities. They believe that there is a tremendous amount of knowledge waiting for exploration and they make concentrated efforts to unveil the mysteries of existence through intellectual process.

However, there are some other characters like Denis in *Crome Yellow*, and Philip Quarles in *Point Counter Point*, who are weighted with "twenty-tons of ratiocination" and earnestly yearn for transcending the dry description of facts in order to experience intuitive truth and direct experience of life. But the pull of intellect is so powerful on them that they fail to establish living contact with the true self. Ironically and with tragic inevitability they rush to their own destruction. In the end, they completely lose their sense of direction and suffer pain and frustration and their life reveals a succession of failures. Huxley has also portrayed characters like Calamy in *Those Barren Leaves*, Anthony Beavis and Dr. Miller in *Eyeless in Gaza*, Propter in *After Many A Summer*, the *Palanese* in *Island*, who have realized the bondage of

intellect. They believe that the profoundest experience of the spirit are incomprehensible and baffling to the intellect. They have overcome all the obstacles created by the empirical ego. In their cases, dualities and partialities are relinquished in the rich totality of a supreme realisation of eternal being.

In Those Barren Leaves, Calamy who is an amorist and intellectual becomes a syanasi. He does not show any more curiosity for the knowing the empirical world but he wants to fathom the bottom of the cosmos. His only desire is to know more and more about the spirit through an intuitive process.

There's nothing more I really want to know about that part of myself; nothing more, of any significance, I imagine, that I could get to know by contact with what is external. On the other hand, there is a whole universe within me, unknown and waiting to be explored; a whole universe that can only be approached by way of introspection and patient uninterrupted thought. Merely to satisfy curiosity it would surely be worthy exploring. But there are motives more impelling than curiosity to persuade me. What one may find there is so important that it is almost a matter of life and death to undertake the search! 1

In Eyeless in Gaza, Anthony Beavis who in the beginning believes that the metaphysical approach is the most satisfactory approach to the understanding of the problems of life. Though he realizes the limitation of this approach, he keeps his vision blurred and does not attempt to bridge the gap between the outer and the inner life. But soon he experiences a crisis in his life, nevertheless he gets around his difficulties through self-transcendence.

From the foregoing analysis, it is evident that Huxley is completely disenchanted with the glamour of the intellect. Though he in his empirical mood gives concession to scientific temperament, at heart he is a mystic par excellence and reveals a marked predisposition towards mystic experiences. He feels that intellect may appear to give some solace to human mind but this solace is always transient and fleeting. In order to seek an abiding solution to all human problems, Huxley like Buddha and Sankara advocates a complete distrust of discursive knowledge. In Buddhistic and Vedantic systems spirituality is held supreme as against rationality. Huxley has clearly indicated his indebtedness to Vedanta and Buddhism because he makes his characters think in Vedantic and Buddhistic way, speak in Vedantic and Buddhistic terms, and act on Vedantic and Buddhistic principles of life.

Rousseau believes that 'man is born free but every where is in chains'. Huxley seems to echo Rousseau when he denounces social and intellectual institutions and calls them unethical and powerful instruments of tyranny. The modern people are "fooled or hypnotized by the limited and ignoble ideals of economic or psychotic man, by unethical technological progress, by the regimented State or the 'Big Brothers', with his big stick of lying propaganda, war, and revolution and total destruction". Man evolves these institutions for creating a

better social climate so that the individual may develop his potentialities to the fullest and live in harmony with the cosmos. But with the passage of time man gets so much absorbed in these institutions that he forgets the true end for the sake of which all these media are created. Instead of retaining them as means for his ends, he becomes a means for their amplification.

The propounders of these institutions are generally motivated by a powerful feeling for establishing an era of peace, prosperity, freedom and justice for humanity. But in actual practice, these ideals always remain utopian because of the hurdles put forth by the corrupting human mind. Instead of serving as delivering agencies, these institutions become diabolical forces of destruction of humanity. This is amply evident from the historical forces.

Huxley denounces all social, intellectual and religious institutions because they curb human freedom, spontaneity, initiative, human warmth and feeling. He shows a contempt for socio-political ideologies like 'Nationalism', 'Fascism', and 'totalitarianism' because they enslave the individual and create a climate of tension and war in the world. He bemoans science and technology and mass-media of communication for their unhealthy influences on the individual and society.

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From the Isaiah to Karl Marx the prophets have spoken with one voice. In the Golden Age to which they look forward there will be liberty, peace, justice and brotherly love. 'Nation shall no more lift sword against nation', 'the free development of each will lead to the free development of all; 'the world shall be full of knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.'
In *Point Counter Point*, Rampion repudiates Christianity, industrialism and intellectualism for stifling man's creativity and spontaneity. In *Brave New World*, Huxley has satirized the mechanical civilization where the individual has become an automaton. In *Ape and Essence*, Huxley speaks in derogatory terms about technology, industrialization, nationalism and progress and calls them Satan, Belial, Moloch, and Lucifer. Swayed under their holocaust man unleashes an era of criminal imbecility, bloodshed and war that he degenerates himself to the level of anthropoid ape.

Huxley also condemns the religious institutions which make the individual superstitious, dogmatic and blind. Though religion in its purest form is always personal, it becomes an instrument of tyranny when it gets institutionalized. Man gets stuck with these institutions and follows them mechanically without knowing the true spirit behind them. Huxley exposes the nefarious activities of these institutions and advocates that the individual should realize the supreme glory of the personal experience. In *The Devils of Loudun*, Urban Grandier, a priest, has been shown to be indulging in debauchery with one of his female parishioners. His hypocrisy has been unmasked when he comes to know that he is the father of an unborn child. Huxley also describes the tyrannical attitude of the Roman Catholic Church towards one of their own priests who refuses to admit that he is possessed by evil. In *Grey Eminence*, Huxley portrays Father Joseph who believes in the identification of the glory of France with dedication to God. It is this false
identification which brings out his downfall.

Huxley advocates that these institutions are strongholds of bondage and man should direct his energies to emancipate himself from the clutches of these diabolical institutions.

VI. Means of Emancipation.

Salvation - but from what? Deliverance - out of which particular situation into what other situation? Men have given many answers to these questions, and because human temperaments are of such profoundly different kinds, because social situations are so various and fashions of thought and feeling so compelling while they last, the answer are many and mutually incompatible.

Huxley dwells upon various forms of bondage: namely the bondage of the ego, the bondage of the lower-self (bodily self), and bondage of the intellect and evils resulting from the intellect like technology and other social and religious institutions. But he does not leave humanity in despair because he fervently believes that somehow, somewhere, there is a way out, a better principle behind the misery.


The Church, as he sees it, is an institution that must promote such degeneration of motive and hypocrisy of conduct. If the state is frankly an organization to further the base materialistic interests of men, in proportion as religion becomes similarly organized, it becomes subservient to the state and corrupts the spiritual values it is supposed to strengthen.


"I show you sorrow", said the Buddha realistically. But he also showed the ending of sorrow-self-knowledge, total acceptance, the blessed experience of Not-Two.
According to him, man's true-self is a spiritual substance, which is eternal and immutable and different from the body, senses, the mind and ego. But in a state of bondage man forgets his essential nature, and identifies himself with his body and bodily adjuncts. It is because of his false identification that the timeless soul becomes temporal, the immutable suffers from mutation.

He believes that the individual life in the present state of existence is fragmentary, confused and uncertain. It is characterized with suffering, evil, limitations and distorted consciousness and, therefore, it has to be transcended. This suggests that there is an ultimate goal, a state in which time, space, matter and causation have no meaning. The final goal consists in the realization of the fact that the individual self is infinite, universal brahman. This goal is a matter of realization of something which is already in existence though hidden from our view. As a result of the attainment of the correct knowledge of self, the false notion of the self as opposed by a not-self is removed and identity is established.


From the unreal lead me to the 'real, from darkness lead me to light, from death lead me to immortality' is the prayer of the spirit craving for enlightenment.

"Asatu mā sat ganaya, tāmasaṁ mā jyoti
raganaya mṛtyaṁ mā mrtam ganaya"

2. *Island*, p.169.

"Liberation", ... "the ending of sorrow, ceasing to be what you ignorantly think you are and becoming what you are in fact ..."
Huxley seems to have been substantially influenced by the Buddhist analysis of the present state of bondage. Like Buddha, he describes that this mundane existence is full of sorrow and suffering but there is "a method by which the individual can free himself from evil and do something to diminish the sum of evil in the world around him." Thus the present state of bondage is not eternal. It has been caused by certain causal conditions, and by the removal of those conditions, the bondage can also be brought to an end. Thus he starts with pessimism about the world at large, but ends on a note of optimism by asserting that there is a possibility and a way out to the transcendence of bondage.

Hope begins only when human beings start to realize that the kingdom of heaven, or whatever other name you care to give it, is within and can be experienced by anybody who's prepared to take the necessary trouble.  

Huxley further writes:

'It's the kind of pessimism and the kind of optimism you find in all the great religions', he added. 'Pessimism about the world at large and human nature as it displays itself in the majority of men and women. Optimism about the things that can be achieved by anyone who wants to and knows how.'

Like Vedantic and Buddhistic thought, Huxley insists on the realization of the individual's efforts for his true nature, but at the same time, he does not completely rule out the redemption of the individual through divine intervention or the element of

2. After Many A Summer, p.246.
3. Ibid., p.245.
divine grace. However, his basic position remains individualistic because divine grace occupies only a secondary role in Huxley's thought. The grace of God cannot be operative, unless the individual prepares the ground for its operation through self-transformation. The transformation of the self requires an all-round concentrated effort. It must be a total transformation and not a piecemeal. Since the individual personality constitutes three dominant traits, namely, cognitive, conative and affective, he advocates the transformation of all the three aspects through three distinct disciplines operating collectively for purification of the individual. In his exposition of the means of emancipation, Huxley mainly depends upon the Vedantic and Yogic methodology. The realization of this state of consciousness is possible only through sacrifice and as such Huxley advocates the following broad ways for self sacrifice: ethical, yogic, intellectual, and religious or mystical. Speaking roughly, these three stages may be distinguished as purification, concentration, and identification. They answer to the via purgativa, via contemplativa and via unitiva. They are not successive steps but different points of view.


As to the means to salvation, these are simultaneously ethical, intellectual and spiritual and have been summed up with admirable clarity and economy in Buddha's Eight-fold path.
At the first stage he insists on the ethical preparation, which is the primary requisite for spiritual insight. The mind must be cleared of all impurities. These practices are adopted for disciplining one's nature and strengthening the will. Mortification of lower self has been advocated "with an uncompromising firmness in the canonical writings of Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and most of the other major and minor religions of the world, and by every theocentric saint and spiritual reformer who has ever lived out and expanded the principles of Perennial Philosophy."  

Dulay believes that there should be complete denial of the separative self. To the extent there is attachment to 'I', me, mine, there is no possibility of experiencing a timeless goal or unitive knowledge. Though mortification is painful, yet pain is one of the pre-conditions of blessedness. This pain can be overcome through strong control over will. He urges the reader to remember Takeno's statement that control of will is possible through meditation which "is a super-rational concentration of the will". 2 He recognizes the pervasive character of animal instincts and insists that it is imperative to transcend them to realize goodness in its purest form. He says:

Goodness is the method by which we divert our attention from this singularly wearisome topic of our animality and our individual separateness. 3

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1. Perennial Philosophy, p.113.
2. Ends and Means, p.286.
3. Ibid., p.298.
He diagnoses that perfect good cannot be achieved at the social level. The good can be achieved only at the individual level. The transformation of the individual will is prerequisite for the realization of goodness at the individual level. "There must be a more than a mere deflection of evil; there must be suppression at the source, in the individual will." Huxley believes that good and evil are actualizable potentialities and one may select whichever one likes. It is a question of choice and therefore he strongly recommends the transformation of will. In Themes and Variations, he writes:

The truth that saves is that which every individual has to realize in and for himself.

He cherishes an explicit faith in the doctrine of human free will. According to him, every individual is a free being. But his mind always vacillates between the forces of good and evil. Under the impact of ego and the empirical self man clings to evil, but he is also disturbed by the momentary

1. After Many A Summer, p. 245.

Huxley writes:

No human society can become conspicuously better than it is now, unless it contains a fair proportion of individuals who know that their humanity isn't the last world and who consciously attempt to transcend it... Not by evolutionary growth, not in some remote future, but at any time here and now, if you like - by the use of properly directed intelligence and good will.


3. Themes and Variations, p. 98.
thought of good provided by the flashes of mystical intuition. A firm grip over the good presupposes a control of will, which can be attained by breaking the bond with all that is evil. If detachment is not effected completely, there would be every possibility of distraction by evil. In order to surmount this difficulty, he advocates the technique of non-attachment. The doctrine of non-attachment is the key-note of the teaching of The Bhagavad Gita. According to Gita, the technique of detachment does not lie in the renunciation of world or activity in the world, but in the renunciation of bodily cravings for realizing the permanent values of the world. Huxley also advocates that what is needed is not the renunciation of the universe but the transformation of universe. He further draws upon the Vedantic ideal of Jivan-mukti, which means that emancipation can be realized in this very world.

In Ends and Means, Huxley states the ideal of non-attachment as a means for the realization of self. He believes that body, sensations, emotions, intellect, and all empirical cravings lead the individual to egocentricity and are stumbling block to his self-development. The first and primary requisite criterion for self-development is the renunciation of all these elements. He advocates that the individual must lose the lower self in order to achieve the higher one. In his ethical
discipline he gives great importance to charity. He writes:

'Real progress', in the words of Dr. R.R. Marrett, is progress in charity, all other advances being secondary thereto *.1

By charity he means the cultivation of right virtues specifically of understanding and compassion. The possession of other virtues is no guarantee of virtuous conduct: "Indeed, you can't be really bad unless you do have most of the virtues. Look at Milton's Satan for example. Brave, strong, generous, loyal, prudent, temperate, self-sacrificing." But since he lacked the qualities of understanding and compassion, he could not be called a virtuous leader.

Huxley's ideal of non-attachment has two requisites: the first is detachment from the empirical ego and the second is attachment to the Divine Ground. Both these elements are equally necessary; attachment to God is not possible unless there is a detachment from the empirical world. Similarly, mere detachment from the empirical world without any other substitution to cling would leave the individual in the vacuum. Thus, in order to give completion to the process of detachment from the empirical world, it is necessary to substitute the divine principle as the object of attachment. We cannot develop the feelings of compassion, understanding, love, and virtue, etc. unless we regard all beings and all

2. After Many A Summer, p.115.
objects as things of divine origin.

Huxley advocates that non-attachment is an ideal state of human existence. He writes:

The ideal man is the non-attached man. Non-attached to his bodily sensations and lusts, non-attached to his craving for power and possessions. Non-attached to the objects of these various desires. Non-attached to his anger and hatred; non-attached to his exclusive loves. Non-attached to wealth, fame, social position. Non-attached even to science, art, speculation, philanthropy... Non-attached even to these. 2

Huxley has portrayed a few ideal characters: Calamy, in Those Barren Leaves, Anthony Beavis and Dr. Miller, in Eyeless in Gaza, Propter in After Many A Summer, Sebastian and Bruno Rontini, in Time Must Have A Stop, and Palanese, in Island, who are immune to empirical joys and sufferings and are resurrected and reassured in the spiritual world.

Though it appears that Huxley has conceived the ideal of non-attachment negatively, yet this ideal has a positive aspect too, which means that the individual in his deepest

1. Ends and Means, p.10.

It is in the light of our belief about the ultimate nature of reality that we formulate our conceptions of right and wrong; and it is in the light of our conceptions of right and wrong that we frame our conduct not only in the relations of private life but also in the sphere of politics and economics. So far from being irrelevant, our metaphysical belief are the finally determining factor in all our actions.

2. Ibid., pp.3-4.
essence is fundamentally identical with Godhead. He maintains that all our ailments are due to our estrangements from the Divine Ground, which is the ultimate nature of all things. It is only through cultivation of direct and intuitive awareness of Divine Ground that we can get rid of evil and establish absolute identity with It. He at many places alludes to the Upanishadic doctrine of Tat-Tvam-Asi (Thou Art That) and advocates that this belief in the complete identification of the individual with the Divine Ground alone can make us truly non-attached man.

In *Time Must Have A Stop*, Sebastian expresses his firm belief in the Divine Godhead as the ground of all being which is transcendent and immanent. He affirms that it is only through self-denial, that is, the denial of the lower self, or through self-mortification that it is possible "to become actually identified with the Ground".

In *Eyeless in Gaza*, Anthony Beavis aims at the same goal and advocates that it is the evil which separates man from man, and it is the good that unites man with man.

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This absolute identity of the human soul with Godhead is attested in several passages in the Upanisads, and it is the very thesis of the *Mandukya*. It is also basic to Sankra's advaita (Non-Dualism) and to Saktism.

2. *Time Must Have A Stop*, p.289.
The cultivation of good is possible only when man realizes
his basic identity with the Godhead. He sums up the goal
of human existence which consists in the attainment of
"unity of mankind, unity of all life, and all being even.
Physical unity, first of all. Unity even in diversity,
unity even in separation". 1

In After Many A Summer, Propter further elaborates
the theory of non-attachment. He not only professes the
ideal of non-attachment, but also practices it in his actual
life. He repudiates materialistic forces personified in
Jo's Stoyte and advocates that essentially, human being has a
spark of divinity in him, but under the influence of ego
and its appetite he degenerates into a foetal ape. His
ever activities prevent the manifestation of good and open up
the possibilities for the multiplication of new wants
and an aggressive expansion of the collective ego. He
believes that the individual is impregnated with divine
potentialities, but these potentialities have to be manifested
by the unveiling of the ego and other empirical elements.

1. Eyeless in Gaza, p. 612.

The ascent to the divine life is the human journey, the Work of Works, the acceptable Sacrifice. This alone is man's real business in the world and the justification of his existence, without which he would be only an insect crawling among other ephemeral insects on a speck of surface mud and water which has managed to form itself amid the appalling immensities of the physical universe.
He writes that man:

'A nothingness surrounded by God, indigent of God, capable of God and filled with God, if man so desires. And what is God? A being withdrawn from creatures, a free power, a pure working.'

Propter believes that the individual is non-existent without the knowledge of God. But he can establish his identity with the Divine Ground by following the ideal of non-attachment.

In *Island*, Huxley portrays the Palanese way of life which is based on the ideal of non-attachment. They have framed rules and regulations relating to the goal of the individual which are aimed at the elimination of all empirical cravings like desires, passions, hatred, anxiety, jealousy and anger. They believe that the individual should live in harmony with the cosmos and direct his entire energies to the cultivation of such virtues as may lead to disinterested consciousness. They give great importance to love, understanding, compassion and charity.

Ranga in this novel states that the ideal of non-attachment does not imply the renunciation of the world but the achievement of unitive knowledge here and now.

The fetters of the ego are subtle and tenacious and do not permit a man to get rid of their trammels. Thus, the detachment from the empirical world is fraught with innumerable difficulties. Huxley believes that with an iron effort of will and a strenuous contemplation, we can

achieve the disinterested consciousness. Spiritual culture must be understood as an intense and sustained self-reflection, ceaseless watchfulness, and self-criticism. Only through meditative discipline (Dhyana Yoga) are the infinite rewards opened to us. In Ends and Means, he writes that meditation is the only technique of mysticism. It is meditation which alone can bring about concentration and control of will. He realizes the fact that "what we perceive and understand depends upon what we are; and what we are depends partly on circumstances, partly, and more profoundly on the nature of efforts we have made to realize our ideal and the nature of the ideal we have tried to realize". 1

It is the control of will which can help the individual to detach himself from the mundane world and seek an attachment with the Divine Ground. He prescribes two methods for the attainment of the control of will and concentration: contemplation and self-mortification. He writes:

Mortification without contemplation, and 2 contemplation without mortification are useless.

Huxley recommends the Buddhist's eight-fold path for the mortification of ego leading to mystical contemplation. The Hindu method of meditation (Dhyana Yoga) also holds a great fascination for him. Yoga, he believes, is not an esoteric

practice but meditative discipline, a focussing of consciousness. According to 'Gita', it is a conscious endeavour to lift self by the self. Only by such mental discipline can one develop the intuitive faculty, which alone will ultimately take one to the deep-lying essence beneath.

Huxley has portrayed some characters in his novels who possess, in a supreme degree, the capacity for self-dissociation, for detaching themselves from all the surrounding activities and, what is more, for abstracting themselves from the thoughts of experiences of their own mind. He has a preference for Dhyana Yoga as against Raja Yoga of Patanjali. Raja Yoga, with its dualistic assumptions, aims at extinguishing the state of consciousness, a complete extinction of all mental activity, whereas the yogic method of Vedanta aims, through spiritual elevation, to transform the very stuff of our nature. Moreover, the goal of Vedanta is that of identity (Sarvātmatva) or universality. Huxley writes:

It is possible for man, if he so desires, to identify himself with the spirit and therefore with the Divine Ground, which is of the same or like nature with the spirit...

...man's life on earth has only one end and purpose to identify himself with his eternal self and so to come to unitive knowledge of the Divine Ground. 1

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Through meditation on the whole, as 'I am all, I am the infinite Brahman', all particular consciousness is dissolved and the individual loses his particularity and becomes universal. The Chhandogya Upanishad advocates:

That I am all, so he must meditate.

The Upanishad enjoin on us: "One should meditate upon the mind as Brahman; one should meditate upon Ākāśa (space) as Brahman", because the object of meditation is expansion and identification, and since both the mind and space are all pervading and free from limitations, meditation on them will produce the expansion of the inner horizon. In this very act of meditating on its universal nature, the self expands and becomes all, because all particular reference has been eradicated and the barriers that separated the self from the not-self have been broken down. In intuitive meditation identification is practised for the purpose of expanding the self, in order that the self may gain the consciousness of its identity with the world-all. Huxley's mind is not limited to particular objects, but embraces in its expansive vision of the totality of the universe.

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1. Chhandogya, 2.21.4.
2. Ibid., 3.18.1.
In Perennial Philosophy, Huxley shows his marked preference for the yogic 'aphorism' 'Om' which is an object of contemplation. He believes that meditation facilitates the achievement of ethical disciplines and consequently a change in the individual psyche. The transformed individual will live in harmony with his fellow-beings and the cosmos. He writes that "the end of human life is contemplation or the direct intuitive awareness of God."

Huxley's practice of meditation reveals the strong influence of Sri Aurobindo's teachings. It seems that from Aurobindo he has learnt that yoga may not be only an exercise for the mind, with the ultimate object of the complete dissolution of the mind. It should be practised for the purpose of expanding the self, in order that the self may gain the consciousness of its identity with the world-all. Besides, it should be effectively utilized for the transformation and transfiguration of the entire world.

1. Perennial Philosophy, p. 337.

To hope for a change of human life without a change of human nature is an irrational and unspiritual proposition. What is necessary is that there should be a turn in humanity felt by some or many towards the vision of this change, a feeling of its imperative need, the sense of its possibility, the will to make it possible in themselves and to find the way. That trend is not absent and it must increase with the tension of the crisis in human world-destiny; the need of an escape or solution, the feeling that there is no other solution than the spiritual cannot but grow and become more imperative under the urgency of critical circumstance. To that call in the being there must always be some answer in the Divine Reality and Nature.
Thus Huxley's major preoccupation is "how should mystics be related to society? And what should society do about mystics?" He believes that only society of mystics can transform the present world which is too much engrossed in inflamed egotism that generates the proliferating danger of 'mechanomorphism', 'specialization', 'fragmentation' and 'organization'.


Sri Aurobindo writes:

Man has created a system of civilization which has become too big for his limited mental capacity and understanding and his still more limited spiritual and moral capacity to utilize and manage, a too dangerous servant of his blundering ego and its appetites. For no greater seeing mind, no intuitive soul of knowledge has yet come to his surface of consciousness which could make this basic fulness of life a condition for the free growth of something that exceeded it ... It is being used instead for the multiplication of new wants and an aggressive expansion of the collective ego ... For the problem is fundamental and in putting it evolutionary Nature in man is confronting herself with a critical choice which must one day be solved in the true sense if the race is to arrive or even to survive.
Huxley believes that society can never be improved unless men choose to resist from the lures and temptations of the mundane values and become 'theocentric saints'. He does not demand that the entire world should be constituted of 'theocentrics': Even if there is a minority of theocentric people it will not only preserve the social order from fragmentation but will also expand the social organization into a higher and higher spiritual unity.

Huxley has been so much fascinated by the 'yogic contemplation' that almost all his metaphysical characters give great importance to the virtues of meditation and contemplation for the attainment of unitive knowledge. In Those Barren Leaves, Galen intends to plumb the depths of the cosmos through the process of mystical contemplation. In Endless in Jazz, Dr. Miller practises yogic exercises for the attainment of the cosmic consciousness. He is convinced that it is through concentration that increased awareness and increased power of control can be achieved. In Island, the Palanese give much importance to mental discipline because they believe that it is only through this process that one can develop the intuitive faculty, which alone will ultimately take one to the deep-lying essence beneath.


Our remedy demands a complete change of the contemporary mentality, a fundamental transformation of our system of values, and the profoundest modification of our conduct toward other men, cultural values, and the world at large.
Huxley affirms over and over again that it is only through intuition that one can apprehend the transcendental unity of Godhead. He believes that intuition is the real source of knowledge - the knowledge that is of unity, where subject and object are identical. The most remarkable feature of the Vedantic philosophy is that it asserts the possibility of direct encounter with the central reality by a species of intuitive identification. Intuition gives the vision of wholeness, in which the inner and outer, the one and the many, the individual and the universal are perceived as one. Intuitive experience is a form of mergence, a dissolution of the other sense in pure consciousness. This state of pure being is described in the Upanishad by an analogy:

As a lump of salt thrown in water becomes dissolved in water and there would not be any of it to seize forth as it were, but wherever one may take it salty indeed, so, verily, this great being, infinite, limitless, consists of nothing but knowledge. 1

Huxley has portrayed a few characters in his novels who firmly believe that the individual can realize the existence of Godhead "by a direct intuition, superior to discursive reasoning". 2

1. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, 2.4.12.
In *Those Barren Leaves*, Mary Thirplow says:

'To think steadily and intensely of one thing is a wonderful mental exercise; it serves to open up the mysteries that lie below the common-place surface of existence; and perhaps, if one went on thinking long enough and hard enough, one might get through the mystery to its explanation'... 1

On the basis of intuitive realization which has been made possible through this sort of concentration, she speaks of Oneness:

... All the universes are one in the spirit - Mind and matter in all their manifestations - all one in the spirit... 2

In *Eyeless in Gaza*, regenerate Anthony Beavis advocates that unity can be realized by divesting the mind of adventitious thought forms the complete disappearance of thought is the intuition of the real. He believes that there is a principle of unity involved in all our experience, which is a non-difference point of subject and object and which is basic to all such differentiation, that this unity itself is the inner nature of things, the real or brahman, and that we can know it in a state of pure immediacy. He advocates his perfect faith in the "unity of mankind, unity of all life, all being even". He believes that salvation of humanity can take place only through intuitive realization of the

all-pervasive unity which constitutes the essence of all the universe. It is only through mystical intuition and insight that the individual can acquire discriminatory knowledge of good and evil. He believes that only the "religious psychologist, the one who knows by direct experience that men are capable of liberation and enlightenment" can acquire this state of consciousness. In Time Must Have A Stop, Sebastian under the guidance of Bruno Rontini experiences a sudden upsurge of illuminative knowledge. He feels that in the radiance of that invading knowledge all the agony and ugliness of the universe is dispersed. In Island, Huxley has portrayed a mystic society where the reality is forever manifest, and whose members experience unitive knowledge eternally. It is a society of wise people, where there is no enmity and senseless quarrels, where there is no cleavage between man and man, man and nature, and man and God. Will Farnaby in association with Palanese society begins to feel the sterility of both rationalism and materialism. He experiences a "luminous bliss" the peace that passeth understanding and his ego is freed from the disturbing influences of the empirical world.

2. Island, p. 263.
Though Huxley shows his marked preference for the individual's own efforts in seeking a liberation from the bondage, he does not overlook the intervention of divine grace. He knows that yogic method calls for severe discipline difficult for average men, whereas the love of God is the easiest path to liberation. The element of grace occupies an important place in all the religions of the world but it is most pronounced in Christianity where "man is brought into relationship with God through Christ who by his sacrifice on the Cross, demonstrates God's indefectible love for man. For the Christian to partake of eternity means to participate in the being of God, and this is achieved by the grace of God which raises man up in passionate longing from his meekly human estate to a divine form of existence in which he is fitted to share in God's nature and to love him as the source of his being and Redeemer".

In Hindu classical tradition of the yoga sutra and in Buddhism the individual effort is regarded as the only means of liberation. But the idea of love for God appears in the teachings of Gita. Ramanuja in his commentary on Bhagavad Gita, advocates that without the assistance of divine grace it is extremely difficult to transcend the lower self. He believes that "no man can achieve the fruition of his own soul without the action of divine mercy."

1. R.C. Zaehner, Hindu and Muslim Mysticism, op.cit., p.86.
2. Ibid., p.87.
Huxley believes that apart from being cognitive, man is also affective. By his very nature, he is so constituted as to yearn for some supernatural assistance in the face of the violent and overwhelming struggle of life. When he confronts with certain crisis in his life he craves for the redeeming help of One all pervading Omnipotent Being and affirms his faith in the religion. In *Time Must Have A Stop*, he writes:

"Grace did not fail thee, but thou wast wanting to grace. God did not deprive thee of the operation of his love, but thou didst deprive his love of thy co-operation. God would never have rejected thee, if thou had'st not rejected him."

In the Vedantic fashion, Huxley maintains that God is gracious and benevolent and works for the salvation of all those who seek His help. He writes:

'For being what you are, for being a human being. Yes, God can forgive you even that, if you really want it. Can forgive your separateness, so completely that you can be made one with him.'

In *Those Barren Leaves*, Mary Thirplov speaks out Huxley's conception of God:

God is a spirit, ... A spirit an all-prevading spirit ... God is a spirit ..."

1. *Time Must Have A Stop*, p.34.
In After Mary A. Guruur, Virginia Knight has been shown to be praying to God for the redemption of men from sin. She says:

'Holy - Mary - Mother-of-God - pray for us-sinners-now-and-then-in-the-hour-of-our-death-Then!'.

Huxley's acceptance of the efficacy of the grace of God as a means of exorcism for the individual from the bondage should not be mistaken as an advocacy of theism. He is through and through an absolutist and his conception of God is also absolutist and not theistic.

Huxley discovers the clue to the agonizing question of the twentieth-century man in the Vedantic and Buddhist scriptures. That is why he insists on the realization of the perception of self-awareness in conformity with the Vedantic pattern of 'Know thyself'. Self-knowledge as developed in the Upanishadic philosophy is the way to freedom, truth and harmonious living.

He believes that the essential nature of the human being is not that of Robinson Crusoe, far removed from all social connections, but that of one who is an integral part of social organization: one who lives his life from the cradle to the grave in and through the social whole. He believes that mystics do not reject society but that, after the experience of a new order, they exercise an enormous influence in determining the conduct of society. "The so-called fight, escape, renunciation of the individual mystic is but an arc, the circle is wider and

1. After Mary A. Guruur, p. 275.
Mystics who are spiritually sensitive are not unconcerned about their fellow beings. They play an important role in transforming and transfiguring this world. The enlightened individual of Huxley is not a solitary individual but an individual who is a member of a perfect society, a society where there is an absolute reign of love, not only free from evils, but a society full of virtues, intellectual and ethical as well as spiritual. The liberated individual of Huxley is an individual who is upright, noble and virtuous. In him there is a perfect integration of all the human faculties, that is cognitive, conative and affective. His is a life of complete identity, identity with his own self, identity with his body and other physiological adjuncts, identity with nature and with all other fellow beings.

The enlightened individual is not only in harmony with himself but also is in harmony with society. He does not live for himself but for the whole society. All his activities are not just self-oriented but are engineered for the entire social whole of which he is also a part. Like the ideal man of the Bhagavad Gita, the enlightened individual cares for Loka Samgraha (welfare of the whole humanity). Like the Bodhisattva of Mahayana School of Buddhism he is not contented with his own perfection but ceaselessly strives for the perfection of all his fellow beings.

Huxley believes that society can only be transformed only by enlightened individuals. He writes:

Society can never be greatly improved until such time as most of its members chose to become theocentric saints. Meanwhile, the few theocentric saints who exist at any given moment are able in some slight measure to qualify and mitigate the poison, which society generates within itself by its political and economic activities. In the gospel phrase, theocentric saints are the salt which preserves the social world from breaking down into irremediable decay. This anti-septic and anti-dotal function of theocentric is performed in a variety of ways. First of all, the mere fact that he exists is profoundly salutary and important ... The theocentric saint is impressive, not only for what he is but also for what he does and says ... The work of the theocentrics is always marginal, is always started on the smallest scale and, when it expands, the resulting organisation is always sub-divided into units sufficiently small to be capable of a shared spiritual experience and of moral and rational conduct. 1

In the empirical world the human beings live in the valley of false glimmer and are unable to perceive the distinction between appearance and reality. It is the realized soul who, after attaining the true knowledge of self, can direct the activities of the society. They lead an integrated life and set examples for those who are suffering the pangs of dualism. They play a dynamic role for the reconstruction of society and towards the promotion of love, peace and unity in the world.

Huxley has portrayed characters like Anthony Beavis and Dr. Miller, in Eyeless in Gaza, Propter, in After Many A Summer, Bruno Rontini in Time Must Have A Stop, and Palanese.

1. Grey Eminence, pp.296-301.
in Island, who not only extol the individualistic virtues of compassion, love and understanding but believe intensely in socialistic virtues. They advocate altruistic ethic and stand for the cause of social justice in the world. In Island, Huxley has portrayed a mystic society, where every one cares for others, and no one cares for his own self. They are integral characters and free from negative feelings of jealousy, anxiety, fear, hatred and conflict. They are happy creatures and live in harmony with the cosmos. They direct their entire energies towards the realization of "self knowledge, total acceptance, the blessed experience of Not-Two". They believe that "by knowing who in fact we are results in Good Being, and Good Being results in the most appropriate kind of good doing."

Thus from the preceding survey it can be conclusively established that Huxley's thought reveals a striking kinship with the Vedantic philosophy in regard to all metaphysical questions. His works can be studied and appreciated appropriately only in the light of Vedantic mysticism.

1. Island, p.39.
2. Ibid.