CLASSIFICATION OF INDIAN THEORIES OF CONSCIOUSNESS

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CHAPTER V

CLASSIFICATION OF INDIAN THEORIES
OF CONSCIOUSNESS

5.1 CLASSIFICATION OF INDIAN THEORIES OF CONSCIOUSNESS:
A SCHEMA

If, 'ruthlessly reductionistic' neurobiological account is the paradigm in all current science in the West, the ruthlessly ontological account is the benchmark of all Indian philosophies up to the present. One interesting way in which we can evaluate the Indian theories of consciousness is to obtain a classification of all the theories. This is just to facilitate a viewing of this classification in the light of both the official classification (Carruthers) and the counter classification (Seager) that have been examined in the previous chapters. An important difference should of course be kept in mind. That is, while the general tenor of the neurobiological investigations suggests that any reference to ontology is to be done away with (return to
(positivist!), Indian classification is ontological up to its neck. Thus if the basic norms of classification in the West are physicalism, materialism, phenomenalism, naturalism, eliminativism, etc., which subserve the Indian classification has only two, that too, they are metaphysically opposed to each other, without subserving any reductionism or the other. Realism holds that consciousness states are real states while idealism holds that consciousness states are inter alia mental states. The expression inter alia is coarse-grained, but cit is not since within all other mental states, it is distinguished. That cit is to be differentiated from other mental states is substained by the famous neti neti ('not this, not this') argument. To what extent such rationale that is drawn above will advance certain points of query looks enigmatic at present.

As we have seen, while the Western classification of theories of consciousness lead to two opposing taxonomies, the Indian theories of consciousness broadly lead to two opposing taxonomies of realism and idealism. Many Indian philosophers uphold an idealistic theory without demur, the roots of which go to Advaitic theory of Consciousness, and still back to Upanishads. The celebrated 'dream-argument' is schematised as below:\(^1\)
There are at least two crucial stages by which Indian approaches to phenomenology can be legitimated.

Stage 1: Witness consciousness provides a basic infrastructure for phenomenology,\(^2\)

Stage 2: Cit Consciousness provides a counterfoil to it by developing a complete phenomenology.\(^3\)

The interface between phenomenology and Indian philosophical tradition provides a rallying point for much of the theory of Cit consciousness. Mohanty, who has explored this for the last many decades of research, fine lines his phenomenology account of consciousness, first by taking the cue from Heidegger (Da-sein) and Husserl ("Consciousness and Existence") and second by encouraging a
systematising a tradition with inputs from a dynamic theory and almost come the possibility of rejecting 'pure contentless consciousness in his latest contribution. Bina Gupta on the other hand, prefers to treat Mohanty's theory as an offshoot of Advaitic theory along the lines of Aurobindo and K.C.Bhattacarya and offers to complete a defence of idealistic theory by subjecting the above to certain emendations from her point of view.

For this purpose, she finds it convenient to develop a new classification of the Indian theories of consciousness into idealistic and realistic types. Almost the entire group of Indian theories can now be classified according to this dichotomy. Basically the conflict between atman view of consciousness (Vedantic) and the denial of this in the anatman view of consciousness (Buddhism) is the impetus for all the major theories of consciousness in the Indian tradition. Thus one can counter pose realism against Idealism.

Recently Kapstein does exactly this after mentioning the four of the theories as proudly a search for the soul as the background of well-reasoning argument for the discovery of self or consciousness. They are:
1. Samkhya, which conceived self as an immaterial spiritual substance (Purusa) standing in absolute opposition to the dynamic realm of nature, the latter thought of as the transformation of a single prime matter (Prakrti).

2. Mimamsa whose main focus was the elaboration of a Meta theory of the Vedic cult, in which the self's role as agent was of special importance.

3. Vaisesika, which sought to establish a fundamental categorical scheme (padarthas) through which to analyse reality in all its aspects.

4. Nyaya whose focus was the study of Pramanasastras, including both the means of knowledge and the means by which it is transmitted to others through reasoned argument.

The above classification between atman and anatman thus settles into Buddhism with its alliance to Nyaya and Vaisesika Schools, whose respective logical-epistemological and ontological concerns were in most respects complementary to the Vedic, vedantic running up to Samkara's Advaita. Bina Gupta evolves a more interesting
classification counter posing idealism to realism. In the end we will have to decide whether we accept the realist or the idealist. If neither wins, then so much is worse for the tradition.

Indian Theories of Consciousness

- Idealistic (subjectivist-objectivist)
  - Samkara
  - Advaita
- Realistic (subjectivist-transcendental)
  - Buddhism
  - Nyaya-Vaisesika

Modification of Advaitic account

Aurobindo  K.C. Bhattacharya  J.N. Mohanthy  Bina

Figure 17: Classification of Indian Theories of Consciousness

The subjectivist-objectivist and subjectivist-transcendental account, requires further distinction between empirical (embodied) and transcendental (disembodied), and subjectivist (self-manifesting (svayamprakasa)) and objectivist (metaphysical as well as
epistemological along with transcendental (condition) and transcendent (all possible limits). The Carvaka, Nyaya-vaisesika and Mimamsa hold the objectivist view. Advaita Vedanta and Samkhya-yoga is subjectivist transcendental; and Yogacara Buddhism is partly objectivist and partly subjectivist.

5.2 REALIST THEORIES

Among the various Indian theories of consciousness, the Nyaya-Vaisesika theory is considered as subjectivist-objectivist theory. This theory considers consciousness as an object as any other objects. It has its own casual condition, its own coming in to being and it is manifested by another consciousness. As a special kind of object, consciousness is definable by its intentionality that is, its intrinsic reference to an object. There is no more awareness, no objectless consciousness, and no consciousness that does not belong to someone, or does not inhere in someone. The main features of the Nyaya theory of consciousness are:

1. Consciousness is a quality (property) of the self.
2. Consciousness alone has the irreducible quality of being of an object. It is intentional. In this way, it is different from other qualities like certain and pain.

3. It arises when certain appropriate conditions are present.

4. It is not eternal— it is produced and destroyed.

5. It is formless, that is, nirakara.

6. It is paraprakasa, not svayamprakasa. It is manifested by another consciousness it is not self-manifesting.

1, 2 and 3 can be brought under recent development in science. 6 stand for the objectivist clause.

For Nyaya, Atman is identified as self. The self is too subtle and cannot be perceived by any of the senses. The six qualities of the self are pleasure, pain, desire, hatred, effort and consciousness. They only belong to the self. Nyaya-Vaisesikas consider consciousness as a guna or quality. For them consciousness is one of the twenty-four gunas of the self. It is subtle and if belongs to a non-material substance including consciousness, six qualities one apprehended by the inner sense. The issue self as substance or as property, is not clearly resolved here.
From ontological point of view, it could be either a *guna* or karma. It cannot be a substance. It has no spatial movement. It can only be a quality. Nyayaikas argue that a quality does not have an independent existence. It must inhere and belong to same substance. They hold that it cannot be a quality of body or sense organs. It is a quality of self. It cannot be a property of sense. It cannot be a property of mind also. Our thoughts, ideas and feelings change continuously like the changes that can be seen is one's body. So consciousness cannot be a quality of the mind. We can conclude that since consciousness does not belong to the body, senses or to the mind, it must belong to the self. An obvious distinction is drawn between mind and self here.

Nyayikas argue that consciousness is an attribute of the self, which exists independently. The self is eternal and it cannot be produced or destroyed. Though it is a quality of the self, it is not an essential quality of the self. The self may exist without consciousness when the appropriate causal conditions are present. That is when the self comes and the senses with external object.

For Nyaya-Vaisesika, there is nothing within consciousness, which appears in consciousness. Everything that appears in
Consciousness is really outside of it. Consciousness is totally exhausted by its reference to its object by its intentionality. Consciousness is neither a substance nor an action. It is a quality, but is different from other qualities like pleasure and pain. Consciousness is always cognitive. But other qualities are themselves cognitive. They are affective. They are intentional like consciousness. Their intentionality desires from that consciousness which presents the objects.

The Naiyayaka account of consciousness is very different from the Advaita concept. The Advaita account argues that when a subject apprehends an object, the object undoubtedly is revealed. It is accompanied by the apprehension. In their view, consciousness is revealed or manifested objects. It is apprehended by the witness-consciousness. The witness-consciousness cannot be an object of knowledge. It is the very condition of the possibility of knowing anything. For them, the self cannot become both the subject and object self is not the consciousness of anything; the real self is pure consciousness. Nyayaikas argue that since the witness consciousness is not accessible through any of the recognized means of knowledge, it cannot be known by any of the pramanas. Therefore the self-luminous
witness consciousness or cognitive state only shows. It is object, but not itself. Cognition is known by a subsequently cognition, which objectifies the primary cognition.

Nyayaikas deny self-luminosity of consciousness and importance to the intrinsic intentionality. For them, atman and consciousness are not related. They claim that consciousness in of an object. They do not postulate it as an act that performs the function of changing into objects. According to Nyaya relation, consciousness is neither inferred from the cognition nor is recognized by itself, but it is cognised by another cognition. Two main features of Nyaya-Vaisesika theory are:

1. They argue that consciousness is a quality of the soul
2. Consciousness has no forms of its own.

In the first sense, consciousness needs a mediation of the body. It is the property of the soul, but not an essential property. Consciousness arises in the soul when the soul in conjunction with some appropriate object or other, and the mind or the inner sense is in conjunction with the sense organ. Bina Gupta argues that Nyaya theory of consciousness
is not entirely objectivist. The pure soul remains transcendent and when it will liberate from the body it will not be the seat of consciousness. Consciousness depends on the body and its relation to the soul. But the soul is far from being an empirical object.

The objectivist account of consciousness depends on the claim that consciousness itself is known in the same way as any other object is known. Schematically this theory represented as:

1. If C is a state of consciousness having for its object O_1, C_1, by its definition can manifest other than itself.
2. Therefore C_1, cannot make itself manifest.
3. If it could manifest what is not its object it could manifest anything whatsoever, in which care, the awareness of a pitcher could also be the awareness of a mountain.
4. Therefore it is most reasonable to insist that C_1 can only manifest O_1, and not itself.
5. C arises at the instant t_1, at t_2 it exists; at t_3 it perishes.
6. C_1 can exercise its function of manifesting O_1 only when it is i.e., at t_2.
7. At t_3, C_1 ceases to be; but only at t_3, can t_2 then arise.
8. But this means that $C_2$ arising at $t_3$, exists at $t_4$.

9. $C_2$ can, therefore, exercise its function of manifesting $C_1$ at $t_4$.

10. But at $t_4$, $C_1$ does not exist.

11. So $C_2$ cannot be a perceptual knowledge of $C_1$ it can only be a memory of it.

There are two objections against Nyaya-Vaisesika account of objectivist theories. One of them holds that this account leads to a regresuum and infinitum. $C_2$ is required if $C_1$ is to be known. But $C_2$ itself need not be known. Therefore there is no regress. On the contrary, the conditions of outer perception are stronger than the condition of inner perception.

The second objection is stronger than the first. If $C_2$ is an inner perception of $C_1$ and if it does not arise automatically but requires the desire to know $C$ it is inexplicable how there could be a desire to know $C_1$ when $C_1$ on the theory is utterly unknown in the beginning. One could know something better than the way it was known earlier. Thus the inner perception or anuvyavasaya requires that one is already familiar with $C_1$. 

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Yogacara school of Buddhism holds that consciousness is the only reality.\textsuperscript{10} They retain the earlier account of consciousness is the only reality. They retain the earlier account of consciousness in Buddhism and develop a sophisticated theory of consciousness.

In early Buddhism, consciousness seems as the third link in the process of dependent arising (pradityasamutpada) Buddha suggests to avoid the two extremes of existence and non-existence and to follow the middle way. In his view,\textsuperscript{11}

On ignorance depends karma,

On karma depends consciousness,

On consciousness depend name and form,

On name and form depend the six sense organs,

On the six sense organs depends contact,

On contact depends sensation,

On sensation depends desire,

On desire depends attachment,

On attachment depends existence,

On existence depends birth,
On birth depend old age and death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief and despair.

Thus this entire aggregation of misery arises.

Buddha presents this doctrine of dependent origination to explain the human bondage as well as liberation. Consciousness in the third link in this doctrine and it provides the link between the past and the present. According to Buddhist conception, one's consciousness is conditioned by what one experiences as well as his response to these experiences.

Buddha argues that the 'I' or human personality consists of five aggregates. They are matter, sensation, perception, mental formation, and consciousness. Consciousness is a response based on six faculties. They are eyes, ears, nose, tongue and the manas or mind. Consciousness is an awareness of the presence of an object. For Buddha, consciousness is not spirit as opposed to matter. It does not denote a soul or substantial self. Consciousness arises depending on certain conditions and ceases when the conditions cease to be. In his view, consciousness depends on four skandhas, namely, matter,
sensation, perception and mental formation. It cannot exist independently of them.

Vasubandhu in his *Abhidharmakosa* holds that consciousness alone is real and the objects perceived in the external world are non-existent.\textsuperscript{12} He points out that there is one-to-one correspondence between images and the external objects and no experience can occur without consciousness. Consciousness is the basic presupposition of any experience. Forms of subjectivity as well as objectivity are manifestations of the same consciousness.

Dignaga, the follower of Yogacara tradition holds that both the object and consciousness are experienced simultaneously.\textsuperscript{13} An object and its consciousness are one and the same. The external objects cannot be taken to be as the cause of consciousness. On the contrary, the external object is nothing but the consciousness itself. He holds that no object is ever experienced apart from the consciousness. The external objects are states of consciousness.

Vasubandhu holds that consciousness consists of a series of momentary events, giving rise to the awareness of various objects of
senses and the mind. All constituent elements and the entity called self are transformation of consciousness. Consciousness transformation is threefold, that is, fruition, thinking and representation of objects. The first, which is known as the warehouse consciousness, is the fruition of all seeds. The second, manonamavijnana's essential nature is thinking and the third transformation represents the six sense-based consciousness. The first the warehouse (Alaya-vijnana) is the repository of all seeds. The alaya-vijnana is a sort of warehouse for traces of past experiences and determining the cause and nature of one's experience. The second one is mano-vijnana, the consciousness called mind. This evolves when it takes the store consciousness as an object and support. The essential nature of the mano-vijnana is to think. It depends on alaya-vijnana for its origin and operation. It creates the false notion of an ego. It is the I-consciousness and associated with four types of defilements, perception of self, confusion about the self, self-pride and self-love. The third transformation is called pravrtti-vijnana or active consciousness. It consists of six sense-based consciousness. They are produced through visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile and the mind senses.
Vijnana of one moment is replaced by the Vijnana of the next moment. As a result, there is a stream of successive moments of consciousness. It causes the formation of consciousness complex. Self is nothing but a complex of this stream of consciousness and the objects in the external world are simply the images that appear in the stream of consciousness. Of the eight kinds of consciousness, the last seven are oriented towards the objection. They create the false belief that there are objects like trees, tables etc. These objects exist independently of consciousness. These seven kinds are intentional. The alaya-vijnana is non-intentional. The seven intentional cognitions are founded up on a non-intentional flux of consciousness. The non-intentional alaya is the foundation of intentional consciousness.

The Yogacara theory has the naturalistic, intentionalistic, and spiritualistic nature. This theory cannot be considered as an entirely subjective theory. It is subjectivist-objectivist theory. According to Yogacara conception, consciousness is not an eternal principle. It is a series of instantaneous events brought about by causal conditions, which are material. They take consciousness as self-manifesting and in that sense it is subjective. They also regard consciousness as caused by
objective conditions and it is objective also. So the Yogacara account of consciousness is partly objective and partly subjective. Thus there is reason to think that the stream-of-consciousness that is linked with bodily suffering and its escape from this is more aligned to Western theories. This lends credence to realistic theory of consciousness.

5.3. IDEALIST THEORY: A FRAGMENT OF SAKSIN PHENOMENOLOGY

The classical Indian theories of consciousness generally involved within a stereological context in which the ultimate goal was same transcendental spiritual state. The goal is liberation for the self from the flawed condition of material world. Indian philosophy is the magnificent effort to probe the inmost being of man and nature. Much of the Indian philosophy is cognitive in the sense that it is a direct inquiry into the elevation of phenomenal consciousness (cit) to higher and higher levels of cognitive activity. In Vedantic view, there are four states of consciousness. They are waking, dreaming, deep sleep and turiya. In the fourth stage, one realises that the whole world of objects in real, it is not ultimate reality. The ultimate reality, Brahman is both immanent and transcendent and the cause of all phenomena.
Conscious mind is an epiphenomenon, because the individual self who is pure consciousness is not conscious. The initial difficulty about this is the way the different stages of the dream argument get empirical support.

Various Advaita commentaries give various descriptions of the notion of Saksin, which seems in principle, correspond to a higher order theory of consciousness, which posits transitive consciousness. Advaitins hold that

1. The Saksin is indubitable, unerring, and eternal. It is always directly manifested and its manifestations are not due to any extrinsic reason.
2. The Saksin is the natural (pure) consciousness as qualified by a modification of the inner sense.
3. The Saksin is that which is never concealed.
4. The Saksin manifests ignorance.
5. That which directly manifests the Saksin.
6. The Saksin is that which illuminates everything.16

In Advaita, the concept of Saksin is the single most important postulate of the principle of revelation operative in experience-
cognitive and non-cognitive alike. This principle is a necessary ingredient in any epistemological process. In Advaita, we can find a phenomenology of levels of consciousness. Consciousness is simply a witness to its own operation and divergent modes. It is eternal, non-dual and remains unchanged.

It is wrong to speak of Saksin as knowable, for it is the element of awareness in all knowing, and to assume that it is knowable would be to imply another knowing element - a process that leads to the fallacy of infinite regress. But the Saksin does not therefore remain unrealised, for being self-luminous, by its very nature; it does not require to be made known at all. Its presence is necessarily equivalent to its revelation and it is therefore never missed the pure element of awareness in all knowing.

According to Samkara, the Atman or self is one, pure, self-luminous, self-established, undifferentiated, non-intentional, eternal and timeless consciousness. In his view, one is aware of atman within oneself. It is real present in human experience. It is known directly and immediately. It manifests in every human being as self-awareness or self-consciousness. It is the witness consciousness of all events,
physical as well as psychical. Atman is pure consciousness and it persists in empirical experience and is known as the agent and the enjoyer of activities.

Bina Gupta provides the translation of some parts of Samkara's writings which are given below:17

1. By superimposing what is known by the 'I' upon the inner self, which is the witness-consciousness of all its endless modification, it superimposes the inner self, the witness-consciousness of everything, upon the inner organ, etc. which are mistaken for it.

2. It may be objected that since the 'I' designate the atma, it cannot be said that it is known from the Upanishads. The reply is 'no', it is said to be the witness-consciousness of that self. That is the witness, who is not the object of the sense of 'I'; the witness-consciousness is different from the agent.

3. Just as a person who is dreaming is not touched by the illusion of the dream experience, because waking and satisfaction do not invariably go together, so the witness-consciousness of the three
states, which is one and non-deviating, is not affected by any of these deviating states.

4. By the mere apprehension of cognition, there does not arise a desire to apprehend the witness-consciousness of the cognition; therefore the apprehension of an infinite regress is not justified. Of the two, the witness-consciousness and the cognition, being by nature different, the relation of the cogniser and cognised is possible. Because the witness-consciousness, which is self-established, cannot be denied.

5. The self does not have changefulness, impurity and materiality. Being the witness of all intellects, it is not of limited knowledge like the intellect.

6. The object is different from the perceiver; because it is perceived, like a jar; the seer and the seen do not belong to the same class, otherwise being the witness-consciousness would be like the intellect.
7. Being the witness of all cognition, it is changeless and all pervading. If it were to change, it would have become of limited knowledge like the intellect.

8. A thing is the witness of another thing when the former experiences the latter. For an object, which is not experienced by any one, there is no need for positing witnesshood.

9. Control the speech in the mind, the mind in the intellect, the intellect in the witness-consciousness, and the witness-consciousness is the indeterminate full self-after, which you will reach the highest peace.

10. Always know yourself to be existence-consciousness-bliss, the witness-consciousness of the intellect, and give up the misconception of the identity of the self and the body, etc.

11. That the self is different from and is the witness of the body, its proportion, its action, and its states, is self-established.

12. One who, again, pervades over, regulates both knowledge and ignorance, is different from these two, because of being the witness.
13. He is the witness-consciousness of all beings, seer of all-owing to the definition "one who directly sees".

14. Just as the reflection of the sun falls on the water, so does the highest self as reflected in the intellect, and as witness-consciousness of all modifications, is here called "atman".

15. That is the highest light, no manifested by an other, self-shining, those wise men who know the self, the witness-consciousness of all awareness by the intellect of all objects such as sound, they, the knower of the self, follow the knowledge of the self.

From these we can draw five different characterisations of Saksin provided by Samkara.18

1. Saksin as the witness of intellect.
2. Saksin as the non-dual, propertyless Brahman.
3. Saksin as identical to atman.
4. Saksin as the witness of all three states, and
5. Saksin as the same as Isvara.

For Samkara, Saksin is a passive observer as opposed to the doer. It is both the basis of and different from the inner sense.19 It is self-
luminous like the self. It is the eternal, unchanging self that fulfils a specific role, as though the self were wearing a different hat. It is an observer and revealer of mental cognition as well as the physical objects. According to Samkara's conception, Saksin has two basic usages, one is that Saksin as simply atman and the other is that Saksin as atman limited by the inner sense. Samkara makes a distinction between two kinds of knowledge in his commentary on Kena Upanishad. They are knowledge of Brahman and knowledge gained through the mind and senses. The former is the highest knowledge, knowledge of reality or pure consciousness. It is beyond the subject-object dichotomy and is self-luminous and non-relational. The latter is modified consciousness. It is a reflection of pure consciousness through a mode of the inner sense. Thus, it is relational knowledge. In his view, each and every empirical cognition is the modification of pure consciousness.

The Upanisadic tradition holds that conscious is one, homogeneous, and undifferentiated. Consciousness, which is pervasive through over experience, may be equated with experience. In the Upanisadic view, consciousness and experience, cit and anubhava, are
one and the same. Even though it is one, it becomes multiple, conditioned by the objects. In our day-to-day life, we use consciousness and experience differently, but they refer to one and the same entity. The three states of experience, waking, sleep and dream follow a pattern. According to Mandukya Upanisad, consciousness or experience is one, continuous and permanent. It seems to be fragmented and discontinuous due to the manifold modifications of the mind which is the internal organ (antah-karana) mediating between consciousness and the objects.\textsuperscript{21} To bring out the nature of consciousness, Gaudapada and Samkara use the phenomenological method.\textsuperscript{22} They explain four states of experience. First three are waking, dream and sleep states and the fourth one is Turiya. This fourth state only refers to the real nature of the Self or consciousness. Turiya transcends the duality of being and beings of ontology. It is beyond onto-theological positions. It can be explained negatively.

The Advaita theory of consciousness is not restricted to the analysis of epistemological crises, it also analyses metaphysical issues.\textsuperscript{23} Consciousness is one and homogeneous, indivisible and eternal. It is also referred to as self or atman. In every human being,
there is the self or consciousness in addition to the mind, senses and
the body. Everything other than consciousness is an object. Advaita
begins its epistemology and metaphysics on the basis of the dichotomy
between consciousness and what-is-other-than-consciousness, between
self and non-self. The five external senses can function only when they
get support from the mind and the mind can do its function only when
it is supported by consciousness. Samkara says: Seeing is of two kinds,
ordinary and real. Ordinary seeing is the function of the mind as
connected with the visual sense: it is an act, and as such it has a
beginning and end. But the seeing that belongs to the self is like the
heat and light of fire: being the very essence of the witness (self), it has
neither beginning nor end. The ordinary seeing however is related to
the objects seen through the eye, and of course has a beginning. The
eternal seeing of the self is metaphorically spoken of as the witness and
although eternally seeing, is spoken of as sometimes seeing and
sometimes not seeing. What is true of visual sense is equally true of the
other senses. The self or consciousness is behind the functioning of all
senses through the internal organ. It remains the same being
untouched and unaffected by the activities of the mind and the senses.
It is said to be the witnesses (Saksin) of all the activities of the cognitive instruments. The objects of the external world and the operations of the mind are transcendent to consciousness. They are not in consciousness, but outside it. Consciousness is not merely object-less, but also mindless.

Advaita uses consciousness and the ego by two different terms and there is no mixing up of these two terms. The term used for consciousness is cit or caitanya. Self, Atman or cit signifies one and the same entity. The other, ego referred as internal organ (antah-karana). The internal organ is designated in four different ways as mind, intellect, ego and memory stuff depending upon the function it does. Internal organ, different from consciousness, is material. Consciousness becomes intentional only because of its presence and functioning. When it functions giving rise to doubtful cognition of an object, then it is called mind. If it produces definite knowledge of an object, then it is called intellect. When there arises the sense of 'I', it is called ego.

Different from Western phenomenological investigations, phenomenological inquiry of Mandukya Upanisad is not restricted to
waking state only. There are also dream and sleep experiences. According to this, self or consciousness is pervasive in all three states of experience. One can speak of one's experience only if one is conscious of it, there has to be consciousness. Though consciousness is one and the same in all three states of experience, for the purpose of analysis designates it as Visva in the waking state, as Taijasa in the dream state, and as Prajna in the sleep state.

Consciousness in waking experience (Visva) is always consciousness of something. It is intentional. The intended object in this state may be physical or it may be one's own subjective state like pleasure or pain. In dream state, that is the Taijasa experiences are internal objects. In dream the impressions of the experience of the objects of the waking state come out of it as real objects even though they are the states of mind. In deep sleep, a person does not experience any object, external or internal. Consciousness reveals objects if they are present; and when objects are not present, it reveals their absence. Since consciousness is present as a witness to the absence of objects in sleep, it is not intentional in the other two states revealing the objects, which it is conscious. "That state deep sleep where the sleeper does not
desire any enjoyable thing, and does not see any dream. The third quarter is Prajna where sphere is deep sleep, who remains one and undifferentiated, who is a mass of mere consciousness, who is full of bliss, and who is the doorway to the experience (of the dream and waking states), Mandukya says. The text emphasizes four points. It differentiates sleep from the other two states. Secondly, in this state consciousness is one, unified and undifferentiated. It is non-relational, non-intentional. Thirdly, consciousness is of the nature of bliss. Finally, the state of sleep is not permanent.

In Samkara's words:

"That the self (i.e. the witness consciousness) is distinct from the three states (witnessed by it) and that it is one, pure, and unrelated, are proved by the fact of its existence in the three states in successions. Further, the evidence of memory in the form, 'I am that', shows its oneness (in all the three states). Sruti also confirms this by the example of the great fish, etc."

Advaita holds that self and consciousness refer to one and the same entity. In Advaita view, all the pramanas such as perception is
able to functions as sources of knowledge by the support of consciousness. Samkara holds that the self is the light inside the body, which is different from the lights like sun and other luminaries. During dreams the mind projects some of the impression stored in it. When the self illuminates them, they are perceived as objects. The dream objects are modifications of the mind. As in the waking state, in dream also the self or consciousness is not the agent of any action. The objects, which appear during waking-consciousness, disappear in dream consciousness. The objects, which appear in dream-consciousness, disappear in waking consciousness. The self is really non-relational. Its intentionality is not necessary, but it is only contingent.

The central doctrine of Advaita is that Brahman-Atman is the sole reality, and the entire manifest world has only empirical reality, has originated from and finally absorbed in Brahman-Atman. So Brahman-Atman and the world are related as cause and effect. Advaita recognises three kinds of Vrttis-Mayavrtti, Antahkaranavrtti and Avidyavrtti. It holds that any kind of experience in the form of knowing or feeling requires some kind of Vrttis. The first kind of Vrtti functions is the case of Isvara and the remaining two are required for
the explanations of Jiva. Isvara is a complete entity consisting of consciousness and Maya. The jiva is a complex entity consisting of consciousness and avidya. In both cases the element of consciousness is the same, eternal and self-luminous. When these Vrttis are illuminated by consciousness, we have experience of various kinds-cognitive, affective and conative. According to Advaita, the immediate knowledge of Brahman-Atman generated by Sruti text through the medium of a special kind of the Vrttis called akhandakara Vrtti. Even memory and recognition are due to the Vrtti of the internal organ, which is inspired by consciousness. The three factors- the knower, the known, and the knowledge, which are involved in mental operation, are revealed by the witness-consciousness (saksin) during self-reflection. "If the saksin were not known, then the knowledge of the triple factors cannot arise from the saksin. So, it has to be accepted that, wherever there is knowledge of the triple factor, there is knowledge of the saksin, because the saksin is self-luminous".28

"In the Vedanta texts, the world 'abhasa' everywhere means the Semblance of consciousness in the internal organ. This Semblance of consciousness in the internal organ is the object of the saksin. But the
saksin, being self-luminous, reveals itself; it is never an object comprehended by the antah-karana-Vrtti carrying the semblance of consciousness".29

Turiya is different from Visva, Taijasa and Prajna and it is bare consciousness. Mandukya Upanisad explains Turiya as "It is unseen, incapable of being spoken of, ungraspable, uninfereble, unthinkable, unnameable, the essence of the knowledge of the one self, that into which the world is resolved, the peaceful, and the non-dual-that is the Fourth, the self, which is to be known."30 On the Advaita view, when the individual person is on to the state of dreamless sleep, the entire cognitive apparatus of the self, including the mind and the sense organs get dissolved in avidya. Though the self is qualified by avidya during this state, that witness consciousness has the ability to reveal its own intrinsic nature and anything super-imposed on it by the relation of identity. Witness-consciousness is the pure consciousness, which is present in the creator and the created selves. It reveals only itself, its own blissful nature and avidya. It never depends on a transformation of the mind in order to reveal an object that is super imposed upon it. It can reveal an internal state without depending upon a transformation
of the mind. Vedantins hold that an individual cannot experience any pleasure or pain during the dreamless sleep state, because experience of pleasure and pain always go hand in hand with objective awareness. Consciousness, which transcends the subject-object duality is beyond the object-oriented phenomenology. It is not an object of knowledge. Every object is known through a pramana that is perception or inference, or something else. The functioning of Pramana presupposes consciousness. Advaita views that any kind of experience requires some kind of Vrtti. That is our knowing; Vrtti Jnana comprehends feeling and willing. There are two special features in the phenomenological inquiry into consciousness. Firstly, it is an inward inquiry towards a transcendent object. Secondly it is negative, it pursues the path of denial. The three states of experience give us the picture of consciousness as conditioned by Upadhi. Turiya as bare consciousness is different from Visva, Taijasa and Prajna. Taijasa and Visva are bound by both cause and effect. But Turiya transcends the three states and free from both cause and effect.

Mandukya Upanisad's view aum is what was, what is and what will be. It signifies a correlation between microcosm and the
macrocosm. Aum stands for Brahman. The three letters in the word 'aum' corresponds to the three states of waking, dreaming and dreamless deep sleep. And the fourth state Turiya is the undifferentiated state of pure consciousness beyond the changing and conditional phenomenal modes of existence. These three states are known as Visva, Taijasa and Prajna. The universal self with the waking state as its manifestation, with consciousness directed outward, of seven links and nineteen mouths, is the enjoyer of gross things, is the first quarter.

The second quarter is the Taijasa or the luminous, with the dream state as its manifestation, with consciousness directed inward, with seven links and nineteen mouths, it is the enjoyed of consciousness not related to objects.

Where the sleeper desires no desires, sees no dream that is deep sleep. The third quarter has deep sleep for its manifestation; it has become one, is of the nature if enlightenment, full of blinks, an enjoyer of bliss, with consciousness as its face.
Visva is the watching self and in this state, the self-cognizer of external objects. Only in this state, the self is consciousness of external objects. It is the first state of Brahman. Taijasa, the dreaming self is the second state. In this state the mind enjoys impressions, imprinted upon the mind during the waking experience. In this state, the self is internally conscious. The third state is Prajna is dreamless sleep state. In this state, there is a cessation of consciousness. In this state, the subject-object distinction does not exist. There is a sense of bliss because there is a temporary union between the absolute and the embodied self. In deep sleep, all mental activities are ceased and the consciousness of individuality is absent. This state is different from Turiya, the state if release. This is the underlying substitution of the three states of waking, dreaming, and dreamless sleep.

All the three states, Visva, Taijasa and Prajna are the embodied self. In the words of Gaudapada Visva and Taijasa are taken to be bound to cause and effect. But Prajna is bound to cause alone. In Turiya, there is neither cause nor effect. The view of various Upanisad is that consciousness is a necessary condition for the assertion that there are things. They hold that self is different from mind or the
intellect. It is also different from the perceiver, the act of perceiving and the perceived object. It is pure consciousness and self-luminous.

5.4. THE COMPLETION OF PHENOMENOLOGY

In her earlier book, 'The Disinterested Witness: A Fragment of Advaita Vedanta', Bina explained the Advaita Vedanta. She focused her attention as the Vivarana school of Advaita Vedanta. She had made an attempt to unfold the Advaita Vedanta phenomenology of levels of consciousness. The main idea of phenomenology of consciousness is that consciousness is simply a witness to its own operation and divergent modes. She only explained a part of Advaita phenomenology and so called it as a fragment. But in her later work, she was further investigated of the general conception of consciousness. She has inspired by the contemporary western philosophical inquiries and debates on the philosophical problems of consciousness. She also got the inspiration from the new consciousness research by the brain scientists and analytic thinkers. A significant feature of Advaita phenomenology of consciousness is that consciousness at a certain level, simply a witness to its own operation and divergent modes. This idea or level of consciousness is witness consciousness. In the absence of such a consciousness, experience or
knowledge would not be possible. There is always a level of consciousness within each one of us where we stand apart at a certain distance and simply observe our experience without getting involved in these experiences. In the absence of this observation there could be no cognition. Phenomenological analysis used to uncover reality or pure consciousness.

The Vedantic method is phenomenological because its focus is as experience instead of objects. Consciousness is the light that illumines the objects. In Advaita, the transcendental, pure consciousness is a necessary condition of all phenomena. Saksin is the witness to the object. They also make use of the idea of ignorance. There is a consciousness that witnesses this ignorance. When ignorance is removed, the consciousness and the object became non-different. The saksin is the presupposition of all knowing; it illuminates all that is known and making knowledge possible. Bina Gupta's claim is to convey the relation between disinterested witness phenomenology and cit phenomenology. Distinct from her earlier work, in her later work, she has given a complementary picture of consciousness. She was inspired by two factors. One is the contemporary western
philosophical debate as various problems and the second one is that the consciousness research by brain scientists and analytic thinkers.

Bina claims that Advaita is such a system of philosophy which has thought so deeply on the nature of consciousness. In her view, from an idealistic angle, Advaita Vedanta is a case of a sublime metaphysical system, subtle logical discursivity, and detailed phenomenological description. She defends a view that is modified from other reconstructions of Advaitic approach, such as Aurobindo, K.C.Battacharya and J.N.Mohanty.

5.5. MODIFICATIONS OF ADVAITIC ACCOUNT

Sri Aurobindo rejects Samkara's version of Advaita and develops a metaphysical position known as Integral Advaita. He rejects Samkara's position because of his emphasis on the falsity of the world. According to Aurobindo, the Brahman is both transcended and immanent in the world, and the finite individuals are self-manifestation of the Brahman by its own infinite creative energy. He presents a theory of emergent evolution and argues that the idea of evolution presupposes a prior innovation. Matter develops through the steps of life, mind, and many other levels of consciousness. In
Aurobindo's words: "If there is an evolution in material Nature and if it is an evolution of being with consciousness and life as its two key terms and powers, this fullness of being, fullness of consciousness, fullness of life must be the goal of development towards which we are tending and which will manifest at an early or later stage of our destiny. The self, the spirit, the reality that is disclosing itself out of the first in conscience of life and matter, would evolve to complete truth of being and consciousness in that life and matter. It would return to itself-or if its end as an individual is to return into its Absolute, it could make that return also-not through a frustrations of life but through a spiritual completeness of itself in life. Our evolution in the ignorance with its chequered joy and pain of self-discovery and world-discovery, its half fulfilments, its constant finding and missing, is only our first state. It must lead inevitably towards an evolution in the knowledge, a self-finding and self-unfolding of the spirit, a self-revolution of the dignity in things in that true power of itself in Nature which is to us still a super nature."34

Aurobindo holds that the evolutionary structure of the word process is due to consciousness-force inherent in the Brahman. This consciousness-force is the stuff of which all existence is made.
Man's consciousness can be nothing else than a form of Nature's consciousness. It is there in other involved forms below Mind, it emerges in Mind; it shall ascend into yet superior forms beyond Mind. For the Force that builds words is a conscious Force, the existence which manifests itself in them is conscious being and a perfect emergence of potentialities in form in the sole object which we can rationally conceive for into manifestation in the world of forms.

Aurobindo holds that nature evolves on several levels because the Brahman has already involved itself at each level. The order of involution is: \[35\]

```
\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Existence} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{Conscious Force} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{Bliss} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{Supermind} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{Mind} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{Psyche} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{Life} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{Matter}
\end{array}
\]
```
Evolution is the reverse action of involution. Evolution is possible because involution is already happened. 'What is an ultimate and last derivation in the involution is in the evolution the last and supreme emergence. Evolutionary process is:

```
Matter
  ↓
Life
  ↓
Psyche
  ↓
Mind
  ↓
Supermind
  ↓
Bliss
  ↓
Conscious Force
  ↓
Existence
```

The first four in the order of evolution constitute the lower hemisphere and the last four the upper hemisphere. Aurobindo tries to explain how mental consciousness is to be transcended into supra-mental conscious does not directly descend into the mind. It requires a link, a kind of creative consciousness. He calls this power of divine creative consciousness, the 'Supermind'. It is a power conscious Force expressive of real being. It is the culmination of the mind. The
Supermind has an integral outlook and it achieves a unitary picture of reality. The mind cuts and breaks the unitary whole into parts. Supermind is the link that connects the higher and lower realms. It illuminates itself by its own light and expresses the real truth of being.

The ascending to the supermind can be achieved through a triple transformation, psyche and spiritual and supra-mental. Psychic change hides our soul and supplemented by spiritual change. This change gives the experience of the true nature of the self. It helps one to make conscious of the truth of supra-mental consciousness. The psyche and spiritual transformation are not sufficient for supra-mental transformation. Aurobindo distinguishes various possible movements of mind or consciousness. They are higher mind, illuminated mind, intuitive mind and over mind. The higher mind is a luminous thought-mind. It can conceive a system of ideas 'at a single view'; whereas normal human mind depends for its knowledge on sense experience, inference and other sources of knowledge.

The illumined mind possesses higher consciousness. The initiative mind is an outcome of the meeting of the subject and object consciousness. At the mental level knowledge of world is obtained by
the sense and the intellect and is the level of intuition, consciousness of
the subject penetrates and comes in content with the reality that
underlies the appearances. In Aurobindo's opinion, intuition has a
fourfold power. A power of revelatory truth-seeking, a power of
inspiration or truth-hearing, a power of truth-touch, and a power of
true and automatic discrimination of the orderly and exact relation of
truth to truth. The initiative mind is not the summit of Superconscient
consciousness.

The overmind is in direct touch with the supermind bridges the
gap between knowledge and ignorance overmental descent helps the
illumined, initiative to make contact with the global consciousness. The
overmind descent eliminates the egocentric attitudes and enables to
attain a larger experience of the delight of existence. The supra-mental
transformation signifies a transformation of ignorance into knowledge
and the emergence of a Gnostic being. Aurobindo holds that for the
spiritual life, one should not reject the world. As Gnostic personality
realized that matter is also consciousness, he should accept the world.
Thus the world is neither a fragment of one's mina nor an illusion. He
considers consciousness as the basis as well as the sources of many.
Aurobindo's conception of evolution has three main features. They are widening, heightening and integration. Individual is the basic instrument of this evolution. In his words, the end of this triple process must be a radical change of the action of ignorance into a basis of completion consciousness. Aurobindo's theory of evolution is thoroughly spiritual. Spirit or consciousness is the source of creation as well as the final end of the realization. Satctitananda, the infinite being creates the universe and unfolds itself as many. Evolution is the unfolding of consciousness is matter. Spirit's involvement in matter, its manifestation in grades of consciousness is the significance of evolution. Aurobindo's account is based on a satisfactory philosophy of science, of physics, of biology and of psychology.

K.C. Bhattacharya has developed a conception of the grades of subjectivity, as grades of consciousness. He understands subjectivity as dissociated itself from objects. Through different levels of consciousness, it dissociates and the subject achieves its freedom. Three main conception of Bhattacharya are:

1. A conception of the levels of consciousness;
2. Dream experience as a new dimensions of existence;
3. Distinction between conscious dream, self-conscious dream, self-conscious dream, and dreamless sleep.

Bhattacharya is credited with giving a new interpretation of the Upanisadic doctrine of the four states of consciousness, namely, waking, dreaming, dreamless sleep and the Turiya. He argues that in waking experiences, presentation and practical interests determine the contents. In dream, the contents are copies of waking percepts without any sensation and attention and consciousness of the body is at a minimal. In dream, space and time lose their reference to the body. In dream, the ideas do not consciously remember the corresponding waking percepts: they are at once percepts. Dream and waking are two independent orders. The waking experience denies the validity of dream, but dreaming consciousness does not deny the waking consciousness. In his words, in dream, the object consciousness is free from reference to the body and so purer than in waking consciousness. Bhattacharya cannot justify how dream is wider than the waking world by holding that the consciousness of body determines of the limitations of waking consciousness. Bhattacharya goes further to that if and only if we could dream self-consciously, that is, control the dream images,
take our focus away from the 'heavy-body', and centre it in a larger self, we could achieve a higher order of truth than the waking experience. He let the cat out of the bag by distinguishing three levels, conscious dreams, self-conscious dream, and dreamless sleep. It is difficult to maintain a position like this supported by empirical evidence. He says that conscious dreams are perception without sensation. Self-conscious dreams objects come and go without making any disturbances. In dreamless sleep, the self is dissociated from the body as well as from the mind (empirical cause) Bhattacharya considers self in isolation from empirical consciousness.

In his later work, he claims to develop a new kind of inquiry into the nature of consciousness, he calling it as spiritual or transcendental psychology, which lies between mystic intuition and objective metaphysical inquiry. According to Bhattacharya, for every subjective function, there is a mode of freedom from objectivity.37

The different states of subjectivity are, bodily subjectivity, psychic subjectivity and spiritual subjectivity. Bhattacharya considers bodily subjectivity is primary. One can locate the other perceived objects as in their space, but one could not perceived her own body in
the same way. In this sense, her body is entirely different from the objective world. It is only possible through the feeling of the body. So Bhattacharya makes a distinction between 'perceived body' and 'felt body'. Perceived body is distinct from the felt body, but felt body is not distinct from the perceived body. The felt body is the first realization of freedom from which all higher levels of freedom begin. Image is the elementary level of next level that is psychic subjectivity. An image can be known without spatial and temporal position. The next stage is spiritual subjectivity. It begun with feeling and through introspection proceeds beyond to the subject as freedom.

Bhattacharya calls the mutual relation of reflective consciousness and its content, implicational duration. The idea of the 'Absolute' is coming under the Supra reflective consciousness. In his article, 'The Concept of Philosophy', he argues that higher kind of knowledge can be reached by analysing speeches and thinking. Speeches and thinking admit of grades, and thinking point to the grades of theoretic consciousness. Consciousness functions diversely as knowing, willing and feeling. In each, the relation between consciousness and content is different. In knowing, content is not constituted by consciousness. In
willing, it is constituted by consciousness. In feeling the content constitutes 'some kind of unity' with consciousness. Each has its own formulation of Absolute. Consciousness carries a felt freedom from its objects at every level until its final actualisation is the Advaitic state. Bina does not favour the interpretation given by the above approach but tries to build upon Mohanty's reading of Advaita.

Mohanty holds that reflexivity of consciousness cannot be a second-order intentionality, but a dimension of intentionality and degrees of reflexivity. In his view, consciousness is self-manifesting only so far as it is intentional. While all consciousness is reflexive, this reflexivity has degrees, which vary from full clarity to almost indistinct awareness. Mohanty argues that the degree of intentionality varies with the degrees upon the presence or absence of the hyletic component in the intentional experience. The cognitive states come at the top and the unconsciousness state remains at the bottom. Volitional and affective intentionalities fall in the middle. Opposed to Western phenomenology, he reaches an anti-Kantian standpoint by holding that these are no two different levels of consciousness, the empirical and the transcendental. But all consciousness itself is transcendental.
In his own words: "I have fundamental objection to the way the distinction between the empirical and the transcendental is usually drawn, which misleadingly subjects as though the transcendental subjectivity is not the subject's experience of herself. The other member of the pair, that is, the empirical, also misleadingly subjects that one experiences only oneself as bodily and as a member of the radical and social orders. As transcendental, I am also a cognitive, affective and willing, acting speaking and moving around, not a mere thinking ego."\textsuperscript{40}

Samkara highlighted the mutual incompatibility of reflexivity and intentionality. But Mohanty holds that we recognize that there are both the degrees of intentionality, and the degrees of reflexivity.

From what is said in the above, it is clear that the above-mentioned Indian thinkers, Aurobindo, Bhattacharya and Mohanty are trying hard to bring the insight of Indian philosophy into harmony with modern Western thinking, especially in the area of phenomenology but it hardly registers any success. In Aurobindo, we can see metaphysics of consciousness in the grand Hegelian-Advaita tradition. One being goes through levels of self-manifestation, self-
differentiation, and then recovers its unity. On the other hand, J.N. Mohanty provides a purely phenomenological description of the way in which different states of consciousness, intentionally and reflexivity is interviewed in different degrees. But it does not make metaphysically claims. And, Bhattacharya uses a descriptive phenomenology to reach Advaitic metaphysics of self.

Both of them admit the levels of consciousness and they recognise bodily consciousness. For the recognition of bodily consciousness they go against the traditional Advaitin's rejection of body as a product of ignorance. Body is no more rejected as unreal. Waking consciousness is still a lower level of consciousness to be transcended in dream, dreamless sleep, and ecstasy.

Bina Gupta suggests that we need to combine the insights gained from the tradition into a metaphysics based on our knowledge of brain and neurological sciences as well as physics of elementary particles. It is doubtful whether such integration could be achieved with all the obscurities that are present in the above account. So let me conclude that the Indian classification cannot register a higher level of success than the other two classifications.