Chapter XIII

Conclusion

(a) A synthetic account of the concepts of ĀTMAN and MOKSA

in the different systems, as previously discussed

It is necessary at the final stage to weave together all the different ideas of 'Ātman' and 'Mokṣa' scattered in all the different systems of Indian Philosophy and, to arrange them in an orderly way, and, to trace a line of continuous development in them. So far, in all the previous chapters a detailed account of the ideas of 'Ātman' and 'Mokṣa' has already been taken and, hence, it will be a monotonous repetition if they are again dealt with, in their details. At the same time it is necessary to bring them together and to know them at a glance simultaneously and comprehensively, to understand the kind of evolution that these ideas have undergone. I propose now, to take such a comprehensive view of these ideas by bringing their broad features together and, by linking them properly.

It is a fact, as it has become evident from the discussion in the previous chapters that, no two systems hold identical view of Ātman and Mokṣa and, that their ideas have gradually evolved in different directions.
In spite of the differences in the nature of Ātman (Self) and Mokṣa (Liberation), certain features concerning them have been possessed in common by the different Systems. It will be quite sufficient to take a consolidated view of the changes in the features of 'Ātman' and 'Mokṣa', and they will make articulate the lines of development. Certain lines of evolution in these ideas will be coming up and will become visible and articulate. I shall base my conclusion on a comparative study of the changes in their ideas under the following heads. Ātman, however has appeared as the principle of sentience, and intelligence, the experiencer of pain, pleasure, desire; the moral agent of actions and the reaper of the fruits of those actions; the persistent entity that desires to attain liberation and enjoys it by undertaking the necessary efforts for it. It also appears as the principle of self-consciousness. It can broadly be said that Mokṣa (liberation) also repeatedly appears as the destruction of pain and suffering, cessation of rebirth and Karma and, sometimes as the enjoyment of supersensuous happiness and, the highest bliss, perfect knowledge and power by becoming free from the bondage of ignorance and other worldly limitations, by means of knowledge (jñāna), work (karma) and devotion (bhakti) to God.
The soul in its pure, metaphysical and transcendental aspect is known as the 'Self' and has been sometimes identified with the ultimate Reality or Brahman; while the 'Self' as standing in contradistinction to body and as that which knows, feels and wills, experiences pleasure, pain, desires, will, which is the agent of actions and reaper of their fruits and that which is subject to illusion, ignorance, deception, the subject of all empirical experiences is known as the 'soul', and it is employed here in the sense of the Jīva. The terms liberation, release, deliverance, emancipation, freedom and redemption stand for the idea of 'Mokṣa'.

(1) Soul -- Its Nature:

The term 'soul' is employed in the RgVeda as the principle of vitality (breath) - prāṇa, animation, intelligence; as the body, initiator of actions and the owning and active principle that survives the death of body, being different from the body. It is also used as the 'essence' of the body. Hiraṇyagarbha is employed in the sense of the cosmic-mind. The Āraṇyakas sometimes used it as the abstract and intelligent principle present in all the things in varying grades. The Upaniṣads do not propound any particular view but represent a collection of many hybrid ideas about the soul. In the Upaniṣads
the soul is identified with the material things like reflection in mirror, shadow, person in dream, body, natural agencies, food, sense-organs, prāṇa, manas (mind), and intellect. It is gradually freed from them and then is held to be an immaterial principle which is immortal, all-pervading, sentient, blissful, universal, omnipresent, infinite, eternal, devoid of attributes, imperceptible by sense-organs, the substratum and essence of all, the inner controller of everything, beyond comprehension but the ultimate Subject of all knowledge. About its size various opinions are expressed. Some hold it to be extremely subtle like oil in seed and butter in milk, like the one-hundredth part of the tip of a hair that is divided into hundred parts. Others hold it to be of the size of a thumb, others of a very wide expanse, and, finally according to one view it is infinite and immeasurable, being the same as the Brahman, that resides in the heart as well as everywhere in the universe. It is the Self of every thing. It is not affected by anything of the world. Thus, the Ātman has become gradually free from corporeality, limitations, concreteness, attributes, destruction and has become immaterial, sentient, abstract, attributeless, infinite and eternal; it has become one with the ultimate Reality itself which is the source, sustainer and absorber of all things of the world.
In Carvakism Ātman is nothing but the living body itself and it exists only so long as the body functions. It is mortal like the body. The Susīkṣita Carvakas believe that it is separate from the body, and it enjoys pleasure and pain. Buddhism does not admit the existence of an entity like Ātman. Buddhism is anātmavadin. It holds that the Self is a fictitious name given to a series of the states of consciousness which are everchanging and which arise out of the five aggregates (skandhas). Everything being momentary there exists nothing like a permanent individual soul nor a substratum of the states of consciousness.

According to Jainism - Ātman is eternal, sentient, infinite in number, all-pervading, the agent of actions and the reaper of their consequences, capable of expansion and contraction. It can be besmeared with Karmic matter, revolves on the wheel of birth and death and it is possessed of infinite knowledge, infinite power and infinite bliss in its pure form. The Nyāya Vaiśeṣika systems believe that Ātman is the substratum of the states of consciousness and it is a substance, all-pervading, immortal and infinite in number. Ātman is the same as the Puruṣa in the Sāṃkhya System. It is pure consciousness, the principle of subjectivity, devoid of any attribute, immutable, eternal and infinite in number. The Yoga system
admits the concept of the Sāmkhya - Puruṣa, but it believes also in the Supreme Self (Paramātman), the Self having perfect knowledge, perfect power and perfect bliss. Both believe that the Ātman is self-illumined. The Pūrva Mīmāṁsakas believe that the soul is immortal, doer of actions and reaper of their fruits, it is jada (insentient) according to the Prābhākaras, while it possesses potency of knowledge according to Kumārila. Bhāṭṭa; it is not self-illumined and is known by inference. The souls are all-pervading and infinite in number. Advaita Vedānta of Śāmkara holds that Ātman is the ultimate principle of consciousness. It is pure, intelligence, eternal and free described as the Saccidānanda. It is devoid of attributes and self-illumined. It is the same as the Brahman itself. It is one for all and is the self of all. The plurality of individual souls (jīvas) is illusory. The Viśiṣṭādvaita of Rāmānuja holds that Ātman is the principle of knowledge forming the body of the Brahman and that the soul is a modification of the Brahman related as viśeṣāṇa (adjective) to the Brahman; souls are many, their differences are real and they are atomic in size but become pervading due to the pervasiveness of their intelligence. It is immortal and capable of infinite knowledge and infinite joy in the state of liberation. God is its inner-controller (antaryāmin). Nimbārka is a Bhedābheda-
vādin. He believes that the soul is identical with and still different from God like the waves of ocean and the ocean or the rays of the sun and the sun. It is atomic and the souls are infinite in number, dependent on God and the jīva's essence lies in sentience; It is capable of infinite knowledge and infinite joy in the state of liberation. It is the agent of actions and the enjoyer of their fruits. Madhva is Dvaitin and holds that the soul is really different from the Brahman or God. It is solely dependent on God, is atomic and imperishable. It becomes all-pervading by means of its intelligence. The Ṣuddhādvaita of Vallabha holds that the soul is Brahman or God Himself, His one attribute ānanda (bliss) being obscured in it. It possess sat and cit. It is atomic and immortal. It possesses ānanda in its perfection or in liberation. The Śaivas like the Vaiṣṇavas believe in the personal ultimate Reality and it is Śiva and they believe that the souls are His manifestations; they become pervasive and immortal in liberation; while in samsāra they are weak, bound by Karma and limited in knowledge, power and joy. The Śāktas also hold that the souls are imperfect in knowledge and power and that they are the expressions of Śakti that is inseparable from Śiva, the highest Reality.
The Medieval Vaiṣṇava Saints being the worshippers of God believe that the ultimate Reality is not abstract, but it is concrete; and hence they believe in a Personal God like Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Viṭhobā, Pāṇḍuranga and Nārāyana. Jñānesvara believes that the soul is identical in essence with God like the waves with the ocean, lustre of jewel with jewel and it can be fully absorbed in God as does salt in water, in Mokṣa. Jñānesvara propounds Advaitabhakti and gives more emphasis on Advaita or non-difference. Kabīr believes that the ultimate Reality is attributeless and that the souls are parts of God like the sparks of fire and the waves of water; the souls are governed by Māyā and ignorance. Tulasīdāsa holds that Rām is the highest Reality and He is all-pervading and therefore, immanent in all things. He governs all the beings from within. Suffering is due to Māyā. Tulasīdāsa adopts a relation of servant and master between the devotee and God. Sūradāsa loves much the Līlā of Kṛṣṇa and His loving and merciful nature. Mīranbāī imagines herself to be the female beloved of God Kṛṣṇa who is her sole support and the only object of devotion and love. According to her Kṛṣṇa is the only male person in the Universe. The concept of sex is sublimated in her mysticism. Narasīṁha Mehta believes in the essential
identity of the soul and God but he seeks to maintain their difference to enjoy the Supreme happiness of the company of the Lord Kṛṣṇa. The jīvas are the faithful servants of God and are like the Gopis to Kṛṣṇa. Tukārāma believes like Jñānesvara that the soul and God (Brahman) are the same in their essence like the waves of the ocean and ocean, salt and sea-water. He adopts the relation of a child to mother and that of a servant to his master, to God and also other relations like those of brother and friend. Chaitanya believes in the difference of the soul from God. He mainly adopts the relation of Rādhā (jīva) to the Lord Kṛṣṇa. Ramakṛshna Paramahamsa also believes that the soul is identical with God (Brahman) and that their differences are due to Māyā, upādhis and ignorance. He looks upon God as his mother. All the Saints believe in the relation of child and mother, of wife and husband, of servant and master between the soul and God. They do not like to lose the jīvas in God in Mokṣa.

(2) Nature of Knowledge:

The ṚgVeda looks upon the soul as the intelligent principle. The Upaniṣads hold that the Ātman is essentially a sentient principle, consciousness being its
essential nature. Cārvākas on the contrary hold that consciousness is an attribute of the living body that arises out of its reaction to the external world. Buddhism also believes that consciousness arises as a quality out of the interaction of five aggregates (skandhas). Jainism holds that knowledge or consciousness is the essential nature of the soul and it assumes perfection in the state of liberation. In Nyāya Vaiśeṣika systems the soul is only the substratum of consciousness and consciousness arises in it when it comes into contact with the external world through the sense organs and the manas. Consciousness is its adventitious attribute. The Saṁkhya system regards that the Puruṣa is constituted of pure consciousness. Its consciousness is stable and there are no changes in it. It reveals other objects by reflection. The Māṁśakas also look upon the soul either as jada (insentient) or only possessing the potency of knowledge, consciousness being its separable and adventitious quality like the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika systems. The Advaita Vedānta holds that the Self (Ātman) is constituted of pure consciousness and remains so eternally. Rāmānuja holds that consciousness or intelligence is an attribute (guṇa) of the soul and soul is the knower. It is capable of expansion and contraction; he does not identify them
like Śaṅkara. **Nimbārka, Madhva and Vallabha** also regard like Rāmānuja that consciousness is an attribute of the soul; it is like the light of lamp which becomes visible when it comes into contact with the objects if reveals. Consciousness being an adventitious character of the soul, the soul remains devoid of it when it has no connection with the body, i.e. in the state of pralaya and liberation, although there remains a potency of knowledge. The Buddhists also believe that consciousness can be terminated for ever when the aggregates do not combine. Consciousness is not lost in the state of liberation according to the Medieval Saints although the separative consciousness of particularity vanishes; but the consciousness of the Divine bliss remains.

(3) **The Soul : Doer of actions :**

The Vedas and Āranyakas hold that the soul does the actions good and bad, and, reaps their corresponding results. The Upaniṣads also admit that the soul is the doer of actions. The Cārvākas do not believe in the existence of the soul as the moral agent; they do not recognise moral deeds; the soul does not survive to reap the fruits of those actions, although in the present life the soul (?) does the actions and experiences their
results. The Buddhists do not admit the soul itself; therefore, there is no doer but only deed; the deed acts as the doer and it is followed by its corresponding results. Jainism and Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika systems admit that the soul is the doer of actions. The Sāṁkhyaś on the contrary hold that the soul (Puruṣa) is the enjoyer (bhokṛ) of the results of actions but it is not the agent (kartr) of them since it is immutable. The Mīmāṁsakas, Advaita Vedāntins, Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Vallabha, Śaivas, Śāktas and other saints of the Bhakti school hold that the soul is the agent of actions. Madhva, however, regards that the soul is asvatantra and hence it does not act by itself; all actions are done by God. In fact all the systems agree in believing that the soul is governed by God and so He is the real agent, however, the soul identifies itself with its ego (aḥaṁkāra) through nescience and regards itself the agent. The medieval Vaiśeṣika saints and the Śaivas also admit that the soul is the agent of actions and has the freedom to choose the good and to reach God by good moral actions and spiritual practices.

(4) The Soul - as the Enjoyer of Fruits of Actions, and as experiencing Pleasure and Pain:

All those systems, i.e. Vedas, Āraṇyakas, Upaniṣads, Buddhism, Jainism, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāṁkhya, Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā,
Advaita Vedānta, Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha, Śaivas, Śaktas and all the Medieval saints admit that the soul is the enjoyer of the fruits of actions. The good actions are followed by happiness and evil ones by pain and suffering. The doctrine of Karma demands that the doer must reap the fruits of his actions, otherwise there will be the fallacy of Kṛtapraṇāśa and akṛtabhyāgama. The Cārvākas do not believe in the persistence of the soul; the soul is neither the moral agent nor the enjoyer of the fruits of its deeds. According to the Advaitism of Śaṅkara, the soul itself is illusory, hence as long as the soul does not recognise its identity with the Self (Brahman) it regards itself as the kartā and the bhoktā due to nescience (ajñāna). The saints of the Bhakti-school also hold that the soul is the kartā and the bhoktā as long it is ruled by egoity (ahaṃkāra) when the soul dedicates everything, every action and every desire to God, it no more remains the agent and the enjoyer (bhaktṛ); nothing pertains to it after the dissolution of ahaṃkāra, in the state of Jīvanmukti and Videhamukti.

The Soul experiences pleasure and pain which result from the actions that are performed by it. The soul, in its empirical or worldly life (samsāra), enjoys
pleasure and pain. In the state of liberation, the soul becomes free from the physical body and, experiences happiness without the sense-organs. It is a super-sensuous happiness, that is enjoyed by them in the company of God.

(5) **The Permanence of the Soul**

According to the Vedas the soul does not perish with the body, it survives the latter's destruction and hence, it is more durable than the physical body. The soul that enjoys the heavenly happiness after the death has got to be permanent. Similarly the permanence of the soul is implied in the sacrificial rites of the Brāhmaṇas and Āraṇyakas. The Upaniṣads also maintain that the soul is beginningless and imperishable. The soul that transmigrates on the wheel of birth and death must be permanent. The Cārvākas identify the soul with the living body and hence hold that it is impermanent. The Buddhists maintain that there is no such permanent entity like the soul; the permanence of the soul is felt only due to the continuity of the succeeding states of consciousness. Jainism, Nyāya Vaiśeṣika systems, Saṃkhya, Mīmāṁsā and all the Vedāntins believe in the permanence and transmigration of the soul. Similarly the Śaivas, Śāktas and all other Vaiṣṇava saints of the
Medieval ages admit the permanence of the soul. According to all the systems, the jīva (soul) is said to be born and to die due to its associations with and separation from various bodies, in accordance with the karmas. Even after the karmas are exhausted the soul exists permanently being free from the worldly limitations. The soul shines in them in its transcendental nature and it being unborn exists permanently.

(6) Pervasiveness of the Soul:

The Vedas are silent over the pervasiveness of the soul. Finally the Upaniṣads attribute subtlety and pervasiveness to the soul. Carvākism and Buddhism being anātmavādins deny its pervasiveness. Soul is strictly confined to the individual. Jainism holds that the soul is of the size of the body it occupies (madhyama Pariṇāma), it is capable of expansion and contraction. The Nyāya Vaiṣeṣika, Sāmkhya, Pūrva Mīmāṃsā and Advaita-Vedānta systems hold that the soul is all-pervasive. While Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha, Kabīr, Mīranbāi, Chaitanya hold that the soul is atomic and becomes pervasive by its attribute of intelligence (cit) which is like light that spreads all over. Jñāneśvara, Tukārāma, Narasimha Mehta and Rāmakṛṣṇa Paramahāmsa hold that there is an
essential identity of the two, although the soul appears
to possess limitations that are caused by temporary upādhis.
The souls being immaterial and subtle can be all-pervasive
without overlapping one another.

(7) The Soul and the Body:

The body is supposed to be the vehicle and instru-
ment of the soul; the body furnishes knowledge by means
of the sense-perceptions to the soul. The soul depends
for actions on the body for the knowledge by sense-per-
ception. The Vedas, Upaniṣads and the Āraṇyakas and
Brāhmaṇas look upon the soul as different from the body
that it occupies. Gārvākas identify the soul with the
living body, Buddhism establishes a correspondence between
the two series of mental and bodily states. Jainism,
Nyāya Vaiṣeṣika, Sāṃkhya, Purva Mīmāṁsa, Advaita Vedānta,
Viśiṣṭādvaita, Nimbārka, Madhya, Śuddhādvaita, all the
Vaiṣṇavas, Śaivas, Śaktas agree in holding that the soul
and the body are different from each other. Souls obtain
bodies which are suitable to them in accordance with
their previous karmas, the body is perishable and some-
thing which is filthy. The senses are deceptive and being
liable to temptation of sensuous experiences, the soul is
dragged down and polluted by the body. The soul can
control it by knowledge and will. All the systems except Carvākism discard body and its pleasures and extol the value of the bodiless soul and its supersensual happiness. The Vaishnava saints, Śaivas Yoga and Advaita Vedānta seek to exploit the body for the purposes of the soul by purifying it with self-control and by dedicating it in all the ways to God. Body is generally held as opposed to the soul as is darkness opposed to light, body being jada (non-conscious). The corporeal body does not exist in the state of liberation except in the case of the Jīvanmukta. The Carvākas alone look upon bodily pleasures as the highest pleasures. All others suppose that the body is the abode of all sufferings and therefore they reject the bodily existence in all its forms. In Mokṣa the body ceases to exist, as it is subject to decay and destruction.

(8) The Soul and the Manas and the Buddhi:

The soul is sometimes taken to be the Intellect (Buddhi) in the Vedas and in the Upaniṣads, but, later on a regular hierarchy of these means of knowledge came to be established. It is said in the Upaniṣads that beyond the senses is the manas, beyond the manas is the buddhi and beyond buddhi is the soul. Manas attends to the percepts
and governs the various mental experiences including affection, volition, effort etc. The buddhi relates, compares and discriminates. Both act as the subordinates of the soul. Carvakism does not make much difference between the two. All other systems hold that the manas (mind) and the buddhi (intellect) are the most useful means of acquiring knowledge. Mind is that which attends to the sense-perceptions, organises the percepts, forms ideas and arranges them; buddhi abstracts, compares the similar and dissimilar elements and forms universal generalisations. It is the principle of discrimination. It is only the Sāmkhya system that holds a peculiar view about Buddhi which is made the cause of the whole world. According to the Sāmkhya buddhi is material in nature as it is a product of the Prakṛti; it is pure and transperant due to the predominance of Śattvic attribute in it; it reveals the objects of knowledge by reflecting the light (consciousness) of the soul (Puruṣa). All the changes in the mental states belong to the buddhi, the light of the Puruṣa being steady and permanent. Manas (mind) and ahaṁkāra (ego) are its evolutes. Buddhi or the manas is not the real knower (jñātṛ). Mind experiences pleasure and pain; but all the systems hold that the real jñātṛ and bhoktṛ is the soul and not the manas and buddhi which although serve as the most useful instruments of knowledge.
The Soul and Adṛśṭa:

Adṛśṭa - the unseen principle or the doctrine of karma means every action has its corresponding good and evil effects and the doer of the action has to experience those effects in the succeeding birth. Rebirth takes place to experience the fruits of one's actions in the past life. One enjoys happiness if he has performed good actions in the past life and, suffers pain if he has done evil deeds. None can escape these results. This principle of moral retribution is admitted by all the systems except Carvākism. Carvākism does not believe in morality and Adṛśṭa and therefore, according to it there is no rebirth. The death of the body is the final thing. Buddhism does not believe in the transmigration of the soul still it admits the Adṛśṭa or the doctrine of karma. The soul transmigrates from one body to another and assumes another body for the fruition of karma that it has accumulated in its previous life, and the stock of karma is carried by the soul through the subtle body (sūkṣma śarīra). Carvākas do not believe in the permanence of the soul and hence there is no transmigration of it. The Buddhists reject the soul but explain the process of rebirth on the basis of the continuity of the series of the states of consciousness. Adṛśṭa remains operative
as long as the body acts and the soul is attached to it. Rebirth does not come to an end until actions are completely given up and the old stock of karma is not exhausted either by knowledge of God or by religious rites or by sincere devotion to God. The freedom of the soul from the Adṛṣṭa leads to liberation. All the systems of philosophy and the Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva cults of bhakti admit the validity of the Adṛṣṭa.

(10) The Soul and Nescience (Ajñāna):

Almost all the systems except Carvākism are unanimous on the point of tracing the worldly life and its suffering to ajñāna or nescience or ignorance. The Upaniṣads, Buddhism, Jainism and all other later systems including the Vaiṣṇava saints and the Śaivas hold that ajñāna (nescience) is the cause of worldly life and suffering. It is out of ajñāna or nescience that the soul is wrongly supposed to be that which it is not and thus the attachment to those worldly perishable things under the false sense of soul, actions are undertaken, which bear their results which the soul has to experience in its succeeding lives. Adṛṣṭa remains operative due to ajñāna and as long as one is led by nescience, by the wrong knowledge of the soul, karma does not come to an end.
The first creation is caused by God only for sport; but later on the Adṛṣṭa established the infinite chain of rebirths with the help of the actions which are performed under nescience. Knowledge (jñāna), Karma (religious rites), Yoga (physical and mental discipline and penance) and sincere bhakti (devotion) to God remove nescience that results in the prevention of new rebirth and thus it leads to liberation (Mokṣa). According to Advaita Vedānta of Śaṅkara the whole world is a product of avidyā (nescience) and therefore illusory. Ajñāna or nescience generally means not the absence of knowledge but the presence of wrong knowledge that distorts the perception of Reality. It possesses the two powers of concealment (āvaraṇa) and distortion (vikṣepa).

(11) The Soul - Its Pure and Empirical aspects:

The Vedas do not develop an elaborate distinction between the two forms of the soul. The soul according to the Upaniṣads in its pure-and transcendental aspect is infinite, all-pervading, immutable, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, the witness (Sākṣin), free from all worldly limitations and imperfections, and is therefore, characterised by sat (existence), cit (consciousness) and ānanda (bliss). It is pure, eternal, pure intelligence, eternally
free while the same Self becomes soul when enveloped by nescience; it becomes the worldly soul that suffers from the worldly pains, limitations and imperfections and revolves on the wheel of samsāra, does actions and experiences the fruits of them good or bitter. It is deluded by Māyā. It has desires and is ruled by passions. It is weak and finite in all respects. The gārvākas do not believe in the soul, for them and for the Buddhists no problem remains; however, the Mahāyāna Buddhism believes in the existence of the Dharmakāya which acts as the source, support and end of all ideas and other mental states. It is the spirit that governs all the beings from within and acts as the ideal of perfection of knowledge, purity and love. But it is more like God. Jainism admits the distinction between the pure Self and the empirical soul. The soul in its pure and transcendental form is, infinite, all-pervasive, characterized by perfect knowledge, perfect happiness and perfect power. It is free from Karma-matter and enjoys in the highest degree the supersensuous happiness. The soul in the samsāra or in empirical life is governed by ignorance, and is besmeared with the Karmic-matter. It is fallible and it transmigrates in accordance with its Karmas. In samsāra it has to reap the sweet or bitter fruits of its actions. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika systems
also admit such a difference and they identify the Supreme soul with God who is perfect, pervasive, omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent. The worldly soul is all-pervading, substratum of knowledge and possesses actual knowledge when connected with a body, sense-organs and manas. In Mokṣa it loses all consciousness. It transmigrates and is like the soul as in other systems in other respects. The Sāṁkhya System admits no distinction of the soul. According to it there is one kind of soul (Puruṣa); all are constituted of pure consciousness, are eternal, all-pervading, immutable and self-evident. The Puruṣa is not the agent of actions (Kartā) is supposed to be the enjoyer (bhoktṛ) of pleasure and pain. But in reality, all the changing experiences belong to the Prakṛti with special reference to buddhi to egoity (ahaṁkāra). The soul is falsely supposed to be the transmigrating soul, but really it is unchanging and stands only as the principle of pure sentience. The Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā system attributes all the relevant characteristics to the soul while it lives in the world. It is all-pervading; but it is not constituted of consciousness. Consciousness is its attribute which is absent in its pure state. It is jada (non-sentient) according to Prābhākaras but it retains only the potency of knowledge in the state of liberation.
according to Kumārila. Consciousness being its adventitious attribute arises in it only when it is connected with the manas and sense organs. The soul transmigrates as it is the agent (kartā) and the enjoyer of pleasure and pain (bhoktā) and the knower (jñātā) while in the world.

The Advaita Vedānta holds that the soul is not different from the Brahman or the Self which is the self of all things. It is infinite, eternal, ever-free, pure and perfect. It is characterised as saccidānanda. It is the source, support and end of all the particular things. The soul is really the Self but it appears in the form of the worldly soul that is the kartā and bhoktā, is governed by nescience, is finite due to the adjuncts (upādhis) which are stuck to it due to nescience. The soul in its pure nature is never born nor does it die. It never enjoys pleasure nor suffers pain. It is unborn and immortal. It does not get rebirth and does not transmigrate. All these attributes are superimposed on it out of ignorance. It is the Brahman itself and it possesses perfection of all kinds. It is full of unfading ānanda. It is singular and common for all. The differences are due to the differences of the adjuncts of manas, buddhi, ahamkāra, body and karma. The soul in its pure form (Self) is free from these things. Nothing sticks to
it. It is the same as Nirguṇa Brahman (attributeless Brahman). Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva and Vallabha believe that the soul (empirical self), the jīva, is atomic and it maintains its different nature from God whose part it is. It becomes pervasive by means of its attribute of intelligence. It is kartā, bhoktā and jñātā and it remains different from God in the state of Mokṣa. It is a modification of the Brahman (Brahma vikāraḥ) and is related like an adjective (viṣeṣaṇa) to God according to Rāmānuja while it is an aṁśa of God and bhinnābhinnna with Him like a wave of an ocean or a ray of the sun, according to Nimbārka. Madhva holds that the soul is totally different from God (Brahman) and their difference is eternal. It is entirely dependent on God for all the eight states of its life. It is entirely governed by God. In other respects he agrees with Rāmānuja and Nimbārka. Vallabha holds that the soul in its pure and perfect state is possessed of sat, cit and ānanda; but the ānanda of the Brahman or God is obscured in its worldly soul and so the soul possesses only sat (existence) and cit (consciousness). He agrees with Rāmānuja and Nimbārka in other respects. The Śaivas also hold that the soul and Śiva (God) are in essence identical in their nature and are related as part and whole, like the ripple of ocean and the ocean. It is
subject to karma, pleasure and pain in its empirical state; and, in its pure nature it attains identity with Śiva. The Śaktas further hold the same idea but believe that in the pure state the soul possesses Divine powers.

The Vaiṣṇava Saints identify the Brahman with God and depict personal relationship of the soul with God - like that of a child to mother and father, a friend, servant to master and a beloved wife to her husband. The soul in its empirical state is subject to all kinds of limitations, imperfections, desires, temptations and it acts under ignorance which leads to future births. It is the jñātā, kartā and bhoktā. It is subject to worldly afflictions and to transmigration. It is atomic in nature but is essentially one with God according to Jñāneśvara, Narasimha Mehta, Tukārāma and Ramakṛṣhṇa Paramahamsa. They maintain that the soul is caused by fictitious upādhis which in their turn are produced by nescience. When nescience is destroyed the soul attains its infinitude, omniscience and perfect bliss, which is inherent in it. The Vaiṣṇava saints are not prepared to lose the individual soul in God because thereby they lose the highest happiness that they derive in the company of God from His service.
İsvara or God is admitted by all the systems except those which are atheistic in nature. There is no place for God in Cārvākism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sāmkhya, Mīmāṃsā systems on various grounds. All other systems except these admit the existence of God as the all-pervading, infinite, omniscient, omnipotent being. He is also supposed to be the creator, sustainer and destroyer of the world. The Cārvākās deny the existence of God on the ground of not being perceived by sense organs. Buddhās (Mahāyāna) admit something like God in the form of the Dharmakāya, God in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika systems is the governor and controller of the world; He distributes pleasure and pain in accordance with the adṛṣṭās of the souls. Sāmkhya rejects the existence of God as unnecessary; the Reality is dual in it. Mīmāṃsakās believe in the supremacy and in the eternity of the words of the Śrīti; the deities to which sacrifices are offered are imaginary superior beings; but they deny the existence of God to maintain the final supremacy of the words of the Śrīti. Śāmkara denies the existence of God as the ultimate Reality; his ultimate Reality is nirguṇa (attributeless) but he gives place to God in his system as the penultimate Reality, the sguṇa Brahman, Brahman, qualified by
Mayā and possessing other attributes like omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, infinite love and mercy and the power to combat the evil forces of the world. God too has a comparatively illusory existence according to Him. Rāmānuja identifies the Brahman with God whose the individual soul is a modification. His God is Nārāyāṇa who possesses infinite number of auspicious qualities, is omnipotent, omniscient, full of infinite love and mercy for His creation and He is eternal. He possesses the six main qualities like greatness, knowledge etc. He manifests Himself in the form of the four Vyūhas. Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha also personify the Brahman and look upon Him as the ocean of love and mercy. Rāmānuja with the other Ācāryas and the Vaiṣṇava bhaktas (the saints) maintains that God is merciful and all-loving and He can redeem his devotees by pardoning their sins and by showing them grace even by supervening the adṛśṭa; but generally he does not do it to keep Himself free from the charges of partiality and injustice. The Śaivas also describe their God in the same way as the Vaiṣṇavas; the Śaktas give more importance to the powers of God which when absent God becomes impotent. Kabīr, ā) Tulasīdāsa, Sūradāsa, Jñānesvara, Tukārama, Narasimha Mehta, Chaitanya, Mīrābāi and Ramakrishna do not deny the
God's being above attributes (nirguṇa) but they all believe that the Brahman assumes personal form to meet and to save His devotees who are sincerely devoted to Him. Moreover, God can be worshipped and approached only by means of personal relation with Him. Frequently, the Vaiṣṇava saints regard themselves as the parts, expressions and modifications of God; like sparks of fire, waves of water, rays of the sun and so on. They also look upon God as their lover and regard the soul to be the beloved wife of Him. They believe in one single ultimate God.

(13) Mokṣa (Liberation):

All the systems agree in having the attainment of Mokṣa as the goal of life and knowledge. Knowledge is sought for attaining complete freedom from the sufferings of the worldly life and from the cycle of birth and death by destroying the Adṛṣṭa for ever. The Vedic idea of Mokṣa consists in the termination of pain and suffering of the worldly life and in the attainment of a more happy, full and rich life here on the earth as well as in the heaven. It also consists in the attainment of immortality and in enjoying Divine happiness in the company of Gods. The Vedas also hold that it can be attained by sincere
prayer and sacrifices. The Upaniṣads depict their Mokṣa as the attainment of immortality by means of self-realisation. It is an experience of identity of the soul with the Supreme Self. It is an experience of infinitude and supreme bliss. The soul experiences a kind of supersensuous happiness by overcoming the limitations and imperfections of the samsāra. It transcends duality and relativity. It is a unitive experience in which all distinctions are merged and the soul is completely transformed into the Supreme Self. In Mokṣa the soul becomes completely free from all attachments and desires, from nescience, karma, and finitude. The mukta is free from deception and although he lives in the world he is not touched by the worldly afflictions. It is Jīvanmukti; and in Videhamukti the jīva loses its body and all the three kinds of karma. Carvākism does not recognise anything like Mokṣa. The death of the body is according to it Mokṣa. According to it the highest happiness that the soul can attain is the material and worldly happiness. Buddhism employs the term 'Nirvāṇa' for Mokṣa. It consists in the termination of all conscious experiences, of thought, of will, of pleasure and pain by the eradication of all desires by means of the knowledge of the evanescence of the world and by rigorous self-control and by complete renunciation.
This is the Ṣaṅgha Mokṣa. The idea of the Mahāyānist into Nirvāṇa is different. It is an absorption and identification of the individual with the perfect Dharmakāya; it is not an experience of void of the Hinayānists. It is an experience of supersensuous bliss, perfect knowledge and infinite love. The Mahāyānist concept of Nirvāṇa is positive in content as against the negativistic and nihilistic Nirvāṇa of the Hinayānists. The Mādhyamika Nirvāṇa consists in the attainment of the supreme condition which is free from all kinds of relativity; it is unique and indescribable. All the Buddhist schools agree in believing that Nirvāṇa can be attained by the removal of avidyā, by the proper knowledge of the world, by the complete eradication of all passions and desires, by renunciation and by the necessary Yogic discipline of the body and mind. Jainism too agrees in thinking of Mokṣa to be a state of freedom from all pains, limitations and imperfections by making the soul free from the karma by removing ignorance with the help of the proper knowledge of the soul and the world. The soul in Mokṣa enjoys its native infinite knowledge, infinite power and infinite bliss. It is a bodiless state; all karmas being exhausted there is the eternal freedom from rebirth. It can be attained by gaining proper knowledge, perfect self-control,
renunciation and by observing moral virtues like non-injury, truthfulness, self-control, love, forgiveness, contentment etc. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas regard that state in which the soul is thoroughly freed from the body and from consciousness. It is a state of painlessness as well as pleasurelessness. All states of consciousness come to an end in Mokṣa. The soul remains without any consciousness like a stone only as a substratum of knowledge. It becomes free for ever from the three kinds of karmas and so from the wheel of birth. According to these systems, Mokṣa can be attained by destroying ignorance by the proper knowledge of the soul and of the world, and by exercising strict control over the sense organs and by curbing all desires. The Śāṁkhyā system holds that Mokṣa is a condition in which the three kinds of pain are absent and, in it the soul (Puruṣa) is completely separated from the Prakṛti and the Puruṣa enjoys its immutable state of isolation (kaivalya) by discarding all the changes of the Prakṛti. In such a state karma comes to an end; the wheel of rebirth stops for ever. It can be mainly done by the proper discrimination between the Puruṣa and the Prakṛti and by detaching the soul from every kind of psychical experience, by means of strict self-control, by renunciation of desires and by Yogic
discipline. The Pūrva Māṁsakas agree in holding that Mokṣa consists in the complete cessation of the three kinds of pain, of karma and of rebirth. According to them the soul remains in its original natural state which is devoid of all conscious experiences of pleasure, pain and knowledge. It is similar to the state of the soul as in the Mokṣa in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika systems. According to Prabhākara the soul remains in a non-conscious (jaḍa) state; but according to Kumārila though the soul is devoid of actual conscious experiences it retains its potency of knowledge; it cannot be lost. The soul remains only as the pure substratum of knowledge without any definite content of knowledge. Some old Māṁsakas however, believe that the soul enjoys the supersensuous heavenly happiness to the fullest extent which can be done by performing the sacrificial rites by the Śṛtis. Prabhākara and Kumārila however, believe that Mokṣa can be attained both by the knowledge, of the world and by performing the necessary religious prescribed rites. Śaṁkara in his Advaita Vedānta develops the highest idea of Mokṣa. To him Mokṣa means like others the cessation of all pains and suffering and the stopping the wheel of birth and death for ever by realising identity with the Self which is the Brahman. According to him, Mokṣa
consists in actually experiencing in the real sense the meaning of 'That art thou', 'I am the Brahman' and 'All this is the Brahman'. It is an experience of complete identity with the whole Reality by discarding all the limitations, distinctions, dualities, relativity caused by the adjuncts which are produced by nescience. Bondage is caused by falsely identifying the soul with these adjuncts out of ignorance. When ignorance is destroyed the soul realises its original purity, eternity, consciousness and freedom. The soul enjoys its forgotten infinitude, eternity, omniscience and perfect bliss. This can be done by the knowledge of the Self which is Brahman by means of purification of mind by Self-control and Yogic practices. This is the most evolved idea of Mokṣa which is free from the personalistic defects of human being. Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva and Vallabha however, regard that Mokṣa consists in becoming free from the painful worldly life and the round of rebirth and in the attainment of the everlasting supersensuous divine joy by going to the kingdom of God (Vaikunṭha, Goloka etc.) by means of intense and wholehearted devotion to Him. The liberated soul (mukta) enjoys the omniscience, omnipresence and the supreme bliss of God but the powers of creation and governance remain reserved for God.
According to them, the soul recognises its identity with God (in their own different ways) but still it maintains its distinction to experience the joy of the company of God and to serve Him. Those who sincerely surrender to God and undertake devotional worship of God know Him properly and attain Mokṣa, irrespective of their caste, of class, of colour etc. They gave emphasis on upāsanā and prapatti.

The Vaiṣṇava Saints also followed the footsteps of their Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas and they hold that Mokṣa lies in enjoying the highest supersensuous happiness in the company of God by destroying the ego (ahamkāra) and by purifying one's body and mind by means of ethical virtues and indifference to the world of senses. They regard that in Mokṣa the soul comes to be completely united with the Self or God or Brahman like the union of a beloved wife with her husband or of the salt with the ocean-waters. Nṛsimha Mehta does not want the soul to be lost in God in its union with Him, but He wants to remain separate from God to enjoy the supreme happiness in His company like the Gopis who enjoyed the supreme happiness in the sweet company of Śrīkṛṣṇa. Mirabai too wants to meet God like her dear husband and to enjoy the unique joy of her union with Him for ever. Although the Vaiṣṇava Saints
seek to maintain the difference of the soul from God, they cannot really maintain the difference because the Divine joy which they experience in Mokṣa is so much overwhelming that the individual's separative consciousness is swept away in the huge tide of the love of God. Śaṅkara recognises the possibility of the Jīvanmukta while Rāmānuja does not. Madhva's identity with God means the recognition by the soul of its absolute dependence on Him. Madhva being a dualist seeks to maintain the soul as separate from God in Mokṣa. Vallabha holds that the soul attains its lost and obscured attribute (ānanda) in the state of Mokṣa and then the soul becomes one with God (sāyujya). Rāmānuja holds that the soul attains highest similarity with God but not perfect identity with Him. Nimbārka holds that the soul loses all its adjuncts which are caused by nescience and it enjoys God Himself and the knowledge, bliss and the powers of God except those of creation and governance. Jñāneśvara, Tukārāma, Kabīr, Chaitanya, Ramakrishna mean by Mokṣa, the perfect union of the soul with God (the Supreme Self) by the former's dissolution in the latter or perfect identity of the two. Tukārāma too like Narasimha says in one poem that he does not desire Mokṣa but desires the everlasting joy of the service of God. The Śaivas too mean by Mokṣa attainment
of perfect identity (sāyujuyatā) with God which is expressed by means of (sāmarasya) indistinguishable mixture of the two by means of sincere devotion and knowledge by overcoming ignorance. The liberated soul becomes free from the bondage caused by ignorance by means of sincere devotion and surrender of the devotee to God and by God's grace. The Vaiṣṇava philosophers, Saints and the Śaivas and Śāktas stress the merciful and loving nature of God and the importance of God's grace in attaining the final state of liberation. None can attain Mokṣa unless God shows mercy and grace to him. The Śaivas and Śāktas believe that the liberated soul becomes free for ever from the wheel of rebirth, from karma, body and the worldly life and from its sufferings; and that it enjoys omnipresence, omniscience and some of the powers of Lord Śiva. The Śāktas seek to identify themselves with the Śakti of God and to achieve some powers for themselves.

The special contribution of the Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas and Saints and the Śaivas to the idea of Mokṣa consists in regarding that it can be attained by men of any caste and origin irrespective of their social status on the strong ground of sincere, earnest and exclusive devotion (bhakti) to God. No other thing except the sincerely uttering of the name of God is necessary, according to
them for the attainment of Mokṣa. Thus, they made Mokṣa attainable by all the people of all the castes. Attainment of Mokṣa thus became more simplified and possible for many and, no more it remained an exclusive possession of the higher castes. It no more required the scholarly knowledge of the Śṛtis and the sacrificial rites. Mokṣa came to be universalised. It also lost the original negative and nihilistic trend and was turned into a positive experience of perfect knowledge, perfect bliss and power. It no more meant freedom from pain and suffering only but it meant later on the enjoyment of the company of God, with all His powers except that of creation and governance, Śaṅkara does not allow even this much distinction because he attributes all distinctions to ignorance and its adjuncts. He means by Mokṣa the highest freedom and the experience of infinitude, perfect existence, perfect knowledge and perfect bliss by actually becoming identical with the Brahman itself. When it is attained all the so called worldly things and pains lose their reality.
(b) Brief Comparisons of the concepts of ĀTMAN and MOKṢA with those of some Western Philosophers and of Islam and Christianity

Self (ĀTMAN)

It is desirable that the ideas of Ātman and Mokṣa in the Indian Philosophy be compared with those in the Western Philosophy, in order to properly understand broadly the place of Self in the Reality and in human life and, its significance. In the ancient Greek philosophy the soul came to be interpreted as the logos, a part of the universal fire which is the fundamental Reality. Logos is the part of the divine reason and it is produced like body from the first original principle of the world, the Fire, according to Heracleitus. In the Upaniṣads, the soul is compared with a spark of the divine fire, but it only indicates the latter's forming a part of the Universal Self. On the contrary, it is held by the Upaniṣads that the Self is present in all the things of the world including fire. Heracleitus admits the intelligent nature of the soul. Similarly the idea of Nous of Anaxagoras is parallel to that of the world-soul Hiranyagarbha of the Veda, both forming the rational
principles that control and guide the affairs of the universe intelligently. Plato looked upon the soul as the self-moving principle, it is immortal; it is connected with many bodies and it survives the deaths of the bodies. It is taken in the sense of the whole living personality and has the threefold division according to its functions, i.e. the rational, sensitive and vegetative. The idea of the ideal soul is the rational soul which is free from the preponderance of the sensitive and the vegetative soul, they being equivalent to the sensuous experience and the organic cravings. The rule of the rational part over the other two is admitted by all the Indian systems but nowhere is there a tripartite division of the soul in the Indian Philosophy. Aristotle also accepts the immortality and rationality of the soul. The soul has these faculties (i) nutritive, (ii) sensitive, (iii) appetitive, (iv) locomotive, (v) rational. The soul is present as the principle of life in all the living things, but in different grades, according to the preponderance of the respective functions. Soul and body are inseparable, the former representing the form, and the latter matter. The Upaniṣads and the Advaita Vedānta also admit the immanence of the soul in all the things differing in manifestation like Aristotle's soul, but the Self of the Upaniṣads and Vedānta is the ultimate Reality, which is both immanent in
transcendent over all the particular objects; and, it remains unaffected by its manifestations. The Stoic soul is thoroughly rational, devoid of emotions and is the lover of virtue. The Epicurians regard that the human soul is composed of a finer kind of atoms which are subtle like air and is rational, and is seated in the breast. Stoics hold that the soul holds the body together, while the Epicurians hold that body shelters the soul and hence, the latter comes to an end with the destruction of the former. The soul is mortal and there is no transmigration of it. This view is analogous to the Carvaka view, but only partially. Philo develops the idea of the Logos which corresponds to the Stoic concept of the world-soul as well as to the Platonic world Ideas. The Logos is begotten of God and mediates between the world and God. Plotinus regards God to be the highest Primal reality that is transcendent above being and rationality. The world is an overflow of the perfection of the One Supreme Reality, a beam sent forth from the Infinite Light. Nous is the first emanate of God and the world-soul is an image of the Nous. It is an image of images. The world-soul gives rise to individual souls, the plastic forces, which in turn give rise to the matter. It is a continuous series of emanations from the highest Light to the lowest darkness. Matter being changeful, is the
source of all-evil, as it is the principle of imperfection. Man is a compound of matter and the soul which is immaterial and imperishable. It assumes births according to its actions in the previous life. The soul needs to be purified by withdrawing itself from the influence of the matter. Plotinus agrees with the Vedantic concept of the soul (Ramanuja's) in so far they share in common rationality and the individual soul emanates from the Supreme Self. But the resemblance is too limited.

**St. Augustine** holds that the Soul is simple, immaterial and spiritual. It fills the whole body and so it is immaterial. It is not all-pervasive but it is only limited. It is mortal. It is the principle of energy and knowledge in the body. God is on the contrary, immutable, eternal, all-powerful, all-knowing, absolutely devoid of potentiality and above all predicates and categories. The soul being perishable there is no transmigration of it as in the Indian Philosophy. Like the Jains he holds that the soul fills the whole body.

**St. Thomas** (Acquinas) believes that the soul is the rational and self-moving principle in man. Self-motion is the chief criterion of the soul. There are vegetative, sensitive and rational souls. It is one, intelligent, immaterial, extended all over the body but
has several faculties like that of locomotion, vegetation, sensation (cognition), intelligence and appetite. It is incorruptible, immaterial and so immortal.

In the modern period Descartes regards that the soul is the knowing-principle and that it represents the thinking substance; the mind. God is the primary substance that manifests itself in the form of the two secondary substances, the mind and the matter. The position of Descartes is somewhat analogous with that of Rāmānuja who also holds that the mind (cit) and matter (acit) are the modifications of God; but they differ in all other respects. Spinoza on the contrary, holds that there is only one ultimate substance which is self-subsisting and infinite. It possesses infinite attributes out of which only two, the mind and the matter are known. In fact, the substance is all-pervasive and indeterminate. The attributes also do not belong to the essential nature of it but they appear to belong to it, to the intelligence. The substance is God and all finite things are its effects; but they cannot be understood apart from God. They turn illusory when they are separated from God. Spinoza’s philosophy is similar to that of Śaṅkara in so far as both maintain the monistic and pantheistic nature of the substance and Brahman. The chief difference is that according to Spinoza
the finite things become real when viewed synthetically in substance (God), but according to Śaṅkara the finite things and the world become illusory when one reaches the integral experience of the Brahman. According to Spinoza the human soul is a mode of one attribute (mind) of God. The soul becomes unhappy and illusory when it thinks itself as separate from God, but reaches blessedness and immortality when it realises identity with God.

Leibnitz holds that the monads are the ultimate Realities being centres of consciousness. In the case of human beings all knowledge comes from within. All things are spiritual but they differ in the degrees of intelligence. The soul reaches perfection by the contemplation of God. Locke, the father of Empiricism holds that the soul is the substratum of ideas and of all the states of consciousness. It itself is not consciousness but it is capable of receiving ideas and the other states of consciousness. The soul is perishable and it lasts only as long as the body exists. This soul is somewhat like the soul of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Mīmāṃsā systems according to which the soul is the substratum of the states of consciousness, consciousness being its adventitions character. Berkeley denies the human soul and reduces all things and the soul to the various ideas of their qualities. He believes in
God as the cause and source of all ideas and perceptions, Berkeley reduces the human soul to an aggregate of ideas and perceptions. Berkeley's position is much similar to that of the Vijnānavādin Buddhists. Hume also denies the existence of the soul as a substance of the mental states and he reduces things and soul to a heap of impressions. Kant recognises two kinds of Self, the empirical and the transcendental; the former existing on the phenomenal level and it knows the world in the manifold ways with the help of the a-priori categories possessed by it. The transcendental Self is that which subordinates the changing empirical Self. It is permanent and incomprehensible because the categories of knowledge are not applicable to it. It is known as the presupposition of all knowledge, being the ultimate subject of knowledge which cannot be objectified. This division of the Self is similar to that given by Śāmkara, Śāmkara recognises the two kinds of Self, which are the individual soul (jīva) and the Self (Ātman, Brahman). But he does not give final reality to the individual soul (jīva). He holds that the soul is nothing but the Supreme Self appearing under certain adjuncts. He holds that the Supreme Self (the transcendental Self) is not the unknowable thing-in-itself but it can be known intuitively.
as one's innermost Self which is also the inner reality of the whole universe. It is characterised as the sat (existence), cit (consciousness) and ānanda (bliss). The transcendental Self, according to Kant, is not blissful, but Śaṅkara holds it to be ānandamaya. To both Śaṅkara and Kant the world becomes illusory, but on different grounds. Moreover, Kant keeps them separate and does not speak of their essential identity. The empirical Self of Kant does not merge itself into the transcendental Self in the state of liberation as Śaṅkara thinks. Kant does not hold that the empirical Self is unreal while Śaṅkara holds that the soul (jīva) is fictitious and unreal being caused by nescience (ajñāna). Moreover, Śaṅkara holds that the Self alone exists as a real thing, as against him Kant believes in the reality of the phenomenal world, of the empirical self, and of the thing-in-itself (matter), which also is unknowable because the categories of understanding cannot grasp its essential nature. According to Śaṅkara, the Self is all, it is the Brahman and nothing exists besides and outside it; it is the all-pervading and eternal Reality and everything other than it is illusory; on the contrary, the transcendental Self is a part of the total Reality and it can be known intuitively. Kantian philosophy is often supposed to be exactly like the
Advaitism of Śaṅkara, but the Ātman of Śaṅkara is very much different from the transcendental Self of Kant. Fichte holds that the Ego is the ultimate Reality and that its essence consists in will, activity and knowledge. It posits the non-ego out of it to act upon it. The Ego knows with its reason what is morally good and seeks to realize its real nature by acting upon the non-ego with all struggles and wins supreme joy by overcoming the evil and performing successfully moral duties. The Ego is the conscious subject which is the first condition and presupposition of all knowledge and Being. He denies the independent existence of the Kantian extra-mental thing-in-itself by making it dependent upon the Ego. The Ego is understood by man in his intellectual intuition as the free agent, that wills morally good actions. His position is somewhat analogous with that of Śaṅkara who also holds the Self to be the supreme and final Reality; but unlike Śaṅkara, Fichte gives emphasis on the volitional nature of the Ego and makes its realisation dependent on the moral activity. Śaṅkara does not look upon the world and the moral ideals as real, but they are illusory. He does not therefore hold that moral actions are necessary for the realisation of the Self; on the contrary, he holds that the intelligent and blissful nature of the Self can be known only by the real knowledge of the Self by becoming
Hegel is an Absolutist and believes that the whole universe and the souls are the evolutes of one single principle, the spirit, reason, mind, which is spiritual. The whole world is an evolutionary product of the final absolute Reality. The primary thing is the Spirit or Mind which evolves itself as the knowing and willing souls and as the material things, having a correspondence between the abstract idea and its concrete material form. The Mind is higher and more elaborate evolute of the Spirit, its essence being freedom of willing and consciousness. He holds that a grand evolution of the nature is constantly going on and the human soul is the latest evolutionary product of it. The individual soul grows rich and attains its independent character only by its interaction with the external world. Its content is formed by its interaction with the not-self and with other souls. The highest Self, however, acts as the substance and substratum of all the mental acts. The basic reality of the universe is rational and intelligent. Such an evolution of the world and souls out of the Brahman is found in the Upanishads and, Rāmānuja also holds that the soul and matter are real and are evolutionary modifications of the Supreme Self, God. But Rāmānuja nowhere expresses
anywhere the triad of the stages of development of Hegel, i.e. the thesis, antithesis and synthesis. The Upaniṣadic account of the evolution from the Brahman (Ātman) is different from the Hegelian evolution.

Royce, the modern metaphysician holds that the soul has an internality and it is separate and peculiar in virtue of its purpose, will and ideal. Every soul is unique and works with its own free will; but at the same time it works out the plan of God. Every individual soul has its unique place in the divine scheme and every soul works out the ideal or purpose of God in and through God by acting freely and willingly as His expression. The individual attains its reality by realising its dependence on and identity with God. Bosanquet holds a similar view but says that the particulars are the real manifestations of the Absolute only when they realize their inseperability with the Absolute and when they realize through them the universal will, which is their Real Will. F.H. Bradley regards that the self is an appearance as it has a relational and relative existence; it exists in contradiction with the not-self and it is not self-subsistent. It is also a changing thing since, its content is not the same. Bradley's Absolute is the whole unitive experience of the reality. It is always united with the whole and
in it every particular part is retained without loss of its individual distinction. The Absolute lives in and through the changing objects of the world. The Neo-Realists and the Dialectical Materialists hold that the primary reality is material though extremely subtle and fine and consciousness is its evolutionary product that has arisen to make successful adaptation of the human life with the environment.

MOKŚA

The concept of Mokśa is peculiar in Indian Philosophy and it has no exact correspondence either in the Western Philosophy or in Islam and in Christianity. However, their ideas about the ideal highest happiness may be compared. The concept of liberation or salvation is different from that found in the Western Philosophy. However, certain ideas of some ideal life which is free from the worldly imperfections and sufferings are obtained in some places in the history of the philosophical thought in the West. The concept of Mokśa is a peculiar feature of the Indian Philosophy and of the Hindu religion. All knowledge and the metaphysical inquiries were guided in the ancient and medieval India by the desire to attain Mokśa, which is variedly known as liberation, deliverance,
emancipation, redemption, release, freedom, salvation or the life of blessedness after death. It is mainly a religious concept and means in Indian Philosophy and Hindu religion, liberation from rebirth, karma, pain and sufferings of the worldly life, and sometimes it means the attainment of blessedness and blissful divine life that is supersensuous and it can be attained by the knowledge of the Brahman and Self or by faithful performance of the religious rites, prescribed by the scriptures, or by sincere and wholehearted devotion (bhakti) to God; and by practising Yogic discipline of body and mind. It is frequently believed that the attainment of liberation is dependent on the favour and grace of God. All the systems agree in holding that the attainment of Moksha is facilitated by practising renunciation of the worldly life of sensuous enjoyment and by overcoming ignorance. The Stoic ideal life is one of enjoying the highest happiness by practising the virtues of a highly moral life which are dictated by the rational nature of man in accordance with the general law of nature which is at its base the law of reason. The Stoic idea of ideally happy life is leading a thoroughly rational life by subjugating all emotions and passions which have a seducing effect on the rational nature of man. The Epicurians' ideal life is one of attaining highest
happiness by employing prudence, discrimination, self-control and wisdom in choosing enduring happiness which is also free from accompanying pains. By properly balancing pleasure over pain the highest happiness is sought. It consists in properly harmonising the various urges and emotions rather than in suppressing some parts of it entirely. They were refined hedonists and their ideal of life is the highest happiness of the wise. They tried to live a natural life and did not overemphasize any one part of it.

The highest Good is happiness according to Plato. According to Plato the highest happiness can be achieved by contemplating the world of Ideas and the Good and, thus, to free himself from the bonds of flesh, from the trammels of the body in which the soul is confined, and by means of virtue and wisdom to become like θεός God, even in this life. This can be attained in a mystical intuitive experience. Plato gave emphasis on the subjugation of the animal passions and impulses. Aristotle, on the contrary, thought of the highest happiness which is of the eudemonistic nature. In this happiness, of course, he gives predominance to rationality but he does not neglect the emotions and passions which Plato did. His reason does not grow at the cost of emotions. He tried
to harmonise all the aspects of the human life and sought to achieve an all-round development of human life as guided by the superior element of human life i.e., reason. His ideal is not supermundane. Philo aimed at the mystical ecstasy obtained in the union of man with God by means of the Divine Wisdom which results from contemplation which is above reason. It can be done by freeing the soul from the trammels of the body and the world of sense. He regards that the highest happiness of man consists in the ecstatic union with God. He places confidence in God rather than in action. His ideal is analogous to the Vaiṣṇava ideal of union with God. Plotinus too aimed at a mystical ecstasy in the union of the soul with the one by means of the contemplation of the intellect which is an emanation of God. The soul retires into itself and is rapt in ecstasy and is reunited with the one from which it emanates, receives a special light from intelligence by means of contemplation. His position is somewhat like that of the Advaita Vedānta and Jñāneśvara, in so far as he seeks absorption in the One. According to St. Augustine the goal of human life is the mystical union of the soul with God in the future life. It is full of blessedness and it can be attained by contemplation and love of God and by the discharge of moral duties as
prescribed by the Divine Law. The earthly life is preparatory to the future achievement and so it should be treated as a pilgrimage of the soul. One should love God alone and reject all others. The Mystics of the 13th, 14th and 15th centuries revolted against the excessive intellectualism and believed that God could be attained by sincere prayer, asceticism and attachment through emotions to God. Their approach is partly similar to that of the medieval Vaiṣṇava Saints of India, who too sought to reach God by emotional attachment and surrender to God, prayer and worship and a mystical union with Him. According to Spinoza the aim is the moral emancipation of the human mind which consists in the attainment of the intellectual love of God and of immortality. For that one has to subdue the emotional and sensitive part of our nature and have to maintain and enhance the rational part. In the final state body disappears and the soul attains eternality (deathlessness or immortality) by experiencing itself to be integral with the substance (God). It is the highest unity with God, but in this union the distinction between God and soul is not obliterated, but is rather accentuated. It is a state of blessedness. Spinoza does not favour the absorption of the soul in God like Śaṅkara but he is nearer to Rāmānuja and Nimbārka
in so far as the individual retains its distinction and still experiences its essential unity with God. **Kant** was opposed to any kind of happiness for he looked upon emotions as a part of the lower nature of man. His highest ideal is the discharge of moral duties dictated as the categorical imperative by Reason. **Fichte** also being a moralist does not think of the attainment of happiness. He regards the disinterested discharge of one's moral duties as the highest good. According to **Hegel** the highest ideal is to realise identity of the individual soul (the subjective mind) with the infinite Spirit, the Idea, the Reason from which it has evolved. The highest freedom consists in the experience of the infinitude of the Spirit by realising identity with it and by looking upon every other thing as a manifestation of the infinite Spirit. **Schopenhauer** was a thorough-going pessimist giving more stress on pain rather than on pleasure. According to him, life consists in the will to live and egoity is the source of pain. As long as there is the consciousness of one's narrow ego, suffering is inevitable. He therefore, advocates art (music) in which one forgets himself, sympathy - in which one transcends his narrow egohood and the negation of the will-to-live by means of indifference to self-preservation and renunciation as
the means of deliverance from the bondage of the worldly life. His standpoint is much similar to the Buddhist - Nirvana which also is the deliverance from the sufferings of the worldly life. Royce - being an Absolutist - holds that the freedom of the individual is experienced in the real sense when the individual realises his inalienable union with and dependence on God. In the final union with God the individual is not lost but he is retained in the wider being of God. The finitude of the individual is lost as the personality attains infinitisation. The individual no longer exists as an entirely separate entity but he acts and lives as an inseparable organic part of the whole and realises the infinite nature of the Absolute which realises itself in and through the finite centres. The Absolute, being above all spatio-temporal existence and its changes, is not affected by them. The individual enjoys the highest freedom and the joy of liberation when it experiences its indissoluble union with the Absolute. F. H. Bradley - another Hegelian and Absolutist, thinks like Royce and believes that the Absolute is one single and all-inclusive experience, which expresses itself in every part of the diversity-in-concord. He holds that all the particular parts live in harmony in the whole without any contradiction. The
individuals in their union with the whole disappear as separate entities; but they are permanently united with the Absolute having secured their complete fulfilment and fullest satisfaction. The Absolute is an experience of one and many together; it is that experience which is free from finitude and pain and, in it the particulars are experienced in an immediate and indissoluble union with the whole without obliterating the finite parts.

In the Indian Absolutism of Śaṅkara the individual soul is not regarded as real, therefore, its retention in Mokṣa is impossible. Moreover, the Universal, the Absolute is perfect and infinite. The unitary Self alone is real and all other things are illusory. Moreover, the Absolute of Bradley and Royce which lives in and through the changing objects of the world, is in a way dependent on the particulars in and through which it exists. The Absolute of Śaṅkara, on the contrary, is self-subsistent, completely self-dependent and perfect. It is eternally what it is, all change is illusory. The individual souls are retained in the state of perfection in the God of Rāmānuja, as the parts of the whole in the Hari of Nimbārka, as separate entities but entirely dependent on God (Kṛṣṇa) in the Dvaita philosophy of Madhva and as parts and companions in the divine Līlā of Kṛṣṇa in the
Śuddhādvaita of Vallabha. Complete identification with the Supreme Self by submerging and dissolving in it is not existent anywhere in the Western Absolutism, as we find it in the Absolutism of Śaṅkara and to some extent in Jñāneśvara. The Neo-Realist and the Materialist view that consciousness, mind and intellect are the evolutionary products of matter is similar to the Čārvaka view which regards that consciousness is an attribute of the body.

Bergson in general believes in the 'Creative Evolution' of Life which is indesinate and it assumes definite forms of manifold nature in the course of the evolution for a mutual and successful adaptation of its various forms among themselves. The new forms which emerge are not predetermined by any body or by any supernatural agency. Those forms which suit properly for the onward movement of Life become stable and others are eliminated. There is a complete indeterminism in the Bergsonian Creative Evolution; consciousness, sensibility, mind and intelligence are the progressive evolutes of life. Llyod Morgan believes in the 'Emergent Evolution' and holds that new elements evolve in the course of the evolution of nature. There are no set and definite directions in which the evolution is taking place. S. Alexander however, believes in a 'Teleological Evolution' of the universe and believes
that the Self is not a fixed thing; its content is under a change; the Self is a changing entity which includes in it body and egoity (the sense of 'I' and 'mine'). It increases in its contents with a person's increasing range of appropriation of things and of emotions and thoughts. But he believes that the evolution of the world is directed towards the realisation of the Deity (God). The Self is an intermediate stage in the process.

Edward Caird believes that the evolution of religion has first taken place in the outward, then in the inward and then in the upward direction towards godhood or divinity. His remarks are justifiable and highly valuable since it is a fact that during the whole history of human civilization man first tried to conquer external nature and tried to seize everlasting happiness and peace from it; but failing in it, he turned inward and sought for happiness and peace in his own mental and spiritual experiences. Failing even in that he turned his eyes upward and sought to attain everlasting peace and joy from the company of God. He then found the joy of fulfilment of his whole life in the attainment of God or divinity.

Herbert Spencer describes evolution as the passage from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous, from simple
to complex and from indefinite to definite. It is difficult to pick up any definite line of evolution in the ideas of a particular thing. Religious ideas are influenced by the philosophical systems which precede them or are contemporary with them. According to Islam, the soul is different from the body and it has a spiritual nature. It is the agent of moral actions and it remains in contact with this world as well with the other superior world. It possesses the power of perception and intelligence. It has an inherent tendency towards the angelic world. The souls are of three kinds -- (1) Too feeble soul. It remains confined in the limits of the region of sense and imagination. It cannot perceive the spiritual. (2) These souls of the other class are carried by reflective movement and a natural disposition towards a spiritual intelligence. They can enter into a state of contemplation which results in ecstasy. This is the intuition of the Saints (Auliya). (3) The souls of the third class are created with the power of disengaging themselves from their human bodies in order that they may rise to the angelic state where they become like angels. These souls get the direct revelation of God. The Koran gives a full description of God that is omnipotent,

omniscient, all-good and benevolent, merciful, loving, lover of righteousness and the redeemer of the believers in Him. The Christian view is that the individuals are like children of God. The individual souls are sinful in nature and their degradation is due to their sinfulness. They are intelligent, and capable of enjoying supreme bliss with God. They are finite and limited in their powers. They are often subject to earthly temptations and, so, are more likely to be increasingly sinful. God, on the contrary, is infinite, all pervasive, omnipotent, benevolent, extremely loving, merciful, lover of peace and tranquillity, the destroyer of the satanic beings and evil, and the redeemer of the humanity. The soul is an arena of the holy spirit and the satanic powers. God gives deliverance or salvation on the day of judgment to the souls on the basis of their morally good actions. The regeneration of the soul is conditioned by the moral nature of the actions of the soul. The souls are morally free and hence, bear the responsibility of preparing themselves for the final deliverance by means of morally pure and good actions to make themselves worthy of the divine mercy and grace.

Islam is a monotheistic religion, and God is extremely loving and graceful according to the Islam. God loves
virtue and faith and He admits to his heaven or paradise the believers in Him and bestows on them all the pleasures of heaven. On the day of judgement God takes a total stock of the merit and demerit of the souls in their lives on the earth and distributes rewards among them as they deserve. The pious persons are immediately admitted to the paradise and the infidel persons are thrown in the hell fire. The paradise is watered by rivers; its food is perpetual and its shade also. Therein are rivers of incorruptible water and rivers of milk, the taste of which does not change. There are rivers of pleasant wine and of clarified honey, and abundance of fruits of all kinds. The unbelievers on the contrary, will be thrown in the hell fire and will be subjected to all sorts of tortures. Mokṣa or salvation (najāh) or (khataṣ) means not so much escape from the power of sin in this life as escape from its punishment hereafter. The believers have to observe the prescribed five duties strictly. Islam assures liberation even to the infidels but they have to pass through a long series of sufferings and tortures. Ultimately all are delivered by God as He is merciful. The Islamic concept of liberation is more akin to the Vedic idea of the life in paradise after death as both believe that unending pleasures of all sorts are obtained in the paradise.
Christianity recognises the phenomenon of salvation or redemption which is similar to Mokṣa but in a different sense. According to Christianity, the ideal to be attained is enjoyment of life in the Kingdom of God. God is addressed as the Father in heaven and He bestows peace, happiness and joy on his children on earth out of love and mercy for them. The souls have a too acute sense of their sinfulness and they seek to liberate themselves from the sins by leading a morally perfect and pious life. The removal of sins can be acquired by faith and devotion to God with all humility. God is extremely loving to the souls like a father but He shows his love to those who deserve it by practising highly moral life. God is met by direct and immediate communion with Him and when such an experience is attained the liberated soul enjoys the divine peace and joy. The soul does not win such peace and joy only for itself but it spreads it around to all its brethren who suffer from sin and imperfection.

Christianity makes moral elevation of the soul a necessary condition for such a final experience of salvation. God proclaims his decisions on the day of judgement and distributes rewards in accordance with the deeds the souls on their life on earth. God helps the striving souls to win over the satanic forces and the evil and thus, the
morally elevated souls acquire the divine nature, though partially. The redeeming power of God is shown to them who have perfect faith and trust in Him. The moral regeneration transforms the erring and fallible human soul into a higher spiritual being. The liberated souls enjoy for ever the divine company of God and enjoy the supreme bliss and peace. The Christian concept of salvation is near to the concept of Mokṣa of Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva and some other Vaiṣṇava poets who seek companionship with God, His bliss and peace.

(c) A few words about the ĀTMAN and MOKṢA

It will become evident from all the above broad comparisons that the Westerners are not familiar with the exact concept of Mokṣa as we find in the Indian Philosophy and the Hindu religion. However, it is at the same time a fact that some elements of Mokṣa, like dislike for the worldly life and its sufferings, for finitude, vanity of sensuous pleasures and a desire for immortality, blessedness, supersensuous joy and union with God are present in almost all the systems, except a few. The concept of Mokṣa as the deliverance from the round of birth and death, karma, ignorance and as a positive experience of
infinitude, omniscience, omnipotence and divinity, by attaining godhood itself is peculiar with the Indian philosophical systems and with the Hindu religion. Some of the systems like Buddhism and the Nyāya Vaiśeṣika seek only eternal freedom from pain and from all the states of consciousness; a void and a state of the absence of consciousness. Nowhere do we come across the highest ideal of Mokṣa of the Advaita Vedānta which consists in experiencing oneself as the Brahman, the highest ultimate Reality which is eternal, infinite, all-pervading, free from all imperfections, immutable, eternally free, and full of perfect knowledge and perfect bliss, and which is above all spatio-temporal determinations, dualities of good and bad, and all sorts of relativities. It is the highest experience of bliss and knowledge of the Absolute and it is the most evolved idea of Mokṣa. There cannot be an idea still higher than that. It contains all the elements of the concepts of Mokṣa of the other systems and still positively it possesses its own unique nature. It is the supreme state of eternal illumination. Śaṅkara's idea of Mokṣa, of attaining immortality by entering into an indistinguishable unity with the Brahman is superior to all others as it is the attainment of immortality by the infinitisation and universalisation of
the finite soul. Nay, Śaṁkara never admitted that there exists anything like a real finite soul different from the Supreme Self or the Brahman. His Brahman being the only Reality, it alone exists in truth, although, it appears in various particular forms due to the adjuncts (upādhis) caused by nescience. His thesis is that there never was and is any finite thing in reality other than the Brahman. The world is illusory, so all the pains and imperfections of the worldly life are illusory; they are caused by the false identification of the Self with the things which are finite and unreal. To one who realises the highest, infinite, eternal, self-revealing and blissful Brahman the world and its pains become illusory. He lives as the all-satisfied-Brahman itself. Mokṣa, for Śaṁkara is the realisation of the state of Brahman by discarding all other finite worldly experiences. The moment one realises it, perfect happiness is at his hand. He does not hold that the perfect state would be attained in the future as a further stage of evolution. Mokṣa is Brahman itself which is permanent and present even now. Anybody can attain this kind of Mokṣa (liberation) by acquiring the real knowledge of the Self, which he himself is.

Sri Aurobindo rejects the Māyāvāda of Śaṁkara and
believes in the Spiritual Evolution of the whole Reality. He believes that the same Self (Ātman - Brahman) is undergoing evolution and it is gradually manifesting itself in the progressively higher forms of organisation. The Self is immanent in the world and still transcends it. The Self is undergoing the evolutionary changes without losing its pure and immutable nature. The evolution is its self-actualisation. The same Self which contains in it the whole universe potentially, in an unmanifest form, has passed through insentience, the physical, vital and mental planes and its next stage is the supra-mental plane. The end of the teleological evolution is the realisation of the Supreme Self in its perfection as the perfect existence (sat), perfect knowledge (cit) and perfect bliss (ānanda) in an integral experience. Śaṅkara does not believe in the reality of change. He regards all change illusory and therefore, any evolution is illusory according to Śaṅkara. Śaṅkara's Reality is the eternal, imperishable, infinite, immutable, self-illumined Ātman which is ever-contented and free from all kinds of imperfections. The state of perfection is attained forever, according to Śaṅkara and the end of human life is its realisation. According to him, nothing new and more than that is to be achieved. Such a highest state of perfection (Mokṣa) is existing forever according to Śaṅkara.
Śaṅkara's concepts of the Self and Mokṣa are the most evolved ones and are of supreme eminence. The whole humanity is striving for the satisfaction of the Self; but, due to the wrong concepts of the Self, inspite of the refinement of the material civilisation and the multifarious means of pleasures and happiness, both physical and mental, humanity has not succeeded in becoming free from the basic discontent. As the material and psychical means (including science, art, literature, philosophy and religion) of satisfaction have failed to remove the deep-rooted discontent and the sense of frustration, it is gradually becoming evident that the Self that seeks satisfaction in and through the activities of the humanity is not the physical body, and, the sense organs nor the mind and its various desires and aspirations; the Self is not even the mind; but it is something different and beyond it; it is unique in itself and cannot be reduced to anything other than itself. The satisfaction of the Self thus comes only from itself by realising its true nature, which is the same as the whole reality (Brahman), not by regarding itself to be something else like the senses, the vital principle (prāṇa), the manas (mind), the intellect (buddhi), but by properly understanding and realising its unique nature, which is similar to nothing
besides itself. The Self cannot be therefore, understood in terms of any other thing but itself, since nothing is similar to it. The Upaniṣads therefore, describe the Self as that which is beyond the senses, beyond the manas (mind), beyond the buddhi (intellect) and it is the final principle of knowledge as it is the light of consciousness. Śaṅkara upholds it and contends that the Self is beyond all these. Similarly another Upaniṣadic text is that beyond the physical sheath (annamaya kośa) is the mental sheath (monomaya kośa), and beyond that is intellectual sheath (vijñānamaya kośa), and beyond all these is the sheath of bliss (ānandamaya kośa). Śaṅkara fully supports it and states that the Self is none of them and it is beyond all these levels; it is the highest principle of existence (sat), consciousness (cit) and bliss (ānanda). In fact, as Śaṅkara says, that all is Brahman, everything is in essence the same Self (Ātman) and all the differences that appear are only its various illusory manifestations caused by the unreal adjuncts. The underlying Reality of all the things of the world is the same Self and so, the fundamental attraction of things to the souls is nothing but the attraction of the Self to itself, to realise itself in and through its manifold manifestations. As Aurobindo says it is a game of hide and seek of the Self with its own disguised forms. It is a kind of Līla
(sport) of the Self. The truth of the saying of the Bhādāraṇyaka Upaniṣad is highly significant in this respect. As Yājñāvalkya says "All this is dear for the sake of the Self itself". Thus the real meaning of the attractions of the worldly objects and their attachments is to be understood as the Self's desire to find itself and to reunite with itself as expressed in the infinite number of objects of various names and forms. All this finally leads to the necessity of the understanding of the proper nature of the Self that seeks satisfaction in the various forms but fails to secure it because of its wrong approach. The real and perfect satisfaction can be reached when the Self finds itself or when humanity attains the realisation of the Self to the fullest extent in the real sense. As long as the Self does not find itself or there is no real self-realisation, all the numerous efforts of the present civilisation to secure everlasting peace, happiness and satisfaction for the humanity by multiplying the external physical and psychical means of happiness are bound to meet with failure. Śaṅkara's concept of Mokṣa is nothing else but the enjoyment of the perfect bliss, the perfect knowledge and the perfect freedom by realising the infinite nature of the Self which is nothing else but the whole Reality. When one feels that he is all and whatever seems to
exist outside himself is nothing but himself, that he is the whole Reality, the perfection itself, for him all limitations disappear. He experiences eternal satisfaction as all his desires are fulfilled for ever; his narrow egohood and its resulting urges vanish and he enjoys the supreme joy of perfection by the feeling that he is all and nothing exists outside itself to be desired. He alone enjoys the highest freedom and everlasting satisfaction. Hence the present civilisation requires a careful understanding of the concept of Mokṣa of Śāṅkara.

The Indian thinkers have carried on a ceaseless pursuit after the knowledge of the Self and the world and have made valuable contributions to the thought of Ātman and Mokṣa. Mokṣa is not an external thing to be acquired, but it consists in the inner transformation of the individual and in raising oneself to a higher level of consciousness. Moreover, according to all of them, Mokṣa is not attainable by the simple process of getting knowledge as the Westerners do. But the attainment of Mokṣa requires along with the proper philosophical knowledge of the Ātman, the moralization and spiritualisation of one's habits and inner psychic being. Mokṣa implies not only a change in the rational understanding but a complete change of the mode of life, inner and outer, and a
transformation of the human into the divine. Mokṣa cannot
be attained by any person who simply has the verbal and
theoretical knowledge of the Ātman, but it can be attained
only by those who have qualified themselves by carrying
out all the prescribed instructions and have prepared them-
selves for the reception of it. It can be attained only
by the adhikārins who are already disposed to receive
that kind of experience. Any faithless, raw, unprepared
and uncultivated person cannot attain it. The fitness
(adhikāritva) is conditioned by the past deeds of the
individual.

The special feature of such a liberated (mukta)
individual is that amidst all the changes, temptations
and sorrows of the worldly life, the Jīvanmukta, the man
of spiritual realization stands firm like a rock, resolute,
calm, unruffled and unaffected by the worldly imperfections
and afflictions. To him the external world and the changes
of various magnitudes going on in it matter little. He
stands above all the erring and suffering worldly men.
whose inner calm and poise remain undisturbed in all
kinds of external circumstances. He is ever satisfied
and depends on nothing besides his Self (Ātman) for his
contentment, inner calm, poise and joy. The material
civilisation of this world may enrich the environment,
but a mere satisfaction of the physical appetites and psychical desires and aspirations does not possess the power to fetch unending satisfaction to the inner spirit of man. The realisation of this inner Spirit, the real Self, which is beyond the body, the mind, and the intellect alone can bring the unending joy of satisfaction to man. The bliss, that is brought by self-revelation, is not the temporary satisfaction of this or that desire, but it can be secured only by remaining steady on the unchanging Ātman by acquiring the inner poise. It cannot be attained by prudently harmonising the various desires so as to yield greater pleasure and less pains as the Epicurians and rational hedonists think. Attainment of Mokṣa is not thus the escape from the worldly life of a timid but it is the victory of a brave person over the temptations of the sensuous life of the world and his triumph over the deceptive world. It is a unique and rare achievement. The Indian concept of Mokṣa may thus defeat the madness of the present material civilisation and may offer a new solution, a new way of life for the reorganisation of the future human life.
The Metaphysical Concepts of ĀTMAN and MOKṣA are the psychological sublimations of the respective philosophers and saints to a certain extent.

In the modern psychology we get a new approach to the understanding of an individual by means of his 'unconscious' or 'subconscious' mind, according to the psychoanalytic school of Sigmund Freud and his followers. According to psychoanalysis, every individual is a frustrate, in the sense that some of his urges (which are predominantly sexual in nature) and desires are suppressed for various reasons on various occasions; but these urges, being living forces, cannot be annulled; although they are denied satisfaction in an explicit form, they remain repressed in the subconscious mind and they seek to obtain their satisfaction in various other forms or disguises which are not prohibited, are not objectionable and which are socially recognised. The redirection of the original urges and desires into other forms and getting satisfaction under other disguises without the knowledge is known as the 'Psychological Sublimation'. The repression of urges or desires causes psychological 'tension' in the individual and he suffers from mental abnormalities. The sublimation usually takes place in those ways of behaviour which have been socially recognised and approved.
as 'good'. The motivations of many socially good acts are quite different and they happen to be the unconscious psychological sublimations of the individual. A woman who has failed to beget a child for herself takes to such a profession as that of nursing and derives satisfaction of her maternal instinct by nursing the children of others, with great care and affection. Or a person who has failed in some aspects of his life miserably, wins fame either as an artist, social reformer or political agitator and so on. Thus, as Freud lays down his thesis, every individual's thoughts and actions are influenced by the subconscious forces of his mind of which he remains unconscious. He sublimates them in different forms and thus secures a psychological relief from the tension from which he was suffering.

The Metaphysical concepts of the Reality and of the Self of the different philosophers may thus, be properly understood, in terms of their unconscious psychological sublimations. The Vedic thinkers depicted the picture of their heaven as full of those most refined and superb happinesses which they could not enjoy on the earth that is full of all kinds of imperfections. The idea of their heaven must have been prompted by their unfulfilled desires on the earth. The Carvākas must have
been thoroughly satisfied with the material and physical pleasures, and hence, they depicted their highest satisfaction as consisting in the carnal pleasures. Their denial of life after death and regarding material pleasures as the highest aim must have been due either to their real satisfaction by means of the material pleasures or, by an unfulfilled desire for them. The Hinayana Buddhists, the Nyaya Vaiśeśikas had too much an oppressive sense of suffering and sorrow of the worldly life and hence, they did not desire any more such a miserable worldly life; so they denied the soul, its immortality (Buddhists) and looked upon Mokṣa (Nirvāṇa and Aparvarga) as a permanent escape from pain and suffering and consciousness. The Mahāyānist concept of Nirvāṇa is coloured by their profound sensitiveness to others' sufferings and a philanthropic urge of service and martyrdom for others. The Śāṃkhyas metaphysics seems to have been coloured by the aversion for change and transience of pleasant experiences. The unconscious of them seems to become aloof from the everchanging nature and to experience an unperturbed state of peace and tranquillity. The Jaina philosophical ideas seem to have sprung from their urge to offer security and protection even to the animals from the Vedic sacrifices;
it is more philanthropic in nature like the Mahāyāna Buddhism; their Mokṣa is a result of their fear of pain in the worldly life.

Such psychological sublimations cannot be shown to be entirely responsible for the philosophical speculations of the master minds; it would be too sweeping a statement to assert so; but from a psychoanalytic study of the human mind, it will not be dogmatic to say that the sublimations must have played an important part in the theorizing of even the best minds. My attempt here is to show, from this point of view, that the Philosophic Theories have evolved in their shapings as per psychological sublimations of those Philosophers. Śāṅkara, Plato, Plotinus, Hegel, Spinoza possessed a strong intellectual bend of mind, with a urge of curiosity, hence they theorized in favour of 'Intellectual Idealism' and 'Absolutism'. Their abstractionist tendencies developed the Universal at the cost of the particulars. They sought highest happiness in the intellectual satisfaction which could be derived from such abstract metaphysical speculations. Those in whom was the predominance of the sex instinct and the feelings of parental, filial, mating love and an urge for sociability sublimated them into the worship of God through Love (devotion - bhakti). Such were
Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha and the Vaiṣṇavite and Śāiva saints of the Bhakti cult. Their Psychological Sublimations probably tended to either the transformations of the urges into Metaphysical idealism and Absolutism or into Bhakti cult and idolizations of some affections as Realities. They transferred their feelings to God from the worldly objects, and sought supreme satisfaction by idolizing and concretising the abstract and impersonal Reality.

Kabīr, who was neither purely a Hindu nor purely a Mohammedan, was disgusted with their quarrels about the name and nature of God and hence, he depicted his Reality, Rāma as Nirguṇa (Brāhmaṇ), beyond these distinctions, being the same for both, partial to neither and bearing different names. His condemnation of the scholastic religious tradition may be due to his own illiteracy and inability to study the original classics. His doctrine of Bhakti (devotion) as a means of attaining Mokṣa might have been a result of denial to study the original scriptures due to his anomalous social position; he must have therefore thought it necessary to open the gates of Mokṣa to the persons of all castes and creeds, irrespective of their origin and social status, by means of only sincere devotion. Similar episodes are known from the life-
histories of Tulasidāsa and Śūradāsa. It is said, that Tulasidāsa was too much attached to his wife and that she scolded him harshly and asked him to direct his attention to God when he had gone to meet her when she had been on a short visit to her parents. Since then Tulasidāsa renounced everything and, sublimated his love for his wife into exclusive devotion for Rāma. Śūradāsa also turned blind on a peculiar occasion. A lady had scolded him for casting on her his sinful sight and so she had asked him to concentrate his mind upon God rather than look at her, so that he would attain blessedness. As a result of that Śūradāsa destroyed his eyesight, and became a profound devotee of Śrīkṛṣṇa. He had sublimated his sexual urge and transformed it into the Puṣṭibhakti of Kṛṣṇa. Mīranbāī, was a widow and was deprived of the enjoyment of her normal married life. She directed all her female feelings of love, adoration, service and enjoyment to God (Kṛṣṇa) and worshipped Him as her beloved husband and imagined her highest happiness to be the most intense union with God; but it was completely free from sensuousness. Chaitanya was highly emotional, charming, delicate and he too sublimated his feelings of love and transferred them to God (Kṛṣṇa), himself assuming the role of Rādhā. Narasiṁha Mehta and Tukārāma too had
to pass through very critical periods of life. Tukārāma was terribly shaken by the awful sight of famine and they proved failure in business (mercantile) and became unable to satisfy the needs of their family members. They turned desperate and suffered from a sense of loneliness and helplessness. Tukārāma sought the resort of God (Viṭhoba) as his mother and sublimated all his urges and worshipped God as his mother and all other closest relations. His deep sense of helplessness, loneliness and impracticality in the worldly life made him sublimate his urges and transfer them to God. Narasimha Mehta too was harassed in his worldly life and suffered from a sense of negligence and indifference shown to him by his sister-in-law (his brother's wife), as a result of which he transferred all his love to God and sought final peace and reliance from Him. Thus it becomes evident from the life-histories of the Philosophers and the Saints that their metaphysical concepts of Ātman and Mokṣa are to a certain extent motivated by their previous experiences and are their Psychological Sublimations and they are governed by their individual bends of mind and likes and dislikes.
(d) **Contribution to the Advancement of Knowledge**

From a synthetic survey of the various concepts of the Self (Ātman) as expressed in the different systems of Indian Philosophy it appears that the evolution of the concepts of Ātman and Mokṣa has tended to be in the following directions on the whole, though one cannot say that the progress is in a straight line:

**ĀTMAN**

(1) **From Material to the Spiritual nature of the Ātman**:  
The material view of the Ātman as the living body (Cārvākas), as the five elements (earth, water, fire, air and ether), the food, as the vital principle (prāṇa), as relatives and one's belongings, as the sense organs, the mind (manas) and its various states, the intellect (buddhi) has undergone a change from the former to the latter, as expressed in the above series. Finally, it came to be looked upon as the all-pervasive, eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, extremely loving and merciful, an ocean of infinite number of auspicious qualities, an embodiment of all perfections and blissfulness - Supreme Self (God, the Nārāyaṇa, Hari, Kṛṣṇa, Viṣṇu, Paramātman); but the idea of the Self (Ātman) reaches its final culmination in the most evolved concept of the Nirguṇa Brahman of Śaṁkara,
who supposes God to be the penultimate Reality, the qualified Brahman (Saguṇa Brahman). The Nirguṇa Brahman, the attributeless Brahman (Absolute) is still a higher Reality. It is eternal (nitya), free (mukta), pure (Śuddha) and conscient (buddha), all-pervading vibhu), infinite, the substance - the source, support and end of all worldly objects, immutable, unaffected by change, subtle and characterised by perfect existence (sat), consciousness (cit) and bliss (ānanda). It is the only Reality and nothing other than it exists. It is the essence and truth of everything. It is singular and all external forms of existence (nāma-rūpa) characterised by the three attributes and change are illusory being caused by adjuncts (upādhis) which are caused by nescience (ajñāna). Thus, Śāṅkara's concept of the Spiritual Self (Ātman) as the Absolute is the most evolved concept of Ātman. The concept of Ātman underwent an intermediate change when it is looked upon as the substratum of knowledge, as in the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and the Pūrva Mīmāṁsā systems, which do not make consciousness the essential nature of the Ātman as the Sāmkhya and Advaita Vedānta do; the former make consciousness an adventitious character of the Ātman.

(2) From Pluralism to Monism (Absolutism):

The Buddhists are anātmavādins as they deny the
existence of Ātman; but Carvākism, Jainism, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā, Viśiṣṭādvaīta Systems, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha, all the Śaivas and the Vaiṣṇava Saints believe in the reality of the plurality of the souls; but Śaṅkara denies the reality of the plurality of the souls regarding them to have been caused by unreal adjuncts. Śaṅkara believes that there is only one really existing thing and that is the Brahman (Ātman) and every thing other than it is unreal. Rāmānuja admits the final monism of the Brahman in the form of monotheism but he still admits the reality of the plurality of souls as God's (Brahman) modifications; Nimbārka looks upon the soul as the aṁśa (part), Vallabha as the partially revealed form of the Single Brahman. The individual souls are retained even in the state of Mokṣa by Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha, the Vaiṣṇava Saints except Jñāneśvara, the Śaivas, Jainas, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas, Sāṅkhya, Yogas and the Pūrva Mīmāṃsakas. According to Śaṅkara there is only one Reality (The Absolute), the Brahman which is eternal and nothing besides it exists. The Sāṅkhya system also tried to arrive at a complete Absolutism, but it finally ended into the dualism of Puruṣa and Prakṛti. So far the material world (insentient matter) is concerned, it reached an Absolute in the form
of the Prakṛti. But it posited the Puruṣa as final principle of consciousness and came to look upon the Puruṣa and Prakṛti as completely exclusive of each other; mutually irreducible and independent ultimate Realities. Its dualism cannot be bridged over and hence, although it indicates an advance from pluralism to dualism, it did not finally succeed in establishing the perfect Absolutism. It is an intermediate stage between Pluralism and Monism or Absolutism. The concept of the Self (Ātman) finally culminates into the absolute Monism or Absolutism of Śāṅkara. The Absolute of Śāṅkara is spiritual in nature. Though logically the culmination of the philosophic thought is reached in Śāṅkara's Idealistic Absolutism, it is not the only evolution; it is not the only culmination of the linear and historical evolution, since other offshoots and regressive concepts also are noticeable. But in general, the tendency of the progress of the philosophic thought seems to have logically evolved the Absolute of Śāṅkara which, according to him, can be realized by knowledge (jñāna).

Another line of progress of the philosophic thought seems to have concurrently evolved towards Mysticism or Personal Bhaktivāda. Another alternative evolution towards Absolutism ends in the Personalistic Monism
(monotheism) of Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha and the other Medieval Vaishnava Saints and the Śaivas. Śaṅkara's Absolute is devoid of any personality whatsoever. But the Absolute of the Vaishnava Ācaryas and Vaishnava Saints and of the Śaivas possesses celestial personality, infinite number of auspicious and best qualities, love and mercy for the devotees and, He liberates them out of mercy with His grace. The Personalistic Absolute of them is approachable by love and devotion (Bhakti). He (God) can be realised by means of mystical union with Him. In this line there is a persistent tendency towards Mysticism.

(3) From Finite to Infinite:

The soul is finite according to Carvākism, Viśiṣṭādīvaita, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha and the Vaishnava Saints and the Śaivas it being atomic (aṇuvat); while according to Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāmkhya-Yoga, Pūrva Mīmāṁsā and Advait Vedānta the soul is infinite and all-pervasive. According to Śaṅkara its finitude is fictitious and phenomenal being caused by the adjuncts which result from nescience. Its finiteness is caused in the case of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāmkhya-Yoga and Pūrva Mīmāṁsā systems by its association with the individual aṭṭhas, minds and sense organs. The soul is atomic according to Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha and the Vaishnava
Saints, but it becomes infinite and pervasive by its intelligence which pervades like light and fragrance. The soul becomes infinite after it is freed from Karma, mind and sense organs, according to Jainism, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Saṁkhya-Yoga, Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā, Jñāneśvara and some Śaivas. While according to Śaṅkara it is inherently and eternally infinite and it is never in bondage in the real sense. In its real nature it is free from all conditions and limitations.

(4) From External to Internal:

The Self (Ātman) no more remains an entity similar to the external concrete things like reflection, elements, sense organs nor to mind (manas) and intellect (buddhi); it cannot be reduced to anything other than itself and also it cannot be dissolved into its functions. Finally it comes to be understood as one's innermost reality, the essence of oneself and of the whole world, according to the Upaniṣads, Śaṅkara and the later Vedāntic schools of Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha, the Vaiṣṇava Saints and Śaivas admit it to be one's inner Reality but in a modified form. According to the Upaniṣads the Ātman is present in everything as is butter in milk, oil in seed and water in riverbed. It can be properly known
only in one's intuitive experience. It finally becomes the principle of pure, immutable and eternal consciousness which is also full of bliss. It becomes the internal reality of the human beings; and all the things of the world.

**MOKSA**

There has been a persistent change in the concept of Mokṣa (liberation), along with that of Ātman. The former is dependent upon the latter. The trend of evolution of the concept of Mokṣa seems to have tended to be in the following lines:

(1) **From Negative to Positive content of the Concept of Mokṣa**:

Mokṣa has been mostly negative in its connotation in Carvakism, Buddhism (Nirvāṇa - Hīnayāna), Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Sāmkhya, Yoga and Pūrva Mīmāṁsā systems. It means for them an escape or freedom from pain, suffering, karma and from rebirth in the worldly life (samsāra). The Nirvāṇa of the Hīnayāna Buddhists is an experience of utter void and of extinction and of the cessation of the states of consciousness. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Pūrva Mīmāṁsā systems look upon Mokṣa which is free from pain,
pleasure and all the states of consciousness. Mokṣa appears in a positive form in the Vedas, Upaniṣads, Jainism, Advaita Vedānta and in the philosophies of Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha, the Śaivas and Śāktas and the Vaiṣṇava Saints. According to Jainism the Ātman enjoys infinite knowledge, infinite bliss and infinite power. According to the Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas, Saints and the Śaivas it means the enjoyment of the Divine joy, omniscience, infinitude and of other godly powers except the two powers of God, i.e. the power of creation and of governance of the world. It means for them the experience of the supersensuous joy in a mystical union with God. For Śaṅkara Mokṣa is a positive experience of infinite and eternal freedom and perfect bliss. Mokṣa means the attainment of immortality, of infinitude and of perfect bliss according to the Upaniṣads. The Vedic concept of Mokṣa is less refined than the Vaiṣṇava Mokṣa as it implies material gains. Śaṅkara’s idea of Mokṣa is the most evolved and the highest. It means an experience of identity with the whole Reality. The Sāmkhya and Yoga ideal of 'isolation' (Kaivalya) is more negative than positive in meaning.

(2) Change in the means of the attainment of Mokṣa:

There is a general movement from the Vedic Ritualism
to Jñāna (knowledge) and Bhakti (devotion). Although all the systems agree in holding that Mokṣa can be attained by the right knowledge of the world and of the Brahma and Ātman by the removal of ignorance or nescience, still the Vedas and the Pūrva Mīmāṃsa system gave much emphasis on ritualism and sacrificialism (karma) regarding them necessary for the attainment of Mokṣa. According to Yoga Mokṣa has to be attained by practising the Yogic disciplines of the body and the mind. Advaita Vedānta and Sāṁkhya hold that knowledge alone is sufficient to bring about the final emancipation although, highly moral life and Yogic discipline help it to a great extent. Rāmānuja and his successors, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha, Śaivas, Śāktas and all the Vaiṣṇava saints hold that Mokṣa can be attained primarily by sincere devotion (Bhakti), complete surrender to God (prapatti) and by the grace of God; knowledge enjoys a secondary position in their systems. The Śaivas and all the Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas and Saints regard that worship is necessary as a means of concentration on God and for the purification of the body, mind and intellect. All the systems give equal importance to a highly moral and virtuous life which implies withdrawal from the world of sense, conquest of sense organs and directing the mind exclusively
to the object of worship and devotion. The Yogic method is more rigorous and austere in self-control. The Buddhists and the Yogic school try to forcibly curb and annihilate the senses; but the aim of Śaṅkara, of the Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas and Saints and of the Śaivas is not the uprooting of the human urges and desires. They on the contrary, aim at sublimating the human urges in more desirable forms. They aim at psychological sublimation and spiritual regeneration. They do not disregard and annihilate the sense organs but they seek to make them instruments in the hands of God. The Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas and Saints follow not the path of annihilation but of sublimation and divination of the lower physical and mental life.

(3) Mokṣa is made attainable by the persons of all castes irrespective of their birth, of vocation, of colour and of social status by the Upaniṣads, the Bhagavadgītā, Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, Śāmkhya, Advaita Vedānta, Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Madhva, Vallabha, the Vaiṣṇava Saints, and Śaivas. Buddhism and Jainism also revolted against the Vedic and Brāhmaṇic aristocracy of the higher castes (Brāhmaṇa and Kṣatriya) and believed that Mokṣa can be attained by the persons of all castes.
These are the broad lines in which the concepts of Ātman and Mokṣa have tended to evolve gradually, passing through various stages and ultimately culminating into the highest ideas of them. Śaṅkara has evolved such grand and unique ideas of Ātman and Mokṣa, although they were already present in their rudimentary forms in the Upaniṣads. Śaṅkara has logically and systematically developed them and has made them elaborate. It is difficult to dogmatically assert any linear evolution of these concepts, however, from a comparative study of all these concepts of Ātman and Mokṣa in the different systems of Indian Philosophy, these lines of evolution strikingly and prominently come up and become articulate. There are also some other offshoots and even regresses. The logical culmination in Advaita Vedānta is not necessarily linear and historical. But broadly, the evolution seems to have tended to culminate into the Idealistic Absolutism of Śaṅkara and in the Mysticism and Personalistic Absolutism and Bhaktivāda of the Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas and Saints. These concepts seem to have been the psychological sublimations of the respective philosophers. I modestly hold that some evolution in the concepts of Ātman and Mokṣa has taken place during the course of the steady changes in them and they can be understood in the directions mentioned above.