IS THERE 'PHILOSOPHY' IN INDIA? AN EXERCISE IN META-PHILOSOPHY

Ankur Barua

Philosophers rarely agree among themselves, and especially so when it is a matter of delineating the domain of enquiry that can be viewed, discussed and taught at institutes of higher education as 'philosophy'. Speaking of western *philosophia*, the shifting lines demarcating this form of enquiry from others can be seen partly as a product of wider historical forces: for instance, Socrates would view 'philosophy' as the practice of self-enquiry that can be performed anywhere, even in a tavern, while contemporary Universities would regard that opinion as far too dissolute and provide a more regimented course of topics, themes and, of course, semester examinations. In other words, as we move from a leisurely class, undergirded by a slave society, that ponders on self-knowledge in the Greek *agora* to the world of late modernity where individuals are assessed, evaluated and readied for their contribution to the national income, *philosophia* becomes classified as one more specialisation that offers a University degree. Another instance that highlights how changes in political economy can lead to divergent visions of the location of *philosophia* on the intellectual landscape is the question of medieval Scholasticism. In the tradition of British empiricism, thinkers such as St Thomas Aquinas are often brushed aside as 'mere' theologians, implying that there is no serious logical, rational enquiry in their texts. The Schoolmen are not 'philosophers' because they are Churchmen whose point of departure is a specific Christian world-view, and hence their learned treatises are to be consigned, as David Hume famously put it, to the withering flames of logical analysis. From roughly 1920s onwards, the antagonism between *philosophia* and enquiry based on faith-commitments was rigidified through Logical Positivism – any form of enquiry that smacks of faith in transcendental entities, not amenable to empirical verification, is to be banished from the scientific Academy and dispatched to the charming pieties of poetry club meetings. Analytical empiricists such as Bertrand Russell would broadly agree

with the Positivists – ancient and early modern *philosophia* had been ensnared by the siren calls of speculative system-building, and their monstrous edifices had to be painstakingly dismantled through logic, mathematics, and the empirical sciences. The Russellian truth, to put it bluntly, lies not in the grandiloquence of a Hegelian narrative but in the clarity of a logical atom. (Bostock 2012).

Our survey of *philosophia* from Socrates to Russell shows that the western intellectual tradition continues to struggle with the question of whether *philosophia* is antagonistic to a faith-stance (as Anglophone analytic philosophy in the line of Russell has often argued) or compatible with such a stance (as Catholic Thomism, hermeneutic interpretivism and so on have contended)? The intellectual, cultural and political ramifications of this question are not limited to European conceptual spaces; indeed, they have often impinged on a question at the margins, 'Is there *philosophia* in India?' Often an argument of the following form has been employed to deny the presence of *philosophia* on the Indian intellectual horizons.

Premise 1:   *Philosophia* is the 'tough-minded' project of pure enquiry, based on autonomous thinking (*theoria*) and the rejection of *mythos,* defined as the negation of *logos,* and not shackled to any faith-commitments (Halbfass 1990: 145-159).

Premise 2:   All enquiry in Indian thought is rooted in Vedic speculation, based on authoritative testimony (*śabda-pramāṇa*) or practically orientated towards the goal of liberation (*mokṣa/nirvāṇa*) from phenomenal existence. *Philosophia* is diametrically opposed to any of the former types of 'tender-minded' thinking.

Conclusion: The Indian conceptual spaces are clustered with mythology, poesy, history, dogma, theology, and the like, but are singularly lacking in *philosophia.*

In this essay, we shall interrogate this argument by analysing the two premises. Such an investigation is also an exercise in meta-philosophy, that is, an enquiry into where the boundaries, if at all, of the distinctively 'philosophical' enterprise lie, in any cultural context (Williamson 2007). To begin with, it would be useful to note that the questions 'Is there 'philosophy' in India?' and 'Is there water, gold or fire in India?', despite their similar logical structure, are conceptually distinct, for unlike these elements 'philosophy' is not a 'natural kind' whose presence or absence can be verified

through standardised means of empirical investigation. As Russell argued: 'We may note one peculiar feature of philosophy. If someone asks the question what is mathematics, we can give him a dictionary definition, let us say the science of number, for the sake of argument ... But philosophy cannot be so defined. Any definition is controversial and already embodies a philosophic attitude' (Russell 1975: 7). To Russell's observation, we may add that the boundary lines of the discourse of 'philosophy' are policed by philosophical presuppositions which are themselves often structured by various socio-historical, cultural and institutional forces, as we will see in our discussion of how western *philosophia* has been viewed, received and reconfigured in contemporary India. Further, we will see that 'faith', which has often been positioned as the intellectual Other of *philosophia* in recent centuries, is in fact closely entwined with reason in some other conceptualisations of *philosophia*, and this fact should alert us to the meta-philosophical nature of our quest for resonances of *philosophia* in the Indian intellectual horizons. Such an interweaving, as we will note, characterizes some influential strands of classical Indian enquiry into the nature of reality, the metaphysical status of personhood, and so on, which were often keyed into technologies of the self, geared towards a cognitive, moral and spiritual transformation of the self and its relation with the other, whether human or transcendent.

A

Before we proceed to inspect the two premises, we need to engage with a methodological criticism that could be raised against the very project of cross-cultural enquiry, which claims, roughly, that the attempt to look for Indian parallels to western *philosophia* is misguided from the start. Any such cross-cultural 'translation' would be superficial, so runs the argument, for (English) terms such as 'philosophy' are so densely localised in European structures of assumptions that their meanings will forever elude those looking into them from the margins. To put the argument more picturesquely, anyone who has not lived through the *Indian* rainy season cannot truly savour the poetic beauty of the Sanskrit poet Kalidasa's *Meghadutam*, just as Indian readers of John Keats' 'Ode to Autumn' will miss the point that he is writing about an *English* autumn. To this pattern of criticism, which often draws upon Kuhn's notion of 'incommensurability', sociological applications of Wittgenstein's idea of 'forms of life', anti-foundationalism in

epistemology, ethical relativism, (Winch 1958) and so on, we shall point towards two possible lines of response, keeping in mind our specific inquiry about the nature of 'philosophy' in India. Firstly, the notion of 'incommensurability' between conceptual schemes is self-referentially incoherent if it is taken to deny the possibility of *any* translation across them since this very judgement *presupposes* that one is first able to isolate, identify and somehow compare at least some elements of the two (Markham 1998: 34-5). This takes us to the related question of whether it is possible to neatly 'individuate' distinct life-worlds that are curved inwards into themselves such that trans-cultural interactions or commonalities can never create a context for mutual understanding. Underlying this assumption of 'west' and 'east', fixed in mutual static otherness, is the 'essentialist' view that every cultural system has an inviolable core embodying incommensurable conceptual schemes through which experience is filtered, organized and classified. In this context, we need to distinguish between the relatively straightforward epistemic view that descriptive statements about the world are dependent on conceptual frameworks to the more problematic ontological statement that these frameworks constitute hermetically sealed universes which revolve around some immutable principles or values (Scharfstein 1998: 84-97). In response, it has been pointed out that we must rather emphasise the dynamic and multi-stranded character of cultures and their capacities to adapt themselves to changing circumstances (Matilal 1989: 339-62). For example, it is possible to discover ideas or lines of thought in a system of meaning that are roughly more analogous to those in *another* system than to those *within* itself. Thus, noting that it is a mistake to identify Indian philosophy with 'monism', F.C. Coppleston writes that 'there is more affinity between materialism in India and western materialism than there is between Indian materialism and the philosophy of the Advaita Vedānta' (Coppleston 1980: 169). Therefore, although many cultural contacts, as for instance the British colonial encounters with Indic religions, are characterised by violence and relations of power-asymmetry, the complex processes that are thereby set in motion are better described not in terms of destruction of their putative 'essences' but of mutations in which some of the dominant peculiarities of each culture may become suppressed and the hitherto latent ones brought to the fore (Tanji 1991: 161-173)·

The wider point for our discussion is that provided we do not view 'India' and 'Europe', in Orientalist fashion, as two monolithic wholes, which are structured by essentialist values and do not admit

any translations across their boundaries, we can better appreciate the historical fact that such translations have, in fact, been attempted several times in the last one hundred years. The question, 'Is there 'philosophy' in India?', emerged through a dynamic transactional process characterised by multiple alliances, intersections, oppositions and adjustments between domestic Indian perspectives and a range of European self-understandings on these matters. Wilhelm Halbfass has demonstrated that an almost unbroken tradition of European writing, starting from the early nineteenth century down to Edmund Husserl in the last, equated the concept of 'philosophy' with the spirit of 'pure theory', 'rejection of *mythos*' and 'autonomous thinking' which were believed to be *distinctively* Greek and hence lacking in the Indian and the Oriental traditions (Halbfass 1990: 145-159). In contrast to this exclusion of 'philosophy' from India, pivotal figures of neo-Hinduism such as Swami Vivekananda and S. Radhakrishnan often presented Indian *darśana* in oppositional terms to European 'philosophy' such that while the latter was evaluated as merely rational, analytic and located on the empirical plane, the former was put forward as essentially spiritual, based on 'intuitive experience' and providing an overarching framework synthesising the European manifold of 'economics', 'socio-political existence' and 'religion' (Halbfass 1990: 287-309). In other words, the question, 'Is there 'philosophy' in India?', was to some extent forced upon the Indian intelligentsia located at the 'contact zones' where certain indigenous notions were proposed through a statement of cultural self-affirmation as not only roughly equivalent to the European notions of 'philosophy' but also subsuming the latter within their more comprehensive reach. Nevertheless, the criticism of such cross-cultural movements does provide a salutary reminder of the formidable problems associated with translating terms, or finding their equivalents, across rival or competing traditions, and warns against constructing too easily 'family resemblances' or a Procrustean bed of a 'common core' into which these can be compressed. For example, the semantic range that has been developed in Sanskrit and modern Indian languages such as Hindi to translate western *philosophia* encompasses *darśana, tattvadarśana, tattvajñāna,* and *tattvavidyā* (Halbfass 1990: 287-309), but whether or not these latter are assessed as accurate, or at least adequate, will rely significantly on one's judgement of how satisfactorily they are able to capture the range of meanings associated with the former within its European contexts. Therefore, a cross-cultural inquiry into the question, 'Is there 'philosophy' in

India?', must be grounded in an awareness of the various European self-definitions of the nature of *philosophia* and the manifold indigenous responses through the horizons of *darśana* in contexts marked by the presence of Europe.

B

When we examine the European self-images of *philosophia*, we are greeted with a bewildering range of responses: for Socrates it could mean the instrument through which people are roused from their unreflective lives, for Aristotle it might be an enquiry instigated by a sense of wonder, for some of the Stoics it was a preparation for death, for many of the medievals it was the handmaiden of theology, for empiricists such as Hume it was often an antidote to religious superstition, for Kant it was a transcendental enquiry into the possibility of sensory experience, for Marx it was a mere interpretation of the world which the workers had to transcend by creatively changing the world, for most of the Logical Positivists it was the end of metaphysics, for the existentialists it was a call to accept the absurdity of existence, for Wittgenstein it was a spiritual struggle to dissolve the pseudo-problems produced by language, and for Rorty it was a resource for poetically re-imagining a world without foundations. Further, for almost a century now, the western philosophical landscape has been riven by a notorious 'Analytic philosophy' versus 'Continental philosophy' divide, in which the former allegedly deals with neatly delineated problems by dismantling them to their parts and studying their internal relations with conceptual rigour, while the latter is supposed to address larger questions in an integrative manner with close connections to art, literature and politics (Prado 2003). This survey of western self-understandings of *philosophia* again highlights the meta-philosophical nature of our enquiry into the question, 'Is there 'philosophy' in India?', and it is not surprising that philosophers sharply disagree over how to understand meta-philosophy itself: whether the *meta* in meta-philosophy is to be read as 'after', which would imply that it is a second-order discipline investigating first-order domains such as ontology, epistemology and ethics, or as 'about' which would suggest that it is simply a way of speaking about philosophers (Moser 1999: 561-2). For our purposes, we take meta-philosophy as the specific field of enquiry that raises questions such as the conditions under which a claim should be viewed as philosophical rather than non-philosophical, the autonomy of

philosophy from disciplines such as science, and, most crucially for our purposes, the distinction between philosophy and religion.

From such a meta-philosophical angle, we can see that the descriptions of *philosophia* outlined in Premise 1, namely, 'pure enquiry', 'autonomous thinking' and 'rejection of myth', are three highly specific, and historically located, self-representations in a wide range of competing views. They express the confidence that reason can reveal the deep structure of reality by dispelling the obfuscations of *mythos*, a confidence one can also note in Russell's monumental *History of Western Philosophy*: 'All this [religious dogma and metaphysics] is rejected by the philosophers who make logical analysis the main business of philosophy ... For this renunciation they have been rewarded by the discovery that many questions, formerly obscured by the fog of metaphysics, can be answered with precision'.(Russell 1945: 835) While many philosophers till around the middle of the last century carved the intellectual cake in such a manner that *philosophia* received the largest share by virtue of its following the broadly Enlightenment project of Reason, contemporary philosophers are usually less receptive to the idea that *philosophia* is the 'first science', or generates knowledge through a special faculty called intuition, or provides an *a priori* standpoint from which the world can be critiqued, classified and categorised. Rather, by rejecting such 'philosophical exceptionalism' they tend to see it as more or less continuous with other empirical fields such as psychology, linguistics, jurisprudence, evolutionary biology, and so on (Williamson 2007: 4). An even more strident interrogation of the claims of universal Reason in the second half of the last century has been associated with a revitalised Christian philosophical theology which has produced not only revamped versions of the cosmological and teleological arguments, but also reconfigurations of the classical doctrines of the Incarnation, the Atonement and the Trinity (Insole and Harris 2005). The defenders of such a 'Christian philosophy' often reject the idea that the structure of Christian revelation must be tailored to the requirements of secular Reason or the putatively universal canons of Enlightenment rationality, arguing that finite, perspectival reason must operate with the guidance of revelational control. For instance, Paul J. Griffiths, a Professor of Catholic thought as well as a scholar of Buddhism, argues that reason should be put to work theologically, and this is possible only when, from the vantage point of Christian faith, the limitations of reason, due to volitional depravity and catechetical inadequacy, are recognised. That is, while Christians will be confident of reason's ability to disclose the structure

of reality, since they believe that they participate in the *ratio* of Jesus Christ, the eternal Logos, they will however be keenly aware of reason's corruption by sin (Griffiths 2005: 145-59).

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Griffiths is here touching on the enormously complex issue of Christianity's engagement with 'reason': as a broad generalization, the Roman Catholic tradition has viewed the relation between 'faith' and 'reason' not as antagonistic but as dialectically interconnected in a hermeneutic circle, that is, reason needs to be empowered by revelation to discern reality truly, correctly and adequately. The Catholic view that reason must be located within a salvific context also resonates with some contemporary attempts, not specifically religious, to place the work of reason within a therapeutic network in which philosophical argumentation and human flourishing are closely entwined. The therapeutic paradigm is not a modern reading of *philosophia* but is rooted in certain classical Greek technologies of the self. For instance, Epicurus brings out an important aspect of Hellenistic philosophy when he says: 'Empty are the words of the philosopher who offers therapy for no human suffering. For just as there is no use in medical expertise if it does not give therapy for bodily diseases, so too there is no use in philosophy if it does not expel the suffering of the soul' (Long and Sedley 1987: 157). This therapeutic impulse, as Pierre Hadot emphasised, is central in much of *philosophia* in Greek antiquity where philosophical discourse was structured not as a set of abstract problems to be rationally excogitated but as the practice of spiritual exercises through which the student, as auditor or interlocutor, could undergo a spiritual transformation (Hadot 1995). Aquinas too highlights this therapeutic *telos* of reason in a Christian context when he starts his *Summa Theologiae* with a discussion of sacred teaching (*sacra doctrina*) which he argues is necessary *ad humanam salutem*, a phrase that should be translated, according to one commentator, as 'for human flourishing' (Ganeri 2010: 54).

The therapeutic structure of Christian theological discourse can be traced back to St Augustine for whom human beings need the infusion of divine grace for the cure of the soul. We shall highlight this structure by pointing out how St Augustine's famous philosophical ruminations on the nature of time are not merely an exercise in idle speculation (*curiositas*) but are closely related to his exegetical struggles with the Biblical text. As W.B. Green has pointed

out, St Augustine's attempts to understand the nature must be understood against the background of his exegeses of the text of Genesis: 'Had he not been driven to make explicit the biblical view of creation in opposition to that of the Manichees and the Neo-Platonists, St Augustine might never have put in writing his reflection on time' (Green 1965: 148). Against both these groups, St Augustine argued that we are born into this world with a wounded nature which we have derived not, of course, from God who is blameless but from Adam, and because we are unable to disentangle ourselves from our attachment to physical objects, we are all in need of a healing Physician (*De Natura et Gratia* 3, 3: *jam medico indigent, quia sana non est*). As long as *caritas*, the love of God, does not reign in us, we are bonded to the 'necessity' of sinning, and we cannot attain the true freedom (*libertas*) which is the performance of good works under God's grace. At the heart of this therapy of desire stands St Augustine's *philosophia* of divine eternity which is sharply contrasted with the vacillations caused by human temporality. St Augustine argues that because the timeless God does not move through any temporal successiveness, the divine mode of existence is categorically distinct from that of the mind (*mens*). In order to appreciate this distinction, let us examine how the mind, which, in contrast to God, is immersed in the flux of time, measures temporal durations. Our perception can be only of things that exist in the present moment and not in either the past, which does not exist now, or the future, which does not exist yet. According to St Augustine, we should therefore talk not of three different times, past, present and future but of three modes of one *present* time: a present remembrance of things past with the memory, a present immediate awareness of things present, and a present expectation of things that are in the future. He concludes that time is an extension (*distentio*) of the mind: 'In you, my mind, I measure times' (*In te, anime meus, tempora metior*). (St Augustine 1841a: XI, 27, 36). The present attention of the mind is 'stretched out' in remembering and in anticipating, such that a 'long' past is a 'long' memory of the past and a 'long' future is a 'long' expectation of the future. In other words, whereas the mind's vital activity is symbolised in *linear* terms which points to the fact that it is distended in the two (opposite) directions of the future through anticipation and the past through memory, no such (linear) symbolism can be applied to the 'inner life' of God. Because in this world of ceaseless fluctuations, the mind cannot fix its unchanging attention (*attentio*) on everything simultaneously, its life is one of dispersion whereas in

the divine life there is no such extension (*distentio*). In its experience of transience the mind also learns that it is distinct from the immortal God, for a thing that is no longer what it earlier was can be said to have suffered a kind of death (*si non est quod erat, mors quaedam ibi facta est*) (St Augustine 1841b: 38, 10). Consequently, temporality is experienced by human beings as a process of disintegration for they are scattered in time (*in tempora dissilui*), and the storms of temporal distractions will continue to afflict them until they are purified by the fire of God's love and flow into eternity. (St Augustine. 1841a: XI, 29, 39). St Augustine writes that our earthly loves are ephemeral for time snatches them away from us sooner or later, and we are left behind making futile attempts to hold on to what has passed away with the consequence that we are distracted from seeking God with simplicity of heart. This is why, according to St Augustine, we are in need of Christ's grace which draws us out from the earlier state of bondage into the Church, infuses *caritas* into our hearts and by strengthening our delight (*delectatio*) in God sustains us in the new life, full of grace (Holtzen 1990: 115).

D

Our survey of self-images of *philosophia* reveals that the relation between reason, logical enquiry and philosophical argumentation, on the one hand, and faith-standpoints, hermeneutic horizons or overarching metaphysical commitments, on the other hand, has been conceptualised in more diverse ways in the western tradition than the descriptions in Premise 1 would indicate. This diversity needs to be kept in mind as we examine the often-heard criticism that classical Indian thought cannot be characterised as an intellectually acceptable branch of 'academic philosophy' because it is entangled with 'religion', for such rejections can usually be traced to the standpoint of positivistic empiricism, for which all metaphysical commitments were meaningless, unintelligible or nonsensical in a post-Kantian post-Humean world. Especially from Anglophone analytic philosophical perspectives, Indian *darśana* has often been associated with woolly-headed mysticism or irrational leaps to the authority of scriptural texts, and charged with being deficient in rigorous and methodical analysis (Krishna 1991). In the light of our preceding discussion, we can perhaps argue that Anglophone philosophy's rejection of its internal other, medieval Scholasticism, is paralleled by its suspicion of its external other, Indian

darśana – both are supposed to be fatally implicated in Metaphysics, Authority and Tradition, and hence unpalatable for philosophical consumption. At the same, however, the professional divides in contemporary philosophy have in recent decades become significantly blurred – for instance, now that the boundaries between analytic and continental philosophy have been softened, and the 'method of analysis' is regarded more as one possible style of philosophizing and not exhausting the content of 'philosophy' itself, the sense of an intrinsic antagonism between analytic philosophy and Indian thought has gradually subsided. Significant work on aspects of Indian intellectual concerns with reality, mind and language has emerged in recent decades even in western academic circles, highlighting the presence of issues, debates and enquiries that parallel those which have come to be accepted as 'philosophical' in western contexts (Matilal and Shaw 1985). Further, several commentators on Indian religions have pointed out that the question of liberation, in turn related to the question of the Self, which with some exceptions was always in the background, did not act as an impediment to inquiries into logic, ontology, hermeneutics, and so on. Even the Vedāntic traditions, where the transcendental Self looms larger than elsewhere, are a rich product of the interplay of revelation, human experience, reason and scriptural exegesis. They are characterised both by the dominant soteriological concern of moving out of the cycles of re-embodiment (*saṃsāra*) and by a high level of systematic reflection in order to clarify the character of human response to the structure of reality and to confront the alternative viewpoints of the rival schools of Vedāntic interpretation. In the remaining sections of this essay, we shall highlight precisely this dense interweaving between, on the one hand, rational argumentation to establish the coherence, systematicity and adequacy of one's doctrinal position, and, on the other hand, acceptance of a revelational horizon which guides such reasoning'.

We shall do so by picking up a question that is central to many influential strands of classical Indian thought: if the ultimate goal is liberation from the cycles of the phenomenal world, what is the correct description of the goal and what is the proper method to arrive there? By highlighting some aspects of Indian thought, namely, the traditions of Sāṇkhya–Yoga, classical Buddhism and Nyāya, we will indicate that some of their debates are centred round these two questions: *Which* liberation? and *Whose* method?

E

To signal at the outset, the cruciality of the 'work of reason' in classical Indian *darśana*, we may start with one of the requirements for discipleship according to the tradition of Advaita Vedānta. In addition to possessing certain ethical virtues such as self-control, purity and austerity, the disciple should be able to distinguish between what is eternal and what is not-eternal (*nitya-anitya-vastu-viveka*) (Grimes 1996: 261). Some of the sharpest disagreements between the Sāṃkhya–Yoga, the schools of the Vedānta and Buddhism revolve precisely over the metaphysical question of what is, in fact, eternal, for only the eternal, so runs the argument, can provide true lasting satisfaction for *saṃsāra*-bound humanity. To rephrase this question in terms of human personhood: is personal identity ultimately a conceptual fiction that is generated through psychological connectedness among non-eternal moments (the Buddhist view) or is personal identity grounded in a substantial, eternal self (as Rāmānuja and some others argue)? What is crucial for our purposes is that these arguments over the substantial self, or the lack thereof, are not based simply on Vedic revelation: often, they appeal to what is believed to be the most plausible explanation for the phenomenology of memory.

At first glance, Sāṃkhya–Yoga and Buddhism seem to overwhelm us, as it were, with detailed descriptions of our lives as mired in pain, suffering and misery; however, this exhortation to view the world *as* permeated with dissatisfaction is propaedeutic to the resolution of the ills that beset us. These traditions offer highly specific diagnostic approaches to the human condition: only *after* we have realized the true depths of our misery shall we also wish to put an end to it, and reach out for the remedy that has been offered to us. That is, this sort of an *experience-as*, in which one learns to *experience* suffering *as* omnipresent, plays a therapeutic role: to put it bluntly, a physician may not be able to heal a patient who does not grasp the true extent of her *dis*ease.

The set of beliefs and practices that are sometimes clubbed together as Sāṃkhya-Yoga puts forward the thesis that there is a preponderance of suffering over happiness in this world, and that even moments of happiness are, in fact, mixed with pain or tend to change into pain (Warrier 1981: 55). According to its metaphysical picture, outlined in the *Sāṃkhya-Kārikā* of Īśvarakṛṣṇa (350–450 CE) and the earlier *Yoga Sūtra* of Patañjali, the world has evolved from the conjunction (*saṃyoga*) of two independent principles, *puruṣa* – or pure, inactive, contentless consciousness – and *prakṛti* –

or primordial matter which is made of three strands (*guṇas*). The essential self (*puruṣa*), which is non-agential witness (*sākṣin*), forgets that it is metaphysically distinct from the mind-body complex which is a product of dynamic *prakṛti,* and this misidentification leads to a succession of lives which are steeped in suffering. The remedy lies in learning to discriminate or distinguish (*viveka*) between oneself as translucent witness and the ever-changing states of the psycho-physiological complex, so as to reach the final destination of isolation, detachment or dissociation (*kaivalya*) from all insentient *prākṛtic* evolutes. This therapeutic structure is announced at the very beginning of the *Sāṃkhya-Kārikā* which states that because of the torment of the three types of suffering (psycho-physical, natural and cosmic) there arises the desire to know (*jijñāsa*) the means to terminate them. As one gains a deeper insight into the way that things really are, one sees all phenomenal-*prākṛtic* existence as suffused with suffering, as stated by Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtra* (II. 15): to the one who discerns correctly, all indeed is suffering (*duḥkhameva sarvaṃ vivekinaḥ*). To facilitate the attainment and deepening of this 'healing' insight, the *Yoga Sūtra* lays down an eight-fold path through which the diseased individual is led back to full health. Some scholars have highlighted the parallels between this Sāṃkhya–Yoga technique of the self and the structure of classical Indian medicine. A.G. Krishna Warrier, for instance, points out that 'the entire Sāṃkhya–Yoga Philosophy assumes a four-fold character like the medical science. Corresponding to the four main sections of the latter, the Sāṃkhya–Yoga also deals with suffering, its cause, liberation from it, and the means thereof'. (Warrier 1981: 56-7). A similar diagnostic structure, founded again on the thesis of the ubiquity of suffering, is present in classical Buddhism which holds that all conditioned phenomena can only lead to a deep dissatisfaction (*duḥkha*). Indeed the first noble truth declares that 'all is suffering' (*sarvam duḥkham*), and hammers home the point in the following clear terms: 'Birth is painful [*duḥkha*], old age is painful, sickness is painful, death is painful, sorrow, lamentation, dejection, and despair are painful. Contact with unpleasant things is painful, not getting what one wishes is painful' (Radhakrishnan and More 1957: 274). Once again, however, when this statement from the Buddha's first sermon is placed within the overall structure of the three other noble truths, its therapeutic thrust becomes clear. Having urged us to see suffering as structuring the very fabric of phenomenal existence, the Buddha goes on to identify the *cause* of suffering as craving (the second noble truth), specify that a *remedy*

is available through the cessation of this craving in *nirvāṇa* (the third noble truth) and lay down a *path* towards the restoration of health comprising of the eight-fold path (the fourth noble truth). In fact, the depiction of the Buddha as a physician is a vital aspect of both Theravāda and Mahāyāna Buddhist self-understandings: while the Pali Canon speaks of the Buddha as the Great Physician and his *Dhamma* as the therapeutic training for his disciples, the Mahāyāna text *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra* speaks of the Buddha as a benevolent doctor who seeks to dispense the proper medicine to his sons (Burton 2010: 187). More specifically, the Mahāyāna thinker Śāntideva argues that the Buddha's teaching is 'the sole medicine for the ailments of the world, the mine of all success and happiness' (Śāntideva 1995: 143); and points out that just as medicine tastes unpleasant to the ill, likewise Buddhist practice, which is in fact directed to the health of enlightenment, often turns out initially to be unpleasant or difficult (Śāntideva 1995: 69,101).

F

While Buddhism claims that absolutely every form of phenomenal existence is suffused by suffering (*duḥkha*), it is possible for a critic to complain that 'happiness' and 'sadness' both constitute the fabric of our fragile existence, and by being prudent we can learn to increase the former and decrease the latter. Such indeed would have been the response of the Cārvākas (or the Lokāyatas) who held a fully materialist position and rejected all supra-empirical entities such as the soul, God and the law of *karma*, instead endorsing a hedonistic ethic of attaining the greatest amount of pleasure in this life. More to the point, they held that it was 'wisdom to enjoy the pure pleasures as far as we can, and to avoid the pain which invariably accompanies it; ... just as the man who desires rice, takes the rice, straw and all, and having taken as much as he wants, desists' (Radhakrishnan and More 1957: 229). The Cārvāka mocks the individual aspiring for liberation as a fool who would refuse to eat rice because it comes encased in husks or consume fish because they contain bones or grow crops because animals might destroy them. Now we may be urged, in response to the Cārvāka, to perceive the pervasiveness of suffering by counting the number of our happy hours free from anguish, and consider how they constitute a small fraction of our misery-laden lives. Such a hedonistic calculus would not, however, unambiguously yield the conclusion required by Buddhism, for different individuals would add up the pluses and

the minuses in their own ways and place different weights on the entries in the two columns, depending on the circumstances of their lives. Therefore, the first noble truth of Buddhism needs to be disentangled from its hedonist associations, and 'pleasure' and 'pain' should be regarded primarily not as descriptive hedonic terms but as objective evaluative terms, grounded in a certain metaphysics. That is, one should read the therapeutic structure of Buddhism as based not on quasi-numerical considerations of the predominance of pains over pleasures, but in a metaphysical claim about the very nature of *all* phenomenal existence – namely, that it is characterized by impermanence (*anitya*), suffering (*duḥkha*) and not-self (*anātman*). According to Buddhism, people who claim to have found some amount of happiness (though not entirely unmixed with pain) and view the whole as positively good are in a state of spiritual ignorance. The metaphysical assumption that lies at the basis of this evaluative thesis can be phrased in this manner: that which is impermanent or subject to transmutation is deficient in worth, and the supreme end is, therefore, conceived of in terms of an incomparably valuable state that can neither be lost nor superseded. As Keith Yandell has pointed out: 'There is a tendency in Indian metaphysics (as well as elsewhere) to think in terms of what exists permanently or everlastingly as really existing and of what exists only for a time as existing defectively or not at all' (Yandell 2001: 171-190). It is this 'tendency' that operates in the Buddhist attempts at describing *nirvāṇa* with a string of negations such as unborn, stopping (*nirodha*), unconditioned and deathless.

In common with strands of early Buddhism, Sāṃkhya–Yoga too speaks of ultimate, disembodied liberation in a negative character in terms of absence of pain as well as pleasure. While admitting that the term *ānanda* (bliss) does occur in scriptural texts, it argues that it must not be accepted in its positive significance but must, in fact, be read in a figurative way to denote the absence of pain in the state of liberation (Feuerstein 1980: 56). The Nyāya school agrees with the *Sāṃkhya–Yoga* on two counts: first, it locates the overcoming of ignorance in a therapeutic context, and second, it visualizes liberation in purely negative terms as the complete absence of pain. Vātsyāyana in his commentary on the *Nyāyasūtra* argues that the 'science of the self' (*ātmavidyā*) has a fourfold structure: what needs to be abandoned is suffering (*duḥkha*), whose cause is erroneous beliefs (*mithyājñāna*), after the overcoming of which there arises liberation (*apavarga*) and the method of attaining which is knowledge of the self (*ātmajñāna*) (Thakur 1997: 2, 14-16). Further,

the Nyāya tradition offers what has been termed the No Joy (NJ) understanding of liberation, according to which the liberated self does not enjoy any positive bliss (or possess any cognitive or affective faculties) over and above the absence of pain (Chakrabarti 1983: 167-82). The Nyāya holds that consciousness is not an essential but an adventitious attribute of the self; it is only when the self comes into contact, through the mind and the sense-organs, with the external objects that it is conscious. Consequently, in the state of liberation, when the self is freed from its body (through which it undergoes distress through contact with sense-objects), it is at once emptied of consciousness and freed from all experiences whatsoever–pleasurable or painful.

However, in contrast to both Sāṃkhya–Yoga and Nyāya, the Advaitic tradition has by and large characterized the state of liberation as one of supra-sensuous bliss (*ānanda*), arguing that an individual could not feel motivated to strive towards a state characterized solely by lack of pain. Vācaspati Miśra records this sense of bafflement in the form of an inference: '*Mokśa* must be a state of happiness, because it is *aimed at (iṣṭa)* and nothing but a state of happiness can be aimed at' (Cited in Chakrabarti 1983: 176)· At the heart of these debates over the conceptualizations of *mokṣa* lie, once again, certain metaphysical considerations regarding the constitution of the human person and the type of ethical practices required to recover one's transcendent purity. The Advaita tradition, as interpreted by G.C. Pande, holds that non-dual Brahman is not only foundational being (*sat*) and foundational consciousness (*cit*), but also self-sufficient bliss (*ānanda*) which is distinct from the *saṃsāric* forms of happiness (*laukikānanda, viṣayānanda*) that arise from subject-object interaction. There has been a scholarly dispute regarding the importance given by Śaṃkara to the Upaniṣadic notion of *ānanda* (because it would seem to be associated with duality and desire), but Pande argues that *ānanda* must be understood not in terms of hedonic experiences but as the supreme supra-sensible felicity which is the essence of Brahman (Pande 1994: 204). In contrast to Sāṃkhya–Yoga and Nyāya, the Advaitin, then, could view *mokṣa* a positive fulfilment and 'not the mere absence of *duḥkha* but also the presence of *ānanda* as the nature of Brahman' (Myers 1998: 557).

G

A predominant note that Sāṃkhya-Yoga, Buddhism, Vedānta and

Nyāya strike is that human beings must be trained to perceive everything around them as incapable of providing them with genuine contentment, and that this training involves careful reflection and discriminative understanding of the nature of reality, the structure of human personhood, the shape of the meditative praxis. These traditions seem to agree on these points: the phenomenal world is not a locus of lasting value but neither is it a purely illusory domain, and through ethical-meditative praxis, underpinned by the moral order constituted by the operation of *karma*, human beings can be gradually extricated from the mesh of rebirth and sorrow. However, once we move beyond the formal structure of the therapeutic paradigm (*diagnosis–cause–remedy–praxis*) the Sāṃkhya-Yoga, Buddhism and Nyāya sharply disagree over the substantive content of each of the links in the process that leads to the cessation of suffering. To use Śaṃkara's words, what according to the Sāṃkhya–Yoga and Nyāya are real (*nitya*), namely, some form of substantial self, is precisely what according to most strands of Buddhism is unreal (*anitya*), and the Buddhist scholastic centuries were devoted partly to the task of dismantling, de-centring and deconstructing the belief in substantial enduring entities. In other words, from a Buddhist perspective, it is precisely this belief in a substantial self that holds together one's cognitions and volitions that is the misconception that needs to be overcome. The 'I conceit' that unifies the different impermanent aggregates into a self is the source of attachment not only to 'myself' but also to physical objects in the world which are regarded as 'mine'. The world is correctly viewed, according to Buddhism, not as composed of permanent substrata with their fleeting qualities, but as a collection of interdependent processes, none of which bears the mark of substance, but which are related to one another through dependent origination (*pratītya-samutpāda*). Therefore, in place of a substantial self that is ontologically distinct from its properties such as thoughts and feelings, there are simply interrelated processes of cognitions and feelings, and no 'I' that possesses or comprehends these events as 'mine'.

One of the classical opponents of the Buddhist view that the person is to be deconstructed into a causally related series of cognitions and volitions is the Nyāya school which accepted a plurality of substantial selves, and viewed consciousness as a property of each substantial self. The Nyāya argues that the Buddhists cannot explain the phenomenon of recognitive perception of a cogniser who states: 'I who perceived X earlier am the same I who perceive it now'. The

Nyāya thinker Uddyotakara opposed the Buddhist explanation of
psychological continuity in terms of mental states which condition
each other, on the grounds that since cognitions are momentary,
succeeding cognitions cannot be causally related to the preceding
cognition which has vanished. In other words, for the Buddhist, the
earlier temporal slice with the impression of say a cow is causally
related to the present temporal slice where the impression is revived;
but the Nyāya counters that unless both these slices belong to the
self same cognizer, the subsequent temporal slice cannot know that
the object of its cognition is the same object of cognition as that of
the previous temporal slice (Chakrabarti 1999: 60-65). On the basis
of certain theses about memory such as 'one can only remember
what one has seen before', the Nyāya tries to establish that the
memory criterion of personal identity, in fact, presupposes the
existence of a permanent substantial self. The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika, in
other words, joins contemporary critics of the analysis of personal
identity in terms of the memory criterion: since a mental state can
be a genuine memory of an experience only if the person in the
state is the same person who had the experience, psychological
continuity theories cannot explain personal identity without
presupposing it (Beebee and Dodd 2007: 36-54). The Nyāya critique
of Buddhist reductionism is carried on by Rāmānuja, whose world-
view is fully realist and who argues that the finite self is an enduring
unitary entity that underlies its conscious states. Rāmānuja says that
the various states of consciousness such as joy and grief which
originate, persist for some time and then pass away are attributes of
the *same* self which endures through them. This permanence of
the self underlying all its conscious acts is established by the fact
that a certain object could not have been re-cognised as the same
object over a stretch of time unless the subject of knowledge had
continued to exist for that duration. Also, the distinction of the
knowing subject from its conscious acts becomes the more evident
when statements such as 'I, the knower, do not at present have the
knowledge which I once had' are considered, for what they show is
that conscious acts do not have the same permanence as the knowing
self (Lipner 1986: 52-3). If such transient acts of consciousness were
to be identified with their substrate, the knowing self, it would not
be able to recognise a thing seen on one day as the very same thing
which it had seen on the previous day. This is because, as Rāmānuja
says, what has been cognised by one cannot be re-cognised by
another.

     In short, our discussion of some classical Indian thinkers reveals

that while, on the one hand, they see the process of reasoned discourse as ultimately framed by a horizon of liberation, they also raise, on the other hand, fundamental questions which are recognizable from a western perspective as instances of *philosophia*: the questions of persistence through change, personal identity, nature of consciousness and virtue ethics. For instance, in the Buddhist tradition, desires are viewed not as brute forces but as responsive to our beliefs, and the reason that desire produces suffering is because they are in fact rooted in false views about the nature of reality (Burton 2010: 191). Therefore, Buddhist philosophical therapy has a strong cognitive dimension: we need to overcome our ignorant ways of viewing the world as a domain of substantial things, and such transcendence involves both the logical refutation of Vedāntic arguments and the practice of meditation, mindfulness, restraint and self-analysis.

<div align="center">II</div>

Let us now turn to the Premise 2 of our argument, after having noted in the preceding sections that the classical Indian 'care of the self' did not prevent the flourishing of argumentative settings within which the competing doctrines of rival schools were analyzed, debated and critiqued. The view that rational discourse was lacking in classical India because all thinking was Vedic-based is a sweeping generalization, for not only did Buddhism explicitly reject Vedic authority but also traditions such as Sāṃkhya–Yoga, while traditionally within the Vedic fold, are usually silent on the Vedas. While some strands of the material, such as Advaita Vedānta, are indeed scripturally grounded in the Vedas, this authoritative control needs to be carefully understood in terms not of a 'farewell to reason' but of a division of cognitive labour. Advaita claims that sense-perception, inference, and other means of knowledge (*pramāṇas*) apply to the empirical domain, while the existence of Brahman is known only through scriptural authority. Therefore, Śaṃkara argues in his commentary on the *Bhagavad-Gītā* 18.66 that '[e]ven if a hundred scriptural utterances were to say that fire is cold or that it is not bright they would have no cognitive authority. If scripture were to say such things we would have to assume that it intended some other sense, else we would be understanding its cognitive authority amiss' (Lipner 1994: 146). While Śaṃkara himself employed reason (*tarka*) to dismantle the positions of his opponents, he could also inveigh against what he called the 'dry reasoning'

(*śuṣkatarka*) of the 'dialecticians' who having rejected Vedic authority were entangled in fictions of their own unaided intellect (Halbfass: 280). Śaṃkara was not the only classical theologian who put scripture, as it were, in its proper place, for his own doctrine that the phenomenal world is an insubstantial illusion was criticised by Mādhva who argued: 'Self-evident experience establishes the difference between the individual soul and God. Everyone knows that they cannot do everything. Scripture is not an authority if it contradicts this sort of self-evidence'. (Cited in Bartley 2011: 188)

Another explanation that is sometimes offered for the alleged lack of rational argumentation in the Indian traditions is that the phenomenal world is believed to be an illusion. However, even this view is an over-generalization: not only the Jaina, the Nyāya–Vaiśeṣika, and the Sāṃkhya–Yoga traditions but also the followers of the Rāmānuja and the Mādhva school of Vedānta clearly affirm the ontological reality of the material world. Even the Advaita tradition, which did hold that the phenomenal world is ultimately an illusion, and is grounded in the unchanging, timeless Brahman, sometimes employed sophisticated dialectical tools to dismantle rival standpoints and suggest the way to this Brahman. The Advaitic transcendence of secular (*laukika*) reason should therefore be understood not as instance of reason being cast to the winds but of reason being employed to explore its own limits – and in this specific respect Advaita is in quite good European company, whether Zeno of Elea, medieval Roman Catholicism and arguably Wittgenstein. On the other hand, the Indian schools that were opposed to the Advaitic theory that the temporal world is ultimately a cosmic illusion (*māyāvāda*) often debated, not surprisingly, the nature of time itself: for instance, the realist and pluralist Nyāya–Vaiśeṣika school regarded time as one of the categories of existence (*padārtha*); in the Sāṃkhya tradition, again realist, time was regarded as an aspect of the world of becoming which emerged from the dynamic interplay between the principles of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*; and the Buddhist schools were involved in controversies over notions such as momentariness (Balslev 1983). The often-heard claim that Indian *darśana* is 'spiritual' should therefore not obscure the crucial point that the classical intellectual traditions developed through mutual debate, argument and enquiry, sometimes borrowing one another's argumentative strategies and presenting refutations of their opponent's views. For one instance of the sophisticated level of this cross-border traffic, we may turn to a Śaiva–Siddhānta thinker called Bhaṭṭa Rāmakaṇṭha (c.1000 CE) who, according to Alex Watson, **'creatively assimilated certain**

features of Buddhism, thereby strengthening his own armoury, and then used these to overcome those other features of Buddhism that conflicted with his own tradition' (Watson 2006: 388). More generally, classical Indian debate and enquiry often proceeded through an examination, interrogation and critique of the view of the doctrinal opponent (*pūrva-pakṣin*), and established the final conclusion only through this dialectical negotiation.

On the other hand, one can point to certain strands in the classical material which emphasized patterns of critical enquiry which are not directly connected to spiritual practice. For instance, the *Arthaśāstra* of Kautilya (c.300 CE) mentions a certain cognitive discipline called *ānvīkṣikī*, of which the three branches of *sāṃkhya, yoga* and *lokāyata* are mentioned. Kautilya rejects the view that *ānvīkṣikī* is only a special branch of the Vedas, that economics (*vārtta*) and politics (*daṇḍanīti*) are the only sciences (*vidyā*), and that politics is the only science, and records that *ānvīkṣikī* is an independent science (I.2.1–12). Further, he cites a traditional couplet which states that *ānvīkṣikī* is the source of light for all branches of knowledge, a means for all activities and a foundation for all social and religious duties. While it would be mistaken to read into these remarks a fully–systematized tradition exemplifying the 'pure theoretical attitude' of Husserl, it has also been argued that they do indicate a concern for a practice of reason which can be applied to matters such as the distinction between good and evil, the goals of political institutions and so on (Ganeri 2001: 9). Further, while the Nyāya tradition does hold that the overcoming of erroneous beliefs is geared to final liberation, it also argues that the highest good is to be attained through the knowledge of sixteen categories, six of which are means of right knowledge (*pramāṇa*), the object of right knowledge (*prameya*), the parts of a demonstration (*avayava*), truth-directed debate (*vāda*), victory-directed debate (*jalpa*), and destructive debate (*vitaṇḍā*). (*Nyāya–Sūtra* 1.1.1). More specifically, truth-directed debate (*vāda, kathā*) has the following characteristics: (a) the debate is initiated by the fact that mutually incompatible attributes have been ascribed to the same subject; (b) the proof of either the thesis or the refutation should be based on evidence (*pramāṇa*) and argument (*tarka*); (c) both sides should mention the five steps in demonstration (*avayava*); and (d) the reasoning should not involve contradictions with any accepted doctrine (Matilal 1986: 83-84). The five limbs mentioned in (c) are as follows: (a) the thesis to be established; (b) evidence; (c) the general principle, with an example; (d) subsumption of the present instance under

the general principle; and (e) statement of the position thus proved. Thus a standard instance of this pattern of argumentation goes as follows: (a) there is fire on that hill; (b) for, there is smoke there; (c) wherever there is smoke there is fire, for instance, in the kitchen; (d) there is smoke on that hill 'accordingly' (*tathā*); and (e) therefore there is fire on that hill (Matilal 1986: 78). Given the strong emphasis that the Nyāya tradition places on providing material instances for this inference, it should not be surprising that it often appealed to ordinary experience and ordinary language (*lokānubhava* and *lokavyavahāra*) when trying to establish a conclusion in epistemology. For instance, in response to a sceptic who enquires into why one should accept that all occurrences of smoke are also occurrences of fire, one Nyāya answer is that the assumption that there can be an instance of smoke in the absence of an instance of fire would upset the prestige of ordinary experience (*loka-maryādā*) (Mohanty 1992: 172). The Nyāya tradition was attacked on this very point from two different directions by its doctrinal opponents, the Mādhyamika Buddhists and the Advaita Vedāntins, who argued, for somewhat different reasons, that ordinary language and experience should not, in fact, be taken as authoritative – and proceeded to provide rational reconstructions of the ordinary sphere of discourse.

I

Our discussion in the preceding sections shows that the location of classical Indian thought in dense networks of text, tradition and therapy should not obscure the presence of numerous types of practices of reason in these networks. Thus, in his work on classical Indian philosophy, Jonardon Ganeri speaks of 'rescuing a story suppressed by Orientalism – the story of reason in a land too often defined as reason's Other' (Ganeri 2001: 4). Further, in this anti-Orientalist context where the image of the 'mystical, irrational Orient' has been shown to be a 'western' construction, and scholars are exploring the possibilities of 'alternative modernities' in non-European civilizations, we can see that it is difficult to locate a precise equivalent for *philosophia* in the Indic traditions, whether *darśana* or *ānvīkṣikī*, partly because of the semantic fluidity and the extremely wide range of self-images of *philosophia* itself. For instance, in a book published in 1971, Antony Flew argued in this manner to explain the exclusion of Indian 'philosophy' from the discussion: 'philosophy as the word is understood here, is concerned first, last and all the

time with argument. It is, incidentally, because most of what is labelled *Eastern Philosophy* is not so concerned ... that this book draws no materials from any source east of Suez' (Flew 1971: 36). Twenty years later, Robert Solomon presented a very different view of the relation between 'argument' and 'passion' in philosophical discourse: 'My own allegiances tend toward the more emotionally extravagant existentialists – Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Camus and Sartre ... But even a brief look at our definitive philosophical heroes should be enough to tell us that philosophy is something more than detached analysis and argument. Socrates, our ultimate model, entered into philosophy with wit, passion and a mission almost unimaginable in most professionalized philosophy today. Even Hume and Kant, hardly Kierkegaardian existentialists, display a passion and a mission ... in their works and in their lives that one would be hard pressed to find in the Journal of Philosophy' (Solomon 1992: 44).

Therefore, the question is 'Is there 'philosophy' in India?' turns out, after all, to be a subset of the wider set of translation projects of the type, 'Is there *X* in India?' And as it often happens with the translation of terms which are richly woven into one specific cultural universe into those of another cultural universe, we may argue that terms such as *darśana* and *ānvīkṣikī* are 'not the same, and yet not another' from *philosophia.* That is, the problems that western philosophers have raised, analysed and debated do not always have precise analogues in the Indian traditions: for instance, Advaita Vedānta or Buddhism do not discuss the sense-reference distinction or the analytic truth versus synthetic truth distinction, nor do they speak of the ontological argument, supervenience, or the Kantian *a priori.* On the other hand, the Fregean view that a word has meaning only in the context of a sentence is indeed paralleled in classical Indian thought by the theory of related designation (*anvitābhidhāna*) which states that isolated words are not meaningful in themselves and only a sentence expresses a complete meaning, which was opposed by the theory of relation of the designata (*abhihitānvaya*) which states that sentential meaning is composed of the meaning of individual words (Mohanty 1992: 70). Thinkers in the classical Indian traditions also raised questions which correspond to western philosophical disputes over whether consciousness is a substance, quality or act; whether logic is concerned with formal validity or material truth; whether 'being' is a real predicate or a linguistic artefact, and so on. As for western philosophers themselves, in the wake of Kuhn and other thinkers

who have developed various forms of social epistemology, they have become less shy of speaking of authoritative testimony: a recent introduction to epistemology points out that many testimony-based beliefs are justified beliefs, and that such beliefs play an extremely important role in building up our stock of knowledge (Audi 2011: 150-172). However, whether or not we are able to find detailed parallels to the standard problems of *philosophia* in the Indian traditions is perhaps not the point. Contemporary western philosophers themselves tend to understand their enterprise in terms not of a fixed body of doctrines, debates or systems but of ongoing, tentative essays in rational enquiry. Tyler Burge argues that philosophy 'lies in the detailed posing of questions, the clarification of meaning, the development and criticism of argument, the working out of ideas and points of view' (Burge 1992: 51). The sort of generic rationality – reason at work in elucidating meaning, connecting concepts, and developing arguments – that Burge is indicating can be quite readily located in the Indian traditions, as we have seen on many instances in the previous sections.

And yet, as often, something is indeed lost in translation as we move from some of the present self-images of *philosophia* to *darśana*. Contemporary western philosophers who deal with the problem of personal identity, for instance, tend to keep their discussions clear from arguments in moral philosophy. Whereas for classical Indian thought this was not simply an 'academic' dispute, for the conceptualization of the self as a substantial entity or as a nexus of interconnected process had crucial ethical implications. For instance, some of the Vedāntic thinkers would argue that the education of the emotions requires as a presupposition a temporally extended self which can act as the substantial locus for this self-cultivation, while the Buddhists would respond, with critical argumentation, that the acceptance of such a locus is precisely the misconception which must be overcome for eradicating emotional turmoil. Whatever their views on the ontological status of the world – as an insubstantial mirage or a real adjectival attribute of the Lord – most Vedāntic schools agree that the way beyond *saṁsāra* lies in uncovering the deeper substantial self and ridding it of its empirical impurities. They would concur with the Buddhists on the relation between suffering and impermanence, but would retort that the cure lies in becoming more centred in the heart of being, whether the absolute of Śaṁkara which has no fleeting, and hence sorrowful, attributes or the Lord who shall take away the empirical misery of the dependent self. As we have seen, however, we should perhaps

speak of this shift from 'pure reason' that has often been projected as the hallmark of *philosophia* to 'therapeutic reason' in terms not of the 'overcoming of reason' but, in fact, of the 'surplus of reason' – reason, it would seem, has so much more work to do in these Vedāntic versus Buddhist controversies. At the same time, *philosophia* itself has sometimes been characterized as a progression from the Cartesian turn to the linguistic turn and finally to the ethical turn, and this narrative highlights a point that we have emphasized at several places in this essay – the work of reason and the quest for self-transformation have often entered into complex stances of opposition, engagement and reinforcement in both the western and the Indian intellectual traditions.

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