



## Editorial: Whitehead and Indian Thought

"Whitehead and Indian Thought" would sound 'a homecoming' for Whitehead. The very sense of 'homecoming' is amply expressed in his magnum opus *Process and Reality*: "[...] the philosophy of organism seems to approximate more to some strains of Indian or Chinese thought, than western Asiatic or European thought. One side makes process ultimate; the other side makes fact ultimate."<sup>1</sup> If we browse through the major works of Whitehead, we can see several references and allusions to the philosophies and philosophers of India. Some of the terms and expressions employed in his writings are 'Buddhism' (PR, 244, 342, 343; AI, 33), 'India' (AI, 75, 77, 78, 103), 'Ramanuja' (MT, 47), 'Mahatma Gandhi' (AI, 160), and so on. Although there are no clear indications or direct affirmations of Indian philosophical influence on Whitehead, we can find some sort of affinity between several insights of Indian philosophy and Whitehead's 'process philosophy'.

### 1.0. The Philosophy of Organism

In the philosophical circles, 'process philosophy' refers to a comparatively new system, evolved through the works of Alfred North Whitehead, which in its scope and depth rivals the so-called *philosophia perennis*. Although it has readily been labeled 'process philosophy', Whitehead himself chose to name his philosophic scheme the "Philosophy of Organism" (PR, xi). The very phrase, "Philosophy of Organism," used by Whitehead to capture the tenor of his approach, reminds us of the significance of interconnectedness and interdependence which is to be found in any organic whole. The term 'process' has, however, been retained to identify this philosophical movement simply because it highlights the chief features of this movement, namely, 'the ultimacy of process combined with the primacy of relationship'.

In Chapter II of *Process and Reality*, providing a summary of the primary notions, which constitute the philosophy of organism, Whitehead has singled out four notions for special consideration: "that of 'actual entity', that of a 'prehension', that of a 'nexus', and that of the ontological principle" (PR, 22). However, we discuss here

<sup>1</sup> A.N. Whitehead, *Process and Reality*, New York: The Free Press, 1978, 7.

the first three notions among them, for these three notions underscore his endeavour "to base philosophical thought upon the most concrete elements of our experience" (PR, 22).

1.1. The concept of an "actual entity" is at the heart of Whitehead's metaphysical system. He has coined this term because the traditional term "substance" (translation of Aristotle's *ousia*), which has been used in traditional philosophy for the ultimate existent, is greatly unsatisfactory. Etymologically, it fails to bring out that on which both Aristotle and Whitehead insist in their respective terms, namely the ultimate sense of 'existence'. For Whitehead, an actual entity is an entity which is "fully existent." Whitehead has defined "actual entities" - also termed "actual occasions" - as "the final real things of which the world is made up" (PR, 22). They are, for Whitehead, "drops of experience, complex and interdependent" (PR, 22). Each actual entity is conceived by Whitehead as "an act of experience arising out of data" (PR, 54). The basic model for these entities is a moment of human experience, which has a genuine unity and which exhibits derivation from some past (data) and some self-determination in becoming the definite thing which it finally is. The actual entities, through their essential interconnectedness, make up the composite world of rocks, trees and humans. Hence Whitehead describes the universe as "solidarity of many actual entities" (PR, 54).

1.2. The notion of "prehension" comes to the forefront, when the actual entity is analyzed. The word "prehension" is formed by dropping the first syllable from "apprehension," which has the meaning of 'thorough understanding', or 'grasp' by the intellect or senses.<sup>2</sup> In *Adventures of Ideas*, Whitehead offers a description of prehension: "I use the term 'prehension' for the general way in which the occasion of experience can include, as part of its own essence, any other entity, whether another occasion of experience or an entity of another type" (AI, 234). In order to appreciate how the other actualities can be 'included in' the actual entity through prehension, we should analyze the dynamics of prehension. A prehension, for Whitehead, involves three factors: "(a) the subject which is prehending, namely, the actual entity in which that prehension is a concrete element; (b) the 'datum' which is prehended; (c) the 'subjective form' which is how that subject prehends that datum" (PR, 28). All three factors are essential to the consideration of a prehension in its concreteness, since prehension is the whole concrete act of the subject feeling the datum with a subjective form.

1.3. The third notion central to Whitehead's metaphysics is the notion of "nexus" or "society." A nexus is "a particular fact of togetherness among actual entities"

---

<sup>2</sup> A.N. Whitehead, *Adventures of Ideas*, New York: The Free Press, 1933, 234.

(PR, 24). When actual entities are together in a sequence with some degree of "order," involving genetic relations among themselves, this togetherness is termed a "society." A society is distinguished by "a defining characteristic" or "form" which is inherited by each member from all the preceding members of the society. Underlining the importance of 'a defining characteristic', Whitehead speaks about different types of nexus, which are termed "Regions, Societies, Persons, Enduring Objects, Corporal Substances, Living Organisms, Events", etc (AI, 197-98). The universe is thus conceived in terms of 'societies of societies', and of 'societies of societies of societies'. That is why Whitehead could hold the view that in the philosophy of organism "the notion of 'organism' has two meanings, interconnected, but intellectually separable, namely, the *microscopic* meaning [...] which is concerned with the formal constitution of an actual occasion, and the *macroscopic* meaning [...] which is concerned with the givenness of the actual world" (PR, 151).

## 2.0. Process Thought and Buddhism

The words, like 'Buddhism', 'Buddhist', 'Buddhistic' etc occur in his writings more than any other terms from the Indian heritage. Three important philosophical doctrines of Buddhism, which have great bearings on the main features of process thought and which are further explained and established by Whitehead in his 'philosophy of organism' are: (i) *Pratitya-samudpada*, the doctrine of dependent origination: the teaching that everything has a cause; (ii) *Ksanika-vada*, momentariness of all objects, including consciousness; and (iii) *Anatma-vada*, the doctrine of non-soul, the idea that self is a stream of momentary consciousness.

2.1. The doctrine of dependent origination (*pratitya-samudpada*) is related to the second Noble Truth: The Truth of the Cause of Suffering. Everything in this world has a cause. It is called the *Bhava-cakra*, the cycle of existence. There are twelve such causes and effects, which begin with the present life of sickness, old age and death.<sup>3</sup> Old age and death is caused by birth (*jati*). Birth is caused by the will to be born (*bhava*). The will to be born is caused by the clinging to sensory enjoyments (*upadana*). The clinging to sensory enjoyments is caused by the thirst for such enjoyment (*trсна*). The thirst for enjoyment is caused by the actual experience of enjoyment (*vedana*). The actual enjoyment is caused by the sense contacts with the objects of enjoyment (*sparsa*). The sense contact with the objects of enjoyment is caused by the five sense organs and the mind (*shad-ayatana*). The five sense organs and the mind are caused by the psych-physical body (*nama-rupa*). The

<sup>3</sup> *Dialogues of the Buddha, Part II*, trans. CAF Rhys Davis, London: Oxford University Press, 1919, 1951, 55ff.

psycho-physical body is caused in the womb of the mother by the initial consciousness (*vijnana*). The initial consciousness is caused by the attitudes and aptitudes of the past karma (*samskara*). The *samskara* is caused by ignorance (*avidya*). The ignorance is caused by desire. Since it is a cycle, it goes on and on, just as Whitehead speaks of "a flow of feeling" while describing the dynamics of simple prehension. According to Whitehead "a simple physical feeling is an act of causation," where the "actual entity which is the initial datum is the cause, the simple physical feeling is the 'effect', and the subject entertaining the simple physical feeling is the actual entity 'conditioned' by the effect" (PR, 236). The antecedent actuality which is the cause 'enacted' its feeling; the prehending actuality, the effect, then feels the feeling of the cause by 'reproducing that feeling. Thus, in the words of Whitehead, "the cause passes on its feeling to be reproduced by the new subject as its own, yet as inseparable from the cause" (PR, 237).

2.2. The doctrine of momentariness (*kshanika-vada*) holds that everything is momentary; everything is relative, conditional and dependent. An object perishes, when the condition in which it is originated is removed. The world and its objects are never permanent. The universe is a constant chain of change: momentary coming into existence and disappearance.<sup>4</sup> The doctrine of dependent origination is the basis of the theory of momentariness of objects. Every object comes into existence from an antecedent condition, and gives rise to a consequent object. The constant change is illustrated by the metaphors<sup>5</sup> of fire and water: (i) It is like a flame of the lamp: the flame is actually the continuity of successive flames. A flame exists only a moment, but it gives rise to the next flame. (ii) It is like the flow of water in the river. A river is a continuous rapid succession of coming and going of water. In the Whiteheadian terms, it would mean "there is a becoming of continuity, but no continuity of becoming" (PR, 35). For, Whitehead conceives actual entities as 'atomic', consisting in 'epochal' units of becoming, and the extensive continuity of the universe, as constituted by the succession of the atomic actualities.

2.3. The doctrine of non-soul (*anatma-vada*), for Buddhists, is an application of the theory of 'momentariness', which is set out in the sermon at Benares.<sup>6</sup> Soul is only a stream of moments of consciousness, an unbroken continuity of momentary consciousness.<sup>7</sup> Every succeeding moment of consciousness is caused, conditioned, and determined by the preceding moment of consciousness. Buddhism, therefore,

<sup>4</sup> *Abhidhamma Pitaka*, ed. Poussin, Paris: Asiatic Society, 1918, Book III, 21ff.

<sup>5</sup> *Mahāvagga, Vinaya Pitaka I*, ed. Oldenberg, London: Luzac and Co., 1879, I, 21.

<sup>6</sup> *Mahāvagga*, I, 6, 38ff.

<sup>7</sup> A.B. Keith, *Buddhist Philosophy*, Varanasi: Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series, 1963, 169ff.

denies existence of a soul. How can we then explain the possibility of continuity of knowledge of things, experiences, etc? How can we speak about childhood, youth, old age, etc? The dispositions, tendencies, aptitudes and experiences of one moment are transmitted to the succeeding moment of consciousness. Life is thus a continuous chain of cause-moments and effect-moments. A similar line of thinking is advanced by Whitehead in his 'philosophy of organism'. The human personality is understood primarily "as a society of actual occasions with personal order." What accounts, therefore, for self-identity is the identity of 'form', shared by all experiences which constitute the becoming of a person. For, in the philosophy of organism it is not 'substance' which is permanent, but 'character' or 'form' (PR, 40). This could be compared to an 'artist's style' which is a unifying element throughout a life's work without inhibiting originality. Whitehead's description of the soul brings forth this idea clearly: "The soul is nothing else than the succession of my occasions of experience, extending from birth to the present. Now at this instant, I am the complete person embodying all these occasions. [...] On the other hand it is equally true that my immediate occasion of experience, of the present moment, is only one among the stream of occasions which constitute my soul" (MT, 163).

### 3.0. Process Thought and Ramanuja

Ramanuja, in the words of Charles Hartshorne, "is apparently the closest to such doctrine [panentheism] that ancient India got, as Plato is the closest the ancient Western world got,"<sup>8</sup> whereas Whitehead "is the outstanding surrelativist or panentheist" (PSG, 273). Panentheism, which literally means 'all in God', "views all things as being in God without exhausting the reality of the divine nature [...], stands for a kind of surrelativism, holding for a real convertible relation of dependence between God and the world."<sup>9</sup> Ramanuja's conception of the God-world relationship in terms of soul-body analogy has been interpreted differently as classical theism or panentheism. His vision of cosmos as God's body is not just a means for philosophical and metaphysical understanding of the structure of the cosmos; rather it is the motive force - the *sadhana* - for spiritual liberation.

3.1. From an ontological standpoint, the God-world relation is explained on the analogy of the organic relation between the body and soul. The relationship between Brahman and the universe of *cit* (self) and *acit* (matter) is conceived in the same way as the body is related to the soul. The body is regarded as *sarira* in the

---

<sup>8</sup> C. Hartshorne, *Philosophers Speak of God*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1953, 188.

<sup>9</sup> *The New Catholic Encyclopedia* (Vol 10), New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967, 943-4.

technical sense that it depends wholly and necessarily on the soul for its existence. It is controlled by the soul, and it exists for the use of the soul. The soul is *sariri* or *atman* in the sense that it serves as the basis for the existence of the body (*adhara*); it controls the body (*niyanta*); and it uses it for its purpose (*sesin*). The same explanation holds good in respect to Brahman and the universe, and the two are organically related in the form of body to the soul. The term *sarira* does not mean the physical body as ordinarily understood; but it bears a specific and technical connotation. Ramanuja defines body as "any substance, which a sentient soul (self) is capable of supporting and controlling for its own purpose, and which stands to the soul (self) in a subordinate relation."<sup>10</sup> This definition is very comprehensive and it applies to both the physical body of the living being in relation to its soul (self) and also to the physical universe in relation to Brahman. The physical body is necessarily depended upon the soul for its existence; it ceases to be a body the moment the soul departs from it. It is wholly controlled by the soul; it exists wholly for the use of the soul. On the basis of the above theory of body-soul relation, Ramanuja maintains that the entire universe of *cit* and *acit* constitute the body of Brahman in the technical sense that the former are wholly depended on the latter.<sup>11</sup>

3.2. From a logical point of view, Ramanuja adopts the metaphysical category of substance and attribute, and the concept of *aprthak siddhi* or inseparability that exists between the substance and its essential attribute.<sup>12</sup> According to Ramanuja, substance and attribute, though distinct, are inseparable. A pure substance devoid of attribute is inconceivable; in the same way, an attribute which inheres in the substance does not have an independent existence. Every real entity in the universe is a complex whole - having two aspects: a substantive aspect and an attributive aspect. This principle applies to Brahman (*Isvara*) and the universe, consisting of *jivas* (souls) and *prakrti* (matter). Brahman is the primary substance, and in relation to Him *jivas* and *prakrti* are his attributes or modes (*prakaras*), in so far as the latter depends for their existence on Brahman and are controlled by Him.

<sup>10</sup> Sri Ramanuja, *Sribhasya*, trans. Anantacharya, Madras: The Madras Sanskrit Book Depot, 1937, II, 1, 9.

<sup>11</sup> The other three concepts used to explain comprehensively the organic relationship that exists between Brahman and the universe of *cit* and *acit* are: *adhara-adheya* (the sustainer and sustained), *niyanta-niyama* (the controller and controlled), and *sesi-sesa* (the self-subsistent and dependent).

<sup>12</sup> The Sanskrit term *Prthak* means "separate," and *aprthak* means "not separate." *Siddhi* implies two things: *sthiti* or existence and *praliti* or cognition. *Aprthak sthiti* means that attribute and substance cannot exist as two separate entities, unlike two physical objects. *Aprthak praliti* signifies that substance and attribute cannot be comprehended separately.

3.3. From a metaphoric model, the universe-Brahman relationship is explained in terms of five concentric sheaths or encasements (*kosas*).<sup>13</sup> The outermost sheath is that of inert, imperfect, changeable and non-conscious matter (*annamayakosa*). The second sheath is that of life (*pranamayakosa*). All that has life, starting from vegetative life, are included in this domain. The third sheath is that of senses and mind (*manomayakosa*). All that has animal life belong to this sphere. The next sheath is that of consciousness and intelligence (*vijnanamayakosa*). Human beings, the apex of creation, belong to this category. God, the Supreme Being, is the centre of all these sheaths, who is identified as the supreme pure bliss (*anandamakosa*). The *Taittiriya Upanisad* directly and the *Chandogya Upanisad* indirectly have dealt with these five sheaths, and have gone so far as to regard them not only as cosmological principles, but also as psychological.<sup>14</sup> The cosmos, which is made up of matter, life, senses and intelligence is the "microcosm;" whereas wo/man, who is a harmonious combination of all these sheaths, is the "microcosm." In her/his embodied existence, s/he is composed of matter, life, senses and mind, and consciousness and self. And in the centre of wo/man resides God, as her/his inner controller (*antarayamin*). Therefore, the structure of human person, the microcosm, corresponds exactly to the structure of the cosmos, the macrocosm.

## 4.0. Process Thought and Gandhi

Gandhi at times speaks of himself as an *advaitin*, who believed that 'God is the Upanishadic Brahman who is an Impersonal Absolute. All the same, Gandhi was an 'advaitin' with a difference – a 'rebel' *advaitin*. He writes: "I am *advaitist* and yet I can support *dvaitism* [dualism]. The world is changing every moment [...] it has no permanent existence. But though it is constantly changing, it has something about it which persists and it is, therefore, to that extent real."<sup>15</sup> Here Gandhi sounds very much Whiteheadian in his understanding of the God-world relationship.

4.1. Life, for Gandhi, is essentially a dynamic process, and not something static or stagnant. Life is living and constantly moving, and it is compared to "a mountain river, which flows continuously, never stopping for a moment." Moreover, the tendency of rivers is to flow toward the wider and deeper, not the narrower and shallower. Here Whitehead's principle that "many become one and are increased

<sup>13</sup> *Taittiriya Upanishad*, in *The Principal Upanishads*, trans. Radhakrishnan, London: George Allen, 1953, III, 2-6.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. *Sixty Upanishads of the Veda*, trans. V.M. Bedekar and G.B. Palsule, Delhi: Motilal Benaridass Publishers, 1980, 233.

<sup>15</sup> M.K. Gandhi, *An Autobiography*, Ahmadabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1927, 383.

by one" becomes relevant in explaining Gandhian vision of life as "a dynamic network of connections and interconnections leading to a creative synthesis" (PR, 21). The true nature of life is like that of rivers, flowing on until it reaches the depths of being, which is self-realization. According to Gandhi, self-realization or God-realization is not a rational knowledge of a particular state of life, but an overall transformation of the total personality. Whitehead's basic insight that 'reality is a series of interrelated becoming, is very much reflected in Gandhi's thought. In Gandhi's *Sarvodaya* vision, reality is "theo-anthropo-cosmocentric."<sup>16</sup> That is to say, Gandhi believed in "the essential unity of man and for that matter of all that lives."<sup>17</sup> God, human beings, other living beings and the world constitute together one organic whole. Gandhi wrote, "I believe that all life is one." According to Gandhi, "God is an all-pervasive *Sat* and He is the source of all unity and relationship."<sup>18</sup> Nothing exists beyond and besides God. The understanding of God as 'all-inclusive' further relates to Gandhi's claim that 'the entire creation is God's body'. Hartshorne expands upon this 'mind-body' model for the God-world relationship in *Man's Vision of God*: "A body is really a 'world' of individuals, and a mind [...] is to that body something like an indwelling God."<sup>19</sup>

4.2. In Gandhi's vision of God, what is the relation of God to the world? Gandhi is not a *polytheist* since he believes in one God: "God is certainly one. He has no second."<sup>20</sup> Neither is he a *pantheist* since he does not consider the world as God: "Brahman alone is real and world is both "real and unreal."<sup>21</sup> Gandhi thus holds the view of "non-difference in difference" in his understanding of God-world relationship. Gandhi's conception of God-world relationship has an affinity with panentheism. He proposes a doctrine of reality, which views "all things as being in God without exhausting the reality of the divine nature." While emphasizing God's involvement with the physical world, Gandhi also stresses God's independence of it: "All beings are in Him and yet not in him. He is in them and yet not in them" (CW, 29, 411). For Gandhi, God is both immanent and transcendent at the same time. He is immanent because the world is filled by the presence of Him: "God is in everything."<sup>22</sup> At the same time, God is distinct from the world. God is transcendent

---

<sup>16</sup> Devis Kavungal, *The Philosophical Foundation of Gandhi's Vision of Sarvodaya*, Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 2000, 212.

<sup>17</sup> M.K. Gandhi, *All Men are Brothers*, Ahmadabad: Navajivan Publishing House, 1960, 155.

<sup>18</sup> M.K. Gandhi, *Young India*, October 11, 1928, 349.

<sup>19</sup> Hartshorne, *Man's Vision of God and Logic of Theism*, Hamden: Archon Books, 1964, 177.

<sup>20</sup> M.K. Gandhi, *Young India*, September 25, 1924, 178.

<sup>21</sup> *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, Govt of India: The Publication Division, 1958, 29, 411.

<sup>22</sup> S. Verma, *Metaphysical Foundation of Gandhi's Thought*, Pune: Longmans, 1970, 39.



because the world does not totally contain His Reality. All beings have their origin from God, but He is not co-extensive with the world. Although God includes the world as his body, God as all-inclusive reality is more than the world.

4.3. Gandhi's 'dipolar-theism' is the doctrine that God is both impersonal and personal. He uses the expressions 'He' and 'It' for God often without discrimination. Metaphysically, Gandhi understands God as "the impersonal Absolute" (CW, 77, 399). Gandhi remarks: "Mortal man can only imagine the Unmanifest, the Impersonal, and as his language fails him he often negatively describes 'It' as *neti neti* [not this, not this]" (CW, 41, 125). God for Gandhi is a "Formless Reality," but the formless, impersonal God, Gandhi thinks, is understood with form in the mind of the human beings. But Gandhi's religious sentiments and practices seem to suggest that he believed in a personal, intimate God (CW, 32,364). He speaks of God with the attributes of intelligence, goodness and love, which are found only in persons.<sup>23</sup> God is addressed as 'Father' or 'Mother' with the attributes of love, wisdom and power (CW, 43, 125). He believed in His providence: "All is vain without His help. And if He is with this struggle, no other help is necessary" (CW, 43, 125). He had a devotion to God, and prayed to Him. In his prayers, he addressed God as "You" and prayed for His Grace. He confessed his sins before God and asked for His mercy. Time and again he has expressed his ardent desire "to see God face to face" (CW, 28, 190). If God, in Gandhi's view, is not a person, the personal dimensions of religious life is at stake because worship and the religious life are generally conceived in terms of 'I-Thou' relationship. The devotee cannot express the love or address her/his prayer to such a God who is impersonal. Hence Gandhi holds a 'personalistic' understanding of God from the religious point of view (i.e. God of religion) and an 'impersonalistic' understanding of God from the metaphysical point of view (i.e. God of Philosophy). Gandhi does not, however, subscribe to the process view that "the concrete [personal] includes and exceeds the abstract [impersonal]."<sup>24</sup> On the contrary, he seems to suggest that God is actually an Impersonal Absolute, but he is understood as a personal being in God-world relationship.

## Part II

5.0. Indeed the interplay between Process Thought and Indian philosophy has taken greater strides in the global scenario, with the intent of contributing to the richness and variety of speculative thinking, and with the desire of enhancing the

---

<sup>23</sup> M.K. Gandhi, *Young India*, October 11, 1928, 340.

<sup>24</sup> Kurian Kachappilly, *God of Love Revisited*, Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 1998, 199

quality and beauty of life. This volume of *Tattva, Journal of Philosophy*, contains seven original and scholarly papers, which discuss various problems and concerns of human life, such as dimensions of sacredness, dilemma of fragmentation, conflict solving, God-world relationship, enigma of evil and pluralistic approach to reality. These life-issues are explored, drawing inspiration from the complementarities of process thought and Indian philosophy, with a view to transcend narrow boundaries of our knowledge and thus to broaden the horizons of life.

5.1. Drawing on personal experiences with his own children and grandchild, Robert Mesle, in his article "Elliot is Brahman," explores the power of children to function as symbols in Tillich's sense of 'symbol'. Mesle argues that process thought and Hinduism, specifically the Gita, can give depth to Tillich's theory, by exploring how children can disclose dimensions of sacredness precisely in their concrete personhood.

5.2. In his paper "The Myth of Pluralism," Anto Cheranthurathy dwells on the tyranny of fragmentation or dualism, which is one of the greatest enigmas of human exigencies. In his opinion visionaries, like Raimon Panikkar and Alfred North Whitehead, regard a dichotomous understanding of life and matter as the most disastrous of all bifurcations and propose a synthetic vision, based on an ontonomic order. Ontonomy is the realization of the law of being at that profound level where unity does not impinge upon diversity, but the latter is rather the unique and proper manifestation of the former. Ontonomy rests on the assumption that the universe is an organic whole that there is an internal and constitutive relationship between all and every part of reality.

5.3. "Gandhi and Whitehead on Conflict-Solving" by Helmut Maassen treats the question, 'how to deal with force'. According to Maassen both Gandhi and Whitehead had a clear notion that any real social progress would only be possible through persuasion. The notion of an "immanent transcendence" which provides the notion of peace, the final aim of all striving, is shared by both the thinkers. Whitehead developed a metaphysics, which allows him to analyze conflicts, whereas Gandhi obviously was more of an activist than a system-thinker. However, Gandhi and Whitehead realized that how to deal with coercive power, which is present, was the major challenge to their concept of persuasion, and that persuasion and coercion interplay in any human community.

5.4. According to John Peter Vallabadoss, the unifying vision of Process thought developed by Whitehead helps us re-visioning and re-interpreting Indian heritage. Siddha cult, for example, has a vision of holistic approach to reality as in Process Thought. Siddhas' conception of human life with dynamism of the cosmos is indeed

a philosophy of organism. In the paper "A Vision of Organic Whole: Process Thought and Siddha Cult," Siddhas' vision of organic whole is traced out in the interconnections and interdependence among human organism, other living beings and the cosmos, envisaged both in physical and metaphysical levels. Process is ultimately combined with the primacy of relationship. God being related to the world and humans is basically in the Siddha conception of reality.

5.5. Barbara A. Amodio in her paper "God Beyond the Garden of Nama-Rupa" argues that most of western metaphysics could not get unambiguously beyond the densely woven strands and dazzling magic of the garden's existential weave of *Maya* and its ropes of *Nama-Rupa*, due to a near-exclusive reliance on discursive expressive tools, and other failures associated with the imperfectly developed technical fluency in the non-discursive ascetic language and disciplined graduations in experience of the Inner Way. In her view, the fullest technical ascetic vocabulary and navigation charts for the speculative journey within and beyond the garden are preserved and meticulously articulated in the Indian Samkhya-Yoga school and closely allied Sufi traditions, illustrated in the parallel excrescent evolutions of sound and light in the five pure and thirty-one impure Tattwas (conditions) preserved in the Tantra Sastras of Saiva-Saktism, without which the *unified* and graduated cosmos beyond the appearing garden of *Maya* cannot be penetrated or understood.

5.6. Thomas Padiyath in "Whitehead and Aurobindo on the Question of Evil" discusses the contribution of the East, especially that of Aurobindo, in solving the enigma of evil. Padiyath argues that Aurobindo is reluctant to accept the two major views with regard to the problem of evil: (i) evil is unreal and is the product of ignorance, which was favoured by many early Indian thinkers, and (ii) the Western approach, which construes evil as a permanent feature of the world. Furthermore, Aurobindo does recognize God as the creator of the universe, a metaphysical compliment that Whitehead denied to God, also on the ground of the problem of evil; but he does not separate Sachchidananda and the Supermind or Being and power of being to save Sachchidananda from being responsible for evil. The paper lucidly presents Aurobindo's treatment of the problem of evil in its three dimensions: (i) in its relation to the Absolute, the supreme Reality, (ii) its origin and place in the cosmic workings, and (iii) its action and point of hold in the individual being.

5.7. In the paper, "Whitehead and Intercultural Philosophy," Maja Milèinski deals with the glimpses of Whitehead's works that are inspiring for the problems of intercultural philosophy, especially Daoism and Buddhism. It takes into consideration parts of *Process and Reality*, *Religion in the Making* and *Science and the Modern World* which remind us once again of the pluralistic approach to philosophy which

was discontinued due to the narrative approach of European philosophy that opened the way to Hegel. Milènski argues how Whitehead's works can inspire the intercultural philosophy today.

Let these essays/attempts mark a beginning in the right direction, as advocated by Pope John Paul II: "In both East and West, we may trace a journey which has led humanity down the centuries to meet and engage truth more and more deeply" (*Fides et Ratio*, §1).

Kurian Kachappilly  
Executive Editor, *Tattva*  
E-mail: [frkurian@christuniversity.in](mailto:frkurian@christuniversity.in)