



Editorial

The December 2023 issue of *Tattva – Journal of Philosophy* comprises five articles on questions that play a prominent role in different philosophical disciplines, in particular philosophical anthropology, epistemology, philosophy of literature, and philosophy of religion. These questions are analyzed with the help of various philosophical methods and perspectives.

The first article, “Modernity and Disenchantment: Charles Taylor on the Identity of the Modern Self,” by Muhammed Shareef and Anoop George discusses Taylor’s analysis of various malaises in which the modern, disengaged self is entangled, namely individualism, instrumental reason, and the loss of broader horizons of meaning. To overcome these malaises Taylor presents an alternative ontology of the self, which gives primacy to the self’s embodied nature, and its capacity to interpret the world and itself through a common language and as belonging to a specific culture. The authors show that Taylor’s insights lead to highlighting the dialogical, communitarian, and temporal character of the self. These modes of being, reminiscent of Heidegger’s existential analytic, result in the affirmation of everyday life and in stressing the crucial importance of significant others who make us aware of our inescapable horizons of meaning.

In his paper, “Metaphysical Realism and Naturalized Epistemology,” Pragyanparamita Mohapatra examines the perennial metaphysical question of whether reality exists independently of the human mind, and the epistemological question of whether language as a mental human capacity can give a true representation of the world as a nonlinguistic, objective reality. Philosophical realists answer affirmatively to these questions, while anti-realists challenge them. To offer a new perspective on these questions, the author explores the arguments of analytic philosopher Michael Devitt, who argues that metaphysical realism not only has an existence dimension (common-sense entities really exist) but also an independent dimension (these entities exist independently of the human mind). This position leads to a naturalized epistemology, which becomes part of science. The author criticizes Devitt’s position

in that it overlooks the crucial (epistemological) role of conceptual schemes and language in trying to solve the problem of metaphysical realism.

The third paper in this issue is by Sijo Sebastian Cherukarayil, who gives a critical discussion of "Arguments Favouring Epistemic Justification of Religious Belief." After a brief historical overview of this problem, the author examines three contemporary models of justification of religious beliefs, namely, Alvin Plantinga's theory of proper basicity and warrant, Nancey Murphy's epistemological holism with the application of Lakatosian principle in philosophy of science, and Richard Swinburne's cumulative case evidentialism. The author analyses these three positions with the help of the parameters of logical consistency, methodological acumen, norms of belief formation, the role of subjectivity, features of religious language, and hermeneutic dynamics. Cherukarayil's main critique of these models is that they ignore that religious beliefs belong to a different category than beliefs about the empirical world. Consequently, these models lack self-refuting methodological application, they do not acknowledge the specific character of religious belief formation, and they do not take into consideration the specificity of religious language.

In his article, "Vaishnava Philosophy and the Poetic Aesthetics: An Analysis of Jayadeva's Gitagovindam," Sayantan Thakur attempts to show how this literary work contains a juxtaposition of literature and philosophy. He argues that the Gitagovindam is not just a lyrical poem about the adoration of Lord Krishna and Radha, but also an allegory that uncovers the way through which an individual can obtain salvation by surrendering one's soul to the Supreme Lord, so that this work can also be read as a book of devotion and religious inspiration. To substantiate his claim about the juxtaposition of literary and philosophical elements, the author gives a summary of the twelve parts of the Gitagovindam. The importance of Jayadeva as the author of this poem lies in the fact that he, for the first time, tried to exhibit the very idea that loving devotion erases all mundane complexities and can liberate the Jivatma to pursue the 'Paramatma'.

In the final paper of this issue, Venusa Tinyi and Kativa Chauhan interrogate Hick's view of religious pluralism through the

perspective of Yoga philosophy. The authors start by summarizing Hick's theory of religious pluralism, according to which there is only one Absolute Reality in the noumenal realm, which underlies and makes possible varieties of religious experiences and language in the phenomenal realm. In their critical analysis of Hick's theory, the authors query some of Hick's basic assumptions: Is there only one Absolute Reality?; Is religious experience prior to religious language?; Isn't it so that Hick confuses religious interpretation with religious experience? Is it really so that religion ultimately is about interpreting the world? Is the pursuit of 'self-realization' or ultimate realization, which plays a prominent role in Yoga philosophy, necessarily a matter of 'experiencing-as'? At this point, the authors find Hick's view to be inadequate because he does not consider the possibility of a spiritual pursuit beyond the interpretive function of language. To substantiate their critique, the authors confront Hick's views on several points with various aspects of Yoga philosophy and show that the ultimate spiritual pursuit in Yoga philosophy aims to transcend all forms of linguistic and cognitive functions.

On behalf of the editorial board, I wish you a lot of intellectual pleasure in reading the articles in this issue and hope that they may stimulate your thinking and discussions about vital philosophical questions.

Peter Jonkers
Editor-in-Chief