



## **Rung: Colours of Consciousness**

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### **Abstract**

‘Rung,’ colour, has been a subject of exploration by philosophers as the study of consciousness progresses. They believe colours, besides their objective, physical understanding, also have a phenomenal and subjective understanding, for example, the ‘feeling’ that we get when the redness of the red setting sun is felt, or the blueness of the blue sky is experienced. This feeling or subjective phenomenal experience is what has been called consciousness or qualia, qualia being the properties of such experiences. However, deciphering such experiences is what has been the greatest task given to the philosophers; the mystery of this ‘feeling’ or phenomenal experience we get when a colour is perceived is also a mystery, if unfolded, it helps us to decipher what consciousness is. This paper attempts to investigate the subjective experience of colour as explored in Indian Bakhti and Sufi poetry. Colour or ‘rung’ has been extensively used as imagery in such poems, where the experience of being in a divine state is equated to being immersed in the experience of a colour. The divine, also known as ‘runglez,’ the colour dyer or the colour giver, is the one who infuses us with such colourful experience, the experience of himself or consciousness. In this way, the paper will explore the subjective experiences (of colour) as portrayed in such poetry and will try to perceive the question of consciousness from a different perspective.

**Keywords:** Colour, Consciousness, Sufism, Bhakti poetry, Philosophy of mind, Qualia, Indian philosophy

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## Introduction

We easily cognise colours, taking a red apple as a prime example. Generally, we find common ground in naming these colours, an agreement that stems from our shared visual perception. We assume that we all see the colour in the same objective way. However, this presumed objectivity begins to fade when we start to think about the precise and particular shade of the colour we perceive individually. While we might all agree the apple is red, our individual interpretation of that shade becomes a personal experience. Attempting to accurately describe our individual experience of that colour, that specific shade of red, inevitably demands subjective expression. Each person's internal experience of that shade will differ subtly, making personal description the only viable way to convey that kind of experience. The way we experience colour, often described as the "what it is like" feeling of seeing a particular hue, such as redness of the colour red, has been associated with the concept of consciousness (Chalmers, 2010, p.3). However, this subjective quality of colour perception brings about several questions. One of them is that, if colour is, at least in some sense, a physical attribute inherent to objects in the world around us, then why do different people sometimes experience the same colour in different ways or even perceive colours differently altogether?

We objectively understand colour as a measurable property of light reflecting off a surface, based on wavelengths and frequencies. Simultaneously, we have the subjective, personal experience of *seeing* that colour, the phenomenal feeling it evokes. The very nature of this phenomenal feeling, the qualitative experience of seeing colour, also referred to as the hard problem of consciousness (Chalmers, 2010, p.5), is what presents the greatest challenge. Philosophers have offered a wide range of perspectives and theories in an attempt to unravel the mystery of colour perception and its relation to consciousness. This exploration has led to an understanding of the subjectivity of experiencing colour or consciousness through different perspectives.

In India, the subjective aspect of colour and its connection to consciousness has not gone unexplored; the concept of subjective colour experience can be found in various spiritual and devotional

poems in India. The poetry examines the subjective understanding of colour and how experiencing colour through poetic expression can be an experience of consciousness itself, much like experiencing the redness of red. This understanding of colours can be traced to various Indian and Islamic philosophies that explain consciousness as a transcendental experience, equated with the understanding of God Himself. This paper will analyse some poems and examine how, through the subjective comprehension of colours, can give us insight into what consciousness is or how it can be perceived. This will be achieved first by examining various arguments regarding colour in contemporary Western philosophy, then by exploring the use of colours in Indian spiritual and devotional poetry, and finally by investigating the relationship between Western and Indian concepts of colour and, therefore, consciousness.

## Colours in Philosophy

It was John Locke, a British empiricist, who, in a thought experiment, distinguished the experience of two people looking at the same colour and each perceiving colours differently. For example, a red apple, experienced as red by one and green by another, while both call it red. He regarded this phenomenon as spectrum inversion, where two people, despite calling the red apple by the same name, can differ in their experience of it. For him, colours were the secondary property of a physical object in addition to its primary qualities. Locke defined primary properties as properties that an object is inherently made of and cannot be separated from it, such as its shape and size. On the other hand, secondary qualities of an object are those qualities that we experience through our senses and are subjective, such as colours, smell, and taste. It is through secondary qualities that an object's primary qualities are perceived. This brought forward the question: if colours are subjective, what is the role of the physical object in perceiving the colour? In contemporary philosophy, this question has been formulated as the *mind-body problem*, which is how the subjective experiences of the self can be related to the physical world outside the self. In other words, how do the mind and matter interact? To offer possible solutions to the mind-body problem, some philosophers, including colour primitivists or realists, argue that physical reality takes precedence

over the mental realm and contend that colours are perceiver-independent (Brown & Macpherson, 2021); that is, they depend on the physical appearance of the object perceived and not on the perceiver. They consider colours to be properties of primary qualities of the object, which may appear to change with external circumstances, such as the position of the object or its reflection properties, also known as colour constancy. For example, the colour primitivists or the realists see colour *sui generis*, not separated from the physical; the red apple is red to them for every individual, and there is no change in the appearance of the colour even subjectively (Gert, 2021). The reductionists, the other type of philosophers who view colours as the reduced properties of objects, attempt to identify colours as chemical properties of the object's surfaces and argue that colour is dependent on the reflections of those properties (Byrne & Hilbert, 2021). Furthermore, the relationist, see colour perception changing with the circumstances of the subject, be it physical or biological, for example, they would explain the subjective understanding of colour by the perceiving subjects, their concept of colour, their vision and the external circumstances like the position of the object, the amount of light reflected on it etc., (Cohen, 2009). Among the three, the relationists come closest to explaining the variations in colour perception, while the primitivists and reductionists fall short in such explanations. The major criticism the relationist face is, first, in justifying the presence of mental states that are illusory or physically incorrect, such as hallucinations, they are perceived and *felt real* however, they do not have any physical proof or are non-veridical, unlike colour which can be veridical which is having somewhat a physical proof, and second in explaining the question of *qualia*.

Qualia can be understood as the properties of the phenomenal state that we undergo when we experience something (Tye, 1995). This experience is subjective, like the experience of the redness of the colour red of a red apple or the setting sun; in a way, they are the properties of our subjective experience. When we experience a colour subjectively, there is to be *like* something to be in that state that is not similar in any respect to anyone experiencing the same colour. This is what David Chalmers refers to as *the hard problem of consciousness*, as there is no physical representation of this feeling or a way in which this feeling can be formulated (Chalmers, 2010). In

answer to this, some philosophers do see colours as perceiver-dependent and, therefore, only as subjective. Chalmers himself sees colours as the representation of our Edenic content, he believes in Eden, the colours were as the objects, and there were no primary or secondary qualities, and with our fall into this world after eating from the tree of illusion, we try to represent colour as in their natural form (in Eden) however after we fell into this world we found out through science, this world was contingent and we cannot see the object in this world as we saw them in Eden and therefore the cause of distortion in perceiving colours (Chalmers, 2010). According to Chalmers, the mental state is composed of two major things that decide the mental content: the representational content and the phenomenal content. Phenomenal content possesses phenomenal properties of experience, such as qualia and representational content, which possess representational properties of how the external world is represented in the mind of a subject. Both the content for Chalmers is important for realising consciousness. For him, both are in some way dependent on each other, and both can be grounded in each other. (Chalmers, 2010). Therefore, in the understanding of qualia, the understanding of representational properties becomes important. Representationalism, also known as *Intentionality*, is closely related to the word 'intention,' something of which a mental state is about or directed towards an object or how it represents a certain word (Searle, 1983). Our mental states are intentional when they are about something and have an intentional object. In terms of representation, an intentional object is something that our mind is representing. Intentionality is thus our worldview, or we as a subject represent the world in our mind, such as our belief or desire about the object present in the external world. For example, our belief of seeing a reddish round apple in front of us when, in fact, others call it greenish and square. Our intentional content is important for our subjectivity as it defines how the world looks to us and helps in creating our perception of the world. However, the question arises: how does perception lead to a phenomenal experience? For example, how does my perceiving an apple of a certain colour make me *feel* or experience this colour? Certain strong supporters of representationalism or intentionality suggest that consciousness's phenomenal or qualitative character depends on its representational states. They claim that this phenomenal mental

state consists of the intentional content of such states (Kind, n.d.), which tends to solve the problem of consciousness only if explained how. Tim Crane, a contemporary intentionalist, in trying to explain how phenomenal content is grounded in intentionality, claims intentionality as the 'mark of the mental' (Crane, 2022, p.360), the thesis first proposed by Franz Brentano, a nineteenth-century psychologist, according to him, intentionality is a property of the mind that makes the object it is thinking about, non-physical or inexistent, something that is not extended in space and time, it is the mark of the mental what he also calls as a 'psychic or mental phenomenon.' (Brentano, 2009, p.60). For him, the physical object, when perceived, does not remain the same as the object of the mind; the mental object becomes intrinsic, wholly the character of your mind. Crane, in advocating Brentano's thesis, is trying to explain the subjective aspect of consciousness, He claims that every mental phenomenon is intentional; we may see an object in whatever colour, shape or size when it is perceived in the mind, and it becomes of the mind, and it is how the intentional content can be different from the physical, belonging to the mind and the subject. For example, the colour we perceive will not be the same as the objectively perceived colour in the outside world; it will be subjective and will belong to one's experience. Additionally, the content, due to its subjective nature, will also include phenomenal content. Crane also comments on qualia, which some intentionalists, like Michael Tye, regard as non-conceptual and non-intentional. For Crane, qualia are not necessary if the intentional content, which is subjective, itself possesses phenomenal content (Crane, 2022). For Crane, his view of intentionality is something that can reveal the subjective nature of colour and provide an answer to questions related to the hard problem of consciousness and the mind-body problem.

However, Crane's insight into intentionality, has only taken us so far, up to the point where colours are considered to be subjective and phenomenal in nature, but what does it further tell us about consciousness? How will the subjective experience of colour inform us about this phenomenal experience? A similar type of endeavour, where colour experience is to be seen as a phenomenal subjective experience, is explored in some of the spiritual and devotional poems found in India. The colour in these poems is projected as a representation of the *feeling* one gets while experiencing

consciousness; here, too, colours are subjective and phenomenal. This phenomenal and subjective nature of colour, as reflected in the spiritual and devotional poems, encourages us to consider the question of colour from a different perspective. This will be analysed in the next section.

## Colours in Poetry

“Rung,” a term for colour used in some Indian languages, such as Hindi and Urdu, appears in various spiritual and devotional poems from India. The poet in such poems employs colour as a poetic device to convey the feelings experienced by him/her during the divine contemplation, where divine contemplation is itself regarded as the process of realising consciousness. For example, in the poem below,

- a) “Blue is this sky; blue is this space filled with love. Blue is this entire symmetry. Blue is Being-in-Itself. Blue is the colour of karma. Blue is one's Guru and one's Guru's resort. I behave blue, I feed on blue, I become blue, I envision blue” (Jnaneshwar, as cited in Subramaniam, 2014, p. 218).

The poet refers to the colour blue, not merely as a shade of an object, such as the sky, but as an immersive experience of “being-in-itself” or being one with the divine consciousness. It is described as both a space that is “filled with love” and a time in which the experience is continuously present and “envisioned”. The experience of blue is not separate from the subjective self: “I become blue”; it is as apparent as the subject itself: “I behave blue,” and emerges as phenomenal.

In another poem,

- b) “One colour now, one colour, you, and me. I look at you, Panduranga, one look, no you, no me. Those passions quieten. The body is. The body withers. One now, no me, no you. Soyara says: Who is being seen? Who is doing the seeing?” (Soyarabai, 2014 as cited in Subramaniam, p. 228).

The poet conveys her experience of unity with divine consciousness as being “one colour,” where no other aspects of her existence endure. Her “body withers,” and the passions and desires

tied to it fade away, revealing a single reality of one colour. By contemplating God, “I look at you,” she merges with Him and deconstructs the distinction between the seer and the seen, leaving nothing but a singular experience of consciousness: the experience of colour.

Again, in the poem below,

- c) “Come Colour Me in Your Own Hue, Colourful, come colour me in your own hue. You are my lord, Beloved of God...” (Khusrau, trans. Russell & Shackle, 2014, p.105, lines 1-3)

Here, the poet asks his *pir*, the spiritual guide, to help him realise consciousness and attain the colour experience. The *pir* who has been coloured by such experience by the divine, the colour giver or *rungez*, is asked by the poet to help him with attaining the same colourful experience as someone who is one with God or consciousness and embodies its glory.

Lastly, in this poem,

- d) “Mother, today there is colour, in my beloved’s home: colour in his courtyard, a happy meeting with my love...Mother, there is colour.” (Khusrau, trans. Russell & Shackle, 2014, p.107, lines 1-5)

In the poem, the poet conveys the good news in an expression of calling his mother and saying that he has found his spiritual guide. He regards this bliss as the presence of colour. As discussed above, his spiritual guide is already in a state of colourfulness, i.e. one with divine consciousness. Hearing that he has accepted the poet as his disciple, the poet rejoices; he will be among the colourful ones, too. Here, again, the concept of realising consciousness is expressed in terms of colour.

In all the poems, the experience of colour is portrayed as subjective and phenomenal in nature. The poet undergoes a feeling of bliss or unity with divine consciousness, and this realisation is expressed in terms of colour. Therefore, colour does not remain objective in perception but becomes entirely subjective; blue is not merely blue but a “being in itself.” The experience of consciousness is, in essence, the experience of colour. Similarly, some philosophers like Chalmers view colour as dependent on the subject as its



perceiver and see an adhering relationship between colour experience and consciousness, as he refers to consciousness as “a subjective phenomenal experience” (Chalmers, 2010, p.4). However, the poems discussed are to be associated with specific beliefs rooted in the Indian and Islamic philosophical traditions that are found in India, which also explore the nature of consciousness and its experiences. These philosophies examine the essence of subjective and phenomenal experiences, aligning them with colour experiences addressed in the poems, which are inspired by such philosophies. While the question of colour as a subjective experience and its connection to consciousness still persists, looking at these philosophies might help us to understand what this experience is all about.

## Colours of Consciousness

The poems mentioned above can be divided into two categories: Bhakti poetry, or devotional poetry related to Hindu traditions in India, and Sufi poetry, derived from Sufism practised in India. Both categories of poetry can be interpreted as having emerged from the influence of two major philosophies: Vedic philosophy, sourced from the Upanishads found in India, and the other, traced back to Islamic philosophy found in different parts of the world. They both had their unique approach towards addressing the idea of consciousness, which they conceived as the experience of God, the divine himself.

The first two poems, a and b, are both Bhakti poems and can be associated with the philosophy of Advaita Vedanta, also called non-dualism. The philosophy advocated by Adi Shankaracharya is the philosophy that believes in *Brahman* (the ultimate reality) and that nothing exists but this reality, understood as a certain experience. Brahman, which means *brah* in Sanskrit, to evolve or grow, is the ultimate cause of the universe, a pure consciousness, described in simpler terms as a cosmic consciousness. According to Shankara, Brahman is the cause of the universe. It is objective, embodying all truth and infinity; as it is the only reality, formless; as it is both omniscient and omnipresent, without any cause. The individual self, or Jiva, due to ignorance and lack of knowledge, also termed as *avidya*, cannot realise the true reality until it has freed itself from that

state. For such an individual, Shankara says, the world is covered by a veil that covers the Truth, that is the Brahman (Warrier, 1990; Isha,15). The only reality, for him, is the Brahman; the rest is considered as a *maya* or an illusion, which remains real to the ignorant individual and which, in actuality, is *asat* or unreal. The distinction from the Maya remains important to Brahman, as this illusory world directs a subject to the experiences of the senses, representing an empirical reality opposite to the ultimate one, the Brahman. In contrast to this individual self, or Jiva, which is unaware, there is the self that is aware of the true reality, called the Atman; it is the self or subject that is not separate from Brahman and knows and experiences the true reality. Atman is also considered to be self-luminous or *svayam prakash*, something that possesses knowledge of its own and is independent. He becomes *sakshi*, the witness of the absolute reality.

The distinction between an ignorant self and the Atman, by Shankara, is by comparing the ignorant state as the state of waking and the state of realising consciousness as the dreaming state and further the state of sound sleep. In a waking state, the subject enjoys the objects of the world through its senses, it fears, has pleasure and feels pain. In the dreaming state, it reflects into its inner world, and uses its imagination to create objects of his mind and then when consciousness is fully realised as the state of deep sleep, there is no pain and pleasure and no distinction between the object and the subject, as the subject has realised the ultimate reality and transcended the duality of the subject and the object, (Warrier, 1990; Mandhukya,1-15) ignorance vanishes here, subject shines in its own light, without any differences. The subject's perception comes from a non-different self, where the mind is not divided, is one with the One, in other words, the veil of ignorance is lifted, and there is a kind of transparency that occurs between the object of the mind and the object present outside. Therefore, for the subjective self, the mind perceives the object as it really is without any illusion, as objective, the truth, such that there is no difference between the subjective and the objective, as illustrated by Shankara, the snake is grasped as the rope. According to Advaita Vedanta, to realise what the ultimate reality is, the subject must look inward and introspect in a way that transcends the reality created by the ignorant mind and submerges into the reality that is real. The subject, by realising consciousness,

reveals and identifies with its true purpose, its senses, mind, intellect, language and reason, helps it to fulfil it, and by identifying with the Brahman, the self transcends them all (Sharma,1962).

The colour experience mentioned in poems A and B is the same experience one gets while experiencing Brahman or consciousness. The experience in the poem is illustrated as such that the poet, while experiencing his/her union with God or consciousness, expresses this feeling in the form of a colour experience. In this way, the reality of the poet is undifferentiated, and the colour experience is, in actuality, a subjective experience of the Atman. Therefore, colour or its phenomenal experience becomes subjective. But as we know, for the Atman, there is no distinction between the objective and subjective reality; the subjective experience of the colour becomes also the objective reality of the colour. Hence, colour experience itself becomes the experience of the consciousness and implies that the colours in actuality are not distinguished as red, green, etc, and are only acknowledged as different by an ignorant mind, lacking knowledge. This aligns with Chalmers' view on the nature of colour that colours are contingent and phenomenal; as Advaita Vedanta also consider colour as subjective and phenomenal for the Atman, but Chalmers stops there, as western philosophers might have come close to the concept of Maya, referring to the world of senses as the contingent world, but provides no support to the concept of Brahman. While Chalmers discusses colour as a phenomenal experience, Advaita presents consciousness as subjective and intangible, also transcending the realm of Maya. This distinction is not made by Chalmers but can be seen as connected to Crane's idea of intentionality and its relationship to consciousness. Crane's understanding of intentionality as the 'mark of the mental' brings us closer to the idea of the reality of the mind. In Advaita, the mind in the waking state, as the mind Jiva or ignorant self, considers the world of illusion, accumulated by an ignorant mind, as real. He sees the outside, empirical world as the reality. However, in a dreaming state, which is much closer to the deep sleep state, the subject is conscious of their subjective reality or internal world and creates imaginary objects for themselves, it can be interpreted as where the mind has intentionality, and the subject is aware of its own representation of the objects, which are the creation of the mind. The

mind to realise consciousness has to transcend from the dream state to the deep sleep, where the intentionality disappears, and also the distinction between the subjective and objective vanishes. Crane, in giving the mental content a status of its own, gives way to a subjectivity that belongs to the mental alone. According to him, a subject may perceive objects from the physical world, but as soon as they are perceived, they become the character of the mind; the idea is similar to the subjective reality of the dreaming mind in the philosophies of Advaita. While perceiving, the subject does perceive the object as an object of the mind, but after introspection, in the deep sleep, the object disappears, and the subject becomes one with the ultimate reality. The colour experience for both Crane and Chalmers stays in the realm of the intentionality and this is how they try to describe the phenomenal and subjective nature of the colour, but as seen on the poems a and b, the colour experience with being subjective can be transcendental as well, something that Crane and Chalmers could agree upon.

Similarly, poems C and D are derived from Sufism practised in India and are connected to the prominent Islamic philosophy followed by the Chishti Sufi order, to which the poet's spiritual guide, Nizamuddin Auliya, belongs, known as Wahadat-ul-Wajood by Ibn Arabi. The philosophy of Wahadat-ul-Wajood (Unity of existence) which focuses on the unity of God or consciousness, which is the ultimate reality and the source of all existence. This philosophy can be regarded as a commentary on the first article of Islamic faith, "There is no divinity except the (one) Divinity." (Kazemi, 2009, p.69) Arabi calls God the essence of all the universe, the *Haqq* or the ultimate truth of all existence. For him, the world created by God is a creative act, which follows God's will, as God says in the Quran *Kun!* (Be!), *Faya Kun!* (and it is!) (Abdel Haleem, 2005, 36:82). The cosmos, also called Al-Kwan, Arabi says, has come into existence as the Divine has addressed it, and he points out, although the ultimate reality is Divine in nature, the cosmos or the world that the God created cannot and doesn't capture is whole essence. God is immanent, as he governs and guides the world, but also transcendental as his *Wujood* (being or existence) precedes everything. For him, the world attunes with a degree of reality; it is diverse, has multiplicity as seen in the multiple names or attributes given to God, and which may appear real, but in truth, the Real is

just one, singular presence. However, on the one hand, the world is separated from the Divine and on the other, it is through this world that the Truth has to be realised. Arabi calls the multiplicity of the world an *imagination*, and to recognise this imagination as it is, is to understand the Divine and as mentioned in the Quran, the world of material is considered to be an enjoyment of delusion (Abdel Haleem, 2005, 3:185), a veil (*purdah*) that covers the Real and the Truth from a subject. To realise the divine essence, therefore, is the realisation of this unity (Kazemi, 2009).

Arabi focused on the inner reality of an individual, called the inner essence or the soul of a human, which is breathed into an individual from God's own spirit (Chittick, 2005) in other words, it is connected to God's essence or consciousness, has to be known and reflected on through introspection or remembrance of the Divine and to realise only he is the ultimate reality, to immerse oneself in his colour, as mentioned in the Quran as "*Sibghatullah*" (Abdel Haleem, 2005, 2:38), to colour oneself in the colour of Allah. This experience can be regarded as the realisation of the knowledge that makes us experience the divine, or divine reality, through a mental experience. In the poems as well, the poet asks his spiritual guide to give him the knowledge and guide him to such an experience. Here too, the colour experience is subjective, where the subject understands his or her own inner reality and recognises the outside world as the imagination created by the subject, and explores further the true nature of the reality. The colour experience becomes real, which is at the same time subjective and phenomenal. It is where intentionality is understood as imagination or mere representation of the mind, under a veil and which could be transcended through the right knowledge.

While Advaita emphasises introspection to overcome *maya*, Wahdat-ul-Wajood views realisation as lifting the veil, seeing the divine within the physical world. The poetry determined by such philosophies infuses understanding of consciousness by exhibiting the experience of it. The use of colour in poetry also directs the reader to experience the *feeling* the poet might have had, which is intended to awaken awareness inside the reader, too. This feeling is phenomenal and subjective, meant to be experienced by both the poet and the reader, who may recognise their inner reality through

the poem. In this way, the reader might experience the same mental state as the poet, seeing beyond the physical world and perceiving the true nature of reality. This feeling known to be as consciousness, a “what it’s like” state (Chalmers, 2010, p.3). Thus, poetry serves as a tool for self-reflection and can be understood in two ways: the experience of consciousness of the poet and the experience of the reader while reading the poem. Reader, while reading the poem, becomes the subject of the poet's feeling; they too endeavour to envision the consciousness by themselves through the use of colours by the poet. Colours thus become subjective, dependent on the perceiver, and are not tied to their physical representation in the world. Colours induce a phenomenal experience, which can be associated with consciousness.

Thus, Western philosophy may recognise the transcendental nature of colours and consciousness, similar to the perspective found in Advaita and Wahadat ul-Wajood. The concept of intentionality provides a bridge between Western and Eastern philosophical understandings of the relationship between the perception of colour and the transcendental nature of consciousness.

## **Conclusion**

In this paper, we see that colours are purely subjective, in addition to their objective nature. When it comes to explaining the experience of the redness of the colour red while standing and watching the sunset, it is not easy. The feeling associated with colour is also a subjective phenomenal feeling that can be understood as consciousness. As seen in the mentioned Sufi and Bhakthi poems, there is a distinct colour experience that transcends any particular objective understanding of colour. Particularly in the context of the philosophies of Advaita and Wahadat-ul-Wajood associated with the poems, these philosophies acknowledge the experience of colour as phenomenal and subjective, while also addressing that it transcends them both. Where the subjective mind recognises its objects to be as unreal or imaginative, as in the case of intentionality, as the mark of the mental, and further dwells in seeing what is Real. A perspective where there is no duality of object and the subject, but everything is as one Reality, known as the Ultimate Truth. Meanwhile, in Western philosophies, such as Chalmers' philosophy

of mind, the discussion about colour and consciousness stops at recognising the phenomenal experience as intentional and subjective; it does not seem to progress any further. The understanding of the poems mentioned and the philosophies behind them provides us with an alternative way of understanding what consciousness is and addressing several other questions that arise from this issue.

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