

# Hermeneutics and the Ontological Categorisation of Religious Experience

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Within the study of religion, the fundamental attitude and preferred cognitive style of the scholar to the basic data determine, to a degree, his or her methodology; this methodology then determines the extent to which examples of religion are understood as reconcilable or *vice versa*. In an earlier paper<sup>1</sup>, I argue that, in a continuum of cognition, two preferred modes of perceiving (named 'analytical style' and 'global style')

*... permeate the individual's entire psychological functioning to influence, among other operations, both intellectual tasks and motivational processes. When the dynamics of preferred cognitive styles are applied to the fertile field of Studies in Religion, researchers impose a conceptual order upon religious phenomena in accordance with their preferred cognitive style. That is to say, researchers who prefer the analytical mode of perception not only are motivated to look for diversity, but so perceive and find diversity in religious phenomena. Equally, the researchers who prefer the global mode of perception look for and recognise similarity or unity in religious phenomena. [Indeed,] ... cognitive styles demonstrate the creation of conceptual order from the phenomena of religion and religions. However, "the world as it is" remains independent of the researcher's mode of perception and its subsequent expression. In the creative formation and articulation of conscious experience, the view of "the world as it is" becomes refracted by the preferred cognitive style of the researcher into either a pluralistic view or globalistic view (or some synthesis of both). In the continuum of cogni-*

*tion, each cognitive style is independently valid. For this reason, both pluralistic and globalistic viewpoints in Studies in Religion should be recognised as equally legitimate.*<sup>2</sup>

The article notes also that:

*The hermeneutical application of the dynamics of preferred cognitive styles to my main area of research in eastern contemplative practices reveals interesting possibilities for future research into preferred meditative styles and their associated world-views or religious traditions.*<sup>3</sup>

That is to say, the scholarly mode of analysis and subsequent interpretation of religious experience in Studies in Religion creates ontological categories (i.e. categories of being) that express either diversity or similarity (or some synthesis of both). While the dynamics of preferred cognitive styles were applied in the previous paper to researchers in the field of Studies in Religion, the same dynamics can be applied also to meditation practitioners; ie the continuum of cognition and preferred modes of perceiving can bear upon meditators and their religious experiences in the same way as they do to scholars. In light of the above, this paper, by considering some aspects of eastern religious experience, represents an incipient move in this direction<sup>4</sup>.

For example, the scholar, when confronting the data, may wish to

understand it 1) in relation to his own faith, 2) empathically, i.e. from the "inside", or 3) as data which share characteristics in that they serve the same purpose. As a result, examples 1) and 2) above, by their specific nature, tend to emphasise the *differences* in the data (ie they are analytic in style) while 3.) above suggests their *similarity* (that is to say, it is global in style). However, reluctance to hold tenaciously to one methodological position (as in relation to one's faith) when studying the basic data engenders the opportunity to discover similarity by reducing the possibility of exclusivity. Refusal to rely entirely on the phenomenological description of the data also reduces differentiation, for any attempt to understand religious phenomena from the "inside" suggests that not all religious phenomena are identical. If the religious phenomena, however, are studied as data which share certain characteristics in that they serve the same purpose, then there is similarity and reconciliation. Be that as it may, it is the purpose of this paper to understand examples of religious experience as reconcilable while recognising that "... the goals achieved in different mystical endeavours are not ... the same goal. Nor is it a case of different ways of saying the same thing."<sup>5</sup>

This paper (by applying the dynamics of preferred cognitive styles to meditation practitioners) attempts to adopt to the basic data of religious experience an approach which emphasises *both* differences and similarity.

Such an approach admits that the bald statement "all religions assert some Ultimate Reality beyond the individual" is true; however, this approach must admit also that this statement is not *entirely* true, for (in its reductive fashion)

the assertion that all religions believe in some Ultimate Reality beyond the individual implies that a dichotomous relationship between Ultimate Reality and the individual is the only viable association with Ultimate Reality that religions can assert. That is to say, to be convinced that all religions believe in an Ultimate Reality *beyond* the individual is to choose a dualistic view of reality as being the only true perspective.

Dualism in its extreme form "... radically separates the ultimate from the relative arguing for an absolute lack of connection between the two .... Examples of such dualism abound in ... the arguments of individuals who insist on the total "otherness" of God — its unsymbolisability, transcendentality, and incomprehensibility"<sup>6</sup>. As such, dualism opposes monism which is belief in one Absolute Reality in which any notion of duality, including a distinction between God and the individual is a deceptive impression of reality. Dualism (by positing distinctions in being) and monism (by positing identity in being) are ontological categories derived from two types of religious experience respectively designated "confrontation" and "interiority"<sup>7</sup>. In "confrontation", Ultimate Reality is experienced as an object over against the self as subject; a reality external to the subjective consciousness of the individual; however, in "interiority", Ultimate Reality is not experienced as an object contrasting with the self as subject, but is discovered and realised within consciousness itself<sup>8</sup>. Although these two modes of experiencing Ultimate Reality are quite distinct in that dualism asserts a dichotomous reality in which there is no connection between subject and object, and monism declares the unreality of any

ideas of subject and object while recognising Oneness, it need not be that their distinction precludes their reconcilability. That is to say, all religions assert some Ultimate Reality beyond the individual, ie they believe that Ultimate Reality is to be confronted dualistically. Nevertheless, this is not the only viable association that religions can and do assert. In fact, some such as *Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta*<sup>9</sup> emphasise a direct relationship between dualism and monism rather than a radical antagonism in which one decries the verity of the other; a direct relationship in which difference is of degree and not of kind.

This paper will set out a conceptual framework which articulates adequately the direct relationship between the dualistic mode of religious experience and the monistic mode of religious experience described above. This is perhaps a rather ambitious undertaking considering the complexity of the problem. Nevertheless, it can be done by drawing upon established (though little known or appreciated) schools of thought and behaviour within Buddhism and Hinduism; namely, the Chinese Hua-yen school (a seventh century Buddhist school that was established by the master Fa-Tsang)<sup>10</sup>, and the devotional cult of Śaktāism or Tantrism — with particular attention being paid to the religious experience of the Tantric saint Srī Rāmākṛishna, the nineteenth-century Indian mystic and reviver of Hinduism.

Fa-Tsang's school of Mahāyāna Buddhism recognises that all monistic systems, while asserting that duality is illusion and that all dualisms coincide in Ultimate Reality, have the greatest difficulty explaining the relation of the pluralistic world to Ultimate Reality — the many to the One. In response to this,

Fa-Tsang sets out to perfect and express his vision of the manner in which things exist; a description of the world as seen by the enlightened.

Fa-Tsang makes a systematic attempt to syncretise, mainly, the Buddhist doctrines of Emptiness (*Śūnyatā*), as formulated by Nāgārjuna the founder of the Mādhyamika school of Buddhism, and *Tathāgatagarbha* (Buddha-nature) in order to give a rational basis for an intuition of the nature of things<sup>11</sup>; an intuition of "that most concrete and real existence". A prerequisite in forming this rational basis is the recognition of the subtle emptiness of all phenomena, ie "Reality recognised through a means which eradicates the process of the innate non-analytical intellect which misconceives the nature of the person and other phenomena."<sup>12</sup> Simply, the Buddhist doctrine of Emptiness "... is primarily a logical doctrine which, by the successive self-annihilation of all presuppositions, arrives at an all embracing skepticism." Because all statements are untenable, everything must be dropped until Emptiness alone remains<sup>13</sup>. Nāgārjuna's philosophical position thus lies in the middle between affirmation and negation indicating, in a sense, the mutual identity of "yes" and "no". In their emptiness, all dualisms coincide; they are no longer different but the same<sup>14</sup>.

In Mahāyāna Buddhism, the doctrine of Emptiness (*Śūnyatā*) dictates that substantiality cannot be posited of an actual person or things "... yet the actual existence which is existing in the way that cannot be conceptualised is the most concrete and real existence .... (that is to say) The Emptiness theory negates misconception of reality but does not negate reality itself." It urges us to

comprehend reality such as it is because, in its Suchness (*Tathatā*), reality "... cannot be grasped by the dichotomous thinking of our intellect which works on the basis of duality principle (*dvaya*)."<sup>15</sup> One has to move beyond the principle of duality to comprehend reality in its suchness.

The recognition of the subtle emptiness of all phenomena is, for Fa-Tsang, a criterion for the assertion of universal identity understood as the perception of interdependence of everything<sup>16</sup> "... for if anything exists or has any function at all it is within the total environment; ... to exist in any sense ... means to exist in dependence on the other which is infinite in number"<sup>17</sup>. The principle of universal identity, or mutual identity, is essentially a state of non-differentiation and all-inclusiveness by merging all antithesis. Identity is the *static* relationship amongst things while interdependence is the *dynamic* relationship, and both are alternative ways of saying all is empty<sup>18</sup>. In other words, Emptiness is "... the interdependent existence of the universe or, possibly, the interdependent existence which is the universe (*dharmadhatu pratītyasamutpāda*)."<sup>19</sup>

For Fa-Tsang, the postulation of identity does not remove distinctions for not only are the seeming oppositions identical but, paradoxically, they are identical *because* they are different. Distinctions are in form and function among constituents of the whole and "... each individual is required in its own form, with its own unique function, to act as a condition for the whole in question."<sup>20</sup> For example, the identity of one's tongue and one's toe consists in their identity as conditions for the whole person. As a result, the two are different

while they are the same — they are identical because they are different! The part is merely an abstraction from the unitary whole in the same way as, when you see your right hand, you see it in its particularity; however, this hand is an abstraction from you as a whole being, yet, really, your hand is not different from you. In fact it *is* you. People think and experience, ordinarily, in terms of isolated, distinct, separate beings while practitioners of *Hua-yen*, because they conceive in terms of *relationship* between these same beings, think and experience in terms of one Being and, at the same time, do not reject the dual aspect of reality (where self as subject encounters objects over and against itself); rather, they view distinctions as necessary criteria to complete Ultimate Reality. That is to say, there is unity in diversity and diversity in unity. Thus Emptiness makes possible the various types of beings, suffering, salvation and all schools of thought and behaviour. Fa-Tsang's *Hua-yen* discusses the interdependence of dual and non-dual aspects of reality in their Totality. No thing is excluded in Suchness. For existence, in its totality, is both life *and* death, suffering *and* salvation, subject *and* object, plural *and* whole, and "To see things in a totalistic perspective means to transcend a small pathetic subjectivity and see all pernicious vexing contraries harmonised within the whole."<sup>21</sup>

Such skills, however, are available only to the few and exceptional among those who enquire into the nature of Reality. Śrī Rāmakrishna was one of those few. In his deference for (and thorough understanding of) those who worship God with form (the dualistic, "confrontational" mode of religious experience) and equally for those who

worship the formless God (the non-dual, “interiority” mode of religious experience), Srī Rāmakrishna is placed justifiably among that rare number of people capable of knowing directly “... all the pernicious and vexing contraries harmonised within the whole” and of fully understanding, via experience, the relationship of duality to the non-dual; of “confrontation” to “interiority; of the individual to the Self.

These words:

*Greeting to the feet of the Jnani! (Wise).*  
*Greeting to the feet of the Bhakti! (Devoted).*  
*Greeting to the devout who believe in the formless God!*  
*Greeting to those who believe in God with form!*  
*Greeting to the men of old who knew Brahman!*  
*Greeting to the modern knowers of Truth ....*<sup>22</sup>

spoken by Srī Rāmakrishna, point directly to the two major forms of the revelation of Ultimate Reality. The first form is the non-dual (*advaita*) experience of unitive mysticism where any notion of self as a separate entity vanishes with the identification of the self with Ultimate Reality. The second type is the dual (*dvaita*) experience wherein Ultimate Reality is experienced, essentially, as an object over against the individual self as subject. It is peculiar to the genius of Rāmakrishna that he manages to reconcile these apparently contradictory views and, in doing so, profoundly affect the lives of many people — in particular, Narendra Nath Datta, later to become Swāmi Vivekānanda who, on his master’s death, became a *sannyāsin* (wandering monk) and devoted himself to the propagation of Rāmakrishna’s teaching and to the service of humanity.

Rāmakrishna’s teaching, which in essence insists on the fundamental unity of all religions, is founded on his experiences following his initiation to two teachers. His first great *guru*, Bhairavi, taught the devotional way to approach Ultimate Reality. The devotee (*bhakta*),

*... whose knowledge is derived through love, begins by accepting one form of God in his chosen ideal, as Rāmakrishna the Divine Mother. For a long time he is absorbed in this one love. At first he cannot attain the object of his devotion, but gradually he comes to see, touch and converse with it.*<sup>23</sup>

In this instance, Ultimate Reality takes the personal form of the beloved object over against the devotee as subject, ie it is a dual (*dvaita*) experience. However, Rāmakrishna’s second great teacher, Tota Puri<sup>24</sup>, was to instruct him in the mysteries of the purest monism thus leading to the meditative experience of identity with Ultimate Reality, i.e. Brahman, in which “... all trace of duality vanishes away and the conscious and thinking ego is totally obliterated.”<sup>25</sup>

According to Śaṅkara, what is taken to be the individual self is the result of ignorance “*avidya*), “... the erroneous imposition of particularity on the one true Self which is Brahman”<sup>26</sup>, ie a reality devoid of particularity and distinctions. To attain this realisation of oneness, Rāmakrishna was compelled to eliminate the last trace of dualism from his mind, ie his love for the object of his devotion — Kālī the Mother Goddess<sup>27</sup>, thus removing what *Advaita Vedānta* considers to be an innate error. Simply, Rāmakrishna’s experiences led from the dualistic encounter with Ultimate Reality to the non-dual realisation of Ultimate Reality confirming the Vedāntic thesis

that, eventually, "... the truly spiritual man will rise beyond ... personal and anthropomorphic concepts in his realisation of his identity with the absolute."<sup>28</sup> However, Rāmakrishna did not abandon the insights gained from his primary experience for the insight of the other.

Finding ultimate value in both experiences and his subsequent experiments with the appropriate scriptures, prayers and spiritual disciplines of other religions leads to the understanding that "... what lies behind the various religions of the world is a single Reality. In this respect he harked back to the later phase of the early Vedic religion which saw in so many Gods so many symbols of the one Reality."<sup>29</sup> In essence, Rāmakrishna's dual and non-dual experiences (and his realisation of the ultimate value of both) gave him the ability to see not just the Absolute One, but the Absolute One in Multiplicity; to see unity in diversity. According to Rāmakrishna, "The devotee who has seen God in one aspect only, knows him in that aspect alone. But he who has seen him in manifold aspects is alone in a position to say, 'All these forms are of one God and God is multiform.' He is formless and with form, and many are his forms which no one knows."<sup>30</sup>

Here, Rāmakrishna's words suggest a direct relationship between the immediate, unitive knowledge, ie the non-duality as propagated by Śaṅkara, and the dualism of devotion — where the devotee as subject worships the beloved object. For Rāmakrishna, "... the infinite and the finite are not distinct, but the finite is wholly suffused by the infinite..." in opposition to the notion of pure monism which denies "... all real

existence to all except the One."<sup>31</sup> That is to say, the monists reject summarily any ideas of multiplicity of Ultimate Reality as illusion (*māyā*); ultimately, all is infinite and the notion of finiteness is the result of ignorance — the illusion of the world lies in our false perception of the world as multiform.

Rāmakrishna, however, does not reject the apparent multiplicity of the world out of hand but, instead, acknowledges its contradictory nature in being the One yet many, understood as the historical process at some point in which "... we must reach perfection ... and that will be the transcending of our historical individuality ... (for history) is the working out of a purpose ... *Mokṣa* is the realisation of the purpose of each individual. When one individual completes his purpose, he develops the universality of outlook characteristic of perfection but retains his individuality as a centre of action."<sup>32</sup>

As one such individual centre of action, Rāmakrishna's sole aim is to transmit some of his own dual/non-dual experience of Ultimate Reality to others to make them realise the divine potentialities in themselves. Rāmakrishna's statement noted above, that "All these forms are of one God and God is multiform", suggests that, if we are to realise the implication of Rāmakrishna's teaching and its subsequent effect on India and other countries, we must first try to understand the nature of the relationship between *dvaita* and *advaita*. That is to say, we must first try to understand the affinity of duality with non-duality, pluralism with holism, the finite with the infinite, the Many with the One — the world with Brahman.

The philosopher S. Radhakrishnan believes that it is unfair to represent Śaṅkara's *dvaita* view as illusionism which denies real existence to all except the One, for "We perceive objects and do not simply contemplate apparitions and that no theory has ever asserted that life is a dream and all experienced events are illusions."<sup>33</sup> Isherwood and Prabhavananda state that, in fact, when Śaṅkara says that the multiform world is not real, he does not mean that it is non-existent but that "... finite objects and their relations are a misreading of Brahman ... ; the universe (ie the reality of name and form — duality) is a superimposition upon Brahman"<sup>34</sup>, resulting in the world as we ordinarily know it. Ignorance (*avidya*), according to S. Radhakrishnan, "... is not a private profession of this or that individual's mind; it is common to all minds, being the cosmic principle of finiteness (which is the cause of the whole empirical world (*pṛthivī*) common to all (*sarvasādhāraṇa*)."<sup>35</sup> Isherwood and Prabhavananda believe that, in our ignorance, we superimpose the idea of a finite individual upon our awareness of existence, thus, by claiming individuality for ourselves, we imply individuality everywhere; we create a multiple world of creatures and objects from the undifferentiated reality which is Brahman<sup>36</sup>. In other words, the logical dualism between subject and object rests on a monism; they (subject and object) are characteristics of Ultimate Reality in its immanence, which according to S. Radhakrishnan is "... a fact admitting to various degrees."<sup>37</sup> Swāmi Vivekānanda notes that all difference (i.e. duality — the multiform notion of reality) in this world, be it between weakness and

strength, virtue and vice, heaven and hell, or life and death, "... is one of degree and not of kind."<sup>38</sup> By this criterion, we can say that the relationship between *dvaita* and *advaita*, i.e. duality and non-duality (or individuality and universality — pluralism and holism), is also of degree and not of kind. As a result, the One can be seen in the Many and the Many in the One.

Śaṅkara, however, does not assert an identity between the world as we normally know it and Ultimate Reality, nor does he assert that we can determine logically the relation between the finite and the infinite. As he sees it, "... questions about the origin of illusion are unanswerable, and the nature of illusion is indefinable."<sup>39</sup> If we raise the question how duality rises out of non-duality, Śaṅkara says it is an incomprehensible mystery. Nevertheless, where Śaṅkara fails to determine, logically, the relation between the many and the one, Rāmakrishna succeeds in defining their relation via myth by combining the monism of Śaṅkara with the multiforms of Kālī the Mother Goddess, thus incorporating both levels of truth as espoused by Śaṅkara. Rāmakrishna uses a mythical viewpoint to unite the higher level of truth, in which the notion of individuality is transcended, along with the lower level of truth, in which ordinary judgements implying reality of the multiform world have provisional validity.

To elaborate, Rāmakrishna tells us that it is Ultimate Reality which deludes the world with illusion. As seen in the Dakṣiṇācāra form or "Right-Hand Practice" of Śaktāism, *Brahman* is understood as embodying the male principle of *Śiva* and the female principle *Śakti* or power displayed under the

personification as wife of Śiva, the Divine Mother who represents the world-illusion within which exist all names and forms. From itself, as the One embodying these principles, is produced (via *māyā*) the multiplicity and diversity of the world. Śaktaism is the veneration of the female principle of *Brahman* while accepting the teaching of *Advaita Vedānta*. However, øaktaism "... shifts the accent to the positive aspect of *māyā*, holding that the world is an unending manifestation of the dynamic aspect of the Divine, and as such, should be revered and cherished and experienced with insight and understanding rather than depreciated and discarded."<sup>40</sup> Symbolically, the antagonistic principles of Śiva and Śakti "... unite to constitute a single organism, a paradox, representative of the intrinsic twofold nature of the onefold universe and its inhabitant, man."<sup>41</sup>

In spite of his *advaita* experience, the focus of Rāmakrishna's life remained the Goddess Kālī, the mother of infinite variety and forms, who, as such, is the active personal being including all individual souls<sup>42</sup>. Thus, Rāmakrishna's devotion to the multiform or pluralistic aspect of the One paves the way for his followers who emphasise the One in doctrine and the Many in practice, i.e. although the philosophical doctrine of *advaita* predominates the literature presented to the western world by the followers of Rāmakrishna, it is the veneration of this dynamic, and hence multiform, aspect of Ultimate Reality which motivates his followers to actually *care* for the world and its many people while exhibiting a wide tolerance in matters of religious belief and practice. The teaching which arises from the unique experience of Rāmakrishna moves his followers, through the dynamic

personality of Swāmi Vivekānanda, from metaphysics to social action.

In as much as Vivekānanda appreciated the essential unity of the world as we normally know it, he came to identify himself with its multiplicity of forms by focusing on the sorrows of the whole world, knowing that "... even the differences leading to strife among men are the daughters of the same Mother: that the 'Omnipresent Differentiation' is the face of God Himself ..."<sup>43</sup> The relief of suffering becomes the main duty of Rāmakrishna's followers thus making an important stage in the growth of the Hindu social conscience. This main duty is actualised in the running of hospitals in India, in the active participation in education both inside and outside India, and in centres for the propagation of understanding the Hindu tradition, in the hope that our dichotomising, multiform world may learn to live the life of the Ultimate Reality in a society ordered with the furtherance of the life of Ultimate Reality.

In its most abstract sense, the reconciliation of seemingly antagonistic experiences of Ultimate Reality, as established by Fa-Tsang and Rāmakrishna, is described by Garma C C Chang as "the interpenetration of mutual containment"<sup>44</sup> or, in equally abstruse wording by Robert Thurman, as "the non-dual integration and preservation of opposites."<sup>45</sup> In other words, the dualistic experience (wherein the devotee confronts the deity as a subject facing an object) and the monistic experience (in which all notions of distinction vanish into Oneness) simultaneously consolidate into "... a kind of completeness between devotee and deity wherein some form of pluralistic individualism is preserved"<sup>46</sup>; the realisation that, despite diversity of

appearances, individuality is somehow integral to Ultimate Reality while in no way depreciating its perfection and infinitude.

Bearing in mind the implication of Fa-Tsang's *Hua-yen* philosophy, ie "the non-dual integration and preservation of opposites", and the extraordinary experience of Śrī Rāmakrishna, we can say that all religions do believe in some Ultimate Reality beyond the individual. However, the point I hope to have made in this paper is that the religious experiences of meditation practitioners need not *only* be opposed in categories such a dualism and monism, but, in contradiction to our tendency as researchers to dichotomise "the world as it is", may *also* exist in a direct relationship where difference of kind is seen as difference of degree. That is to say, the dynamics of the continuum of cognition and the two preferred modes of perceiving that were applied previously to researchers in Studies in Religion can apply also to meditation practitioners whose religious experiences, I suggest, become refracted by their preferred cognitive styles into a pluralistic view (eg dualism), a globalistic view (eg monism), or some synthesis of both. It was noted above that each cognitive style is independently valid in the continuum of cognition. Consequently, both pluralistic and globalistic view-points in Studies in Religion (it was urged) should be recognised as equally legitimate. Similarly, the meditative experiences that inform the ontological categories designated dualism and monism should be equally valid.

For this reason, we may come to fully understand and appreciate Vivekānanda's affirmation realised through his intimate association with Śrī Rāmakrishna:

*The only God in whom I believe is the sum total of all souls, and above all I believe in my God the wicked, my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races.*<sup>47</sup>

## Notes

1. See Crangle, Edward F. 'Cognitive Styles and Studies in Religion', *Australian Religion Studies Review*, 1995, 8/1, 22-26.
2. *ibid.* pp23- 25.
3. *ibid.*, p24. Regarding my main area of research in eastern contemplative practices, see for example, Crangle, Edward F. *The Origin and Development of Early Indian Contemplative Practices*, volume 29, Studies in Oriental Religions, Walther Heissig & Hans Joachim Klimkeit (eds), Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1994. I am grateful to The Edith Cowan University who support my interest in cognitive styles and their relationship to meditative styles by my appointment as their Post-doctoral Research Fellow in Intercultural Studies.
4. I would like to thank Dr Rod Bucknell (Department of Studies in Religion, The University of Queensland) who read an earlier draft of this paper. His subsequent advice proved invaluable by helping to clarify some of the complex notions that the paper attempts to articulate.
5. Ninian Smart, "Different Paths, Different Goals", in *Ways of Being Religious*, (ed.) Streng, F J et al. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 973, pp314-319), pp316-317.
6. R Thurman, "Confrontation and Interior Realization in Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Traditions", in P Berger, (ed) *The Other Side of God: Polarity in World Religions*, (NY: AnchorPress/Doubleday, 1981), p209.
7. P L Berger, 'Preface' in P L Berger, (ed.) *The Other Side of God: Polarity in World Religions*, (NY: AnchorPress/Doubleday, 1981, pp.vii-viii), p.vii.
8. *ibid.*, pp. vii-viii.
9. Qualified Non-dualism developed by the philosopher Ramanuja.

10. The *Hua-yen* or Flower Garland school was nominally founded in China by Tu-shun (557-640). However, Fa-Tsang is understood to be the true founder.
11. F H Cook, *Hua-yen Buddhism*, (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania UP, 1977), p55.
12. Jeffrey Hopkins, *Meditation on Emptiness*, (Wisconsin: PhD Thesis, University of Wisconsin, 1973), p610.
13. E Conze, "Buddhism: The Mahāyāna", in *The Concise Encyclopaedia of Living Faiths*, (London: Hutchinson, 1977, 1st publ., 1959, pp296-320), p317.
14. E Conze, *Buddhism*, (UK: Bruno Casirer, 1957, 1st publ., 1951), pp132-133.
15. I Yamada, "Premises and Implications of Interdependence", in *Buddhist Studies in Honour of Walpola Rahula*, (London: Gordon Fraser Gallery & Sri Lanka Vāmamsā, 1980, pp267-293), pp277-281.
16. Cook. op.cit., p.66.
17. *ibid.*, p2.
18. *ibid.*, p15.
19. *ibid.*, p34.
20. *ibid.*, p10.
21. *ibid.*, p28.
22. Romain Rolland, *The Life of Ramakrishna*, (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1960, 6th ed.), p1, quoting Ramakrishna, 28th October, 1882.
23. *ibid.*, p48.
24. Tota Puri was a member of the Puri sect which was one of the monastic orders established by Śākhara — the outstanding master of Non-dual (*Advaita*) *Vedānta*.
25. R C Zaehner, *Hinduism*, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1962), p162.
26. Thomas J Hopkins, *The Hindu Religious Tradition*, (Encino, California: Dickenson, 1971), p119.
27. C Isherwood, *Ramakrishna and his Disciples*, (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1969), p119.
28. Ninian Smart, *The Religious Experience of Mankind* (London: Collins, 1978; 1st publ NY: Scribner's Sons, 1969) p677.
29. *ibid.*, pp181-182.
30. Huston Smith, *The Religions of Man*, (NY: Harper & Row, 1958), p87, quoting Swāmi Abhedarānanda in *The Sayings of Ramakrishna*, NY: Vedānta Society, 1903.
31. Zaehner, op.cit., p165.
32. Radhakrishnan, *The Hindu Way of Life*, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1927), p46.
33. *ibid.*, pp47-50.
34. C Isherwood & Swami Prabhavananda, *Shankara's Crest Jewel of Discrimination*, (US: Vedanta Press, 1947), pp8-9.
35. Radhakrishnan, op.cit., p48.
36. Isherwood & Prabhavananda, op.cit., p14.
37. Radhakrishnan, op.cit., pp48-51.
38. Swāmi Vivekānanda, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1968, 11th ed.), p299.
39. Ninian Smart, *Doctrine and Argument in Indian Philosophy*, (London: Allen and Unwin, 1964), pp99-100.
40. Ruth Reyna, *Introduction to Indian Philosophy*, (New Delhi: Tata McGraw-Hill, 1971), pp234-235.
41. Heinrich Zimmer, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization*, (NY: Harper & Row, 1962, 1st publ., NY: Pantheon, 1946), p216.
42. Reyna, op.cit. p234.
43. D G Mukerji, *The Face of Silence*, as paraphrased in Rolland, op.cit. p80.
44. Garma C C Chang, *The Buddhist Teaching of Totality*, (London: Allen & Unwin, 1972), p183.
45. Thurman, op.cit., p.210.
46. *ibid.*, p211.
47. T M P Mahadevan, *Outlines of Hinduism*, (Bombay: Chetana, 1977, 1st publ., 1956), p222.