Consciousness in the Vedanta
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M

2019

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A Metaphysical Synthesis of Sri Ramana Maharshi's Teachings

Dissertação realizada no âmbito do Mestrado em Filosofia, orientada pelo Professor Doutor Paulo Tunhas

Faculdade de Letras da Universidade do Porto

Setembro de 2019

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Classificação obtida: 16 valores

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Declaration of Honour

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Porto, September 28, 2019

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Abstract

A problematisation of the Hindu philosophical culture comprised in the Advaita Vedanta through the teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi, centred in the role and meaning of consciousness to such body of knowledge. We build this endeavour via metaphysics, to try and understand how such culture deals with the classical problems of being, mind, and consciousness; and how these relate with the world. To such end, we expose and hopefully clarify, the three cosmogonical theories of *ajata vada*, *drishti-shristi vada* and *shristi-drishti vada*, present in the Advaita Vedanta. Through them, we posit the conceptual cascade of i) the world does not exist, ii) the world's illusive existence arises from the mind, iii) the mind does not exist, iv) the mind's illusive existence arises from the 'I-thought', v) this 'I' does not exist, vi) only pure[1] consciousness exists, and as such vii) the reality of the 'I' and the world only exist in consciousness as consciousness.[2] To help us in such effort, we make use of the Hindu notion of *triputi*[3] (rooted in the relationship between of seer-seeing-seen or knower-knowing-known)[4], and the abstract exercise of the topological metaphor. Through the latter we conjure a symbolical cosmogony that attempts to account for such worldview, hopefully inviting one to go beyond its feeble construction into the quest for genuine understanding[5] of Sri Ramana Maharshi's vedantic *mythos*.

Keywords: consciousness, self, I-thought, mind.

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[1] Using Sri Ramana Maharshi's own adjective.

[2] The terminology, order, and structure of such argument (here displayed in synthesis), is not our own but Sri Ramana Maharshi's (and by extension the Vedanta's as well) through the available translations to English.

[3] According to the Marathi-English dictionary a '*triputi*' is a trinity composed of the aggregate of agent, object and action.

[4] Alternatively (on our own terminology) subject-event-object.

[5] See note 19 and appendix 1.

Methodological Considerations

This thesis is written from the vedantic worldview itself towards the reader, meaning that we voice the Advaita Vedanta as the truth against which all else is measured. This is a literary and philosophical choice that better suits our meta-philosophical beliefs, and not the intention to evangelise or ignorantly dismiss the validity of any other worldview which might be counterpointed. Ergo, our work is not properly critical or inside the scope of what one would call analytical philosophy. To us such choice seems more adequate to faithfully expound such ancient body of knowledge without risking to compromise its meaning in futile comparisons or overly critical hermeneutics. Although this might seem an overzealous position, our own worldview (particularly regarding epistemology) prevents us from such analytical endeavour, since to us each of these ancient bodies of knowledge are incomparable in form. And while we do accept that there's unity between them in what they *truly* mean, that unity is only understandable (as such) in a mystical[6] way and not in any formal or rational exercise. Hence we prefer to deal with our current subject matter as a philosophical island, although voiced with terms compatible with Western contemporary philosophy, which ultimately is the real exercise at hand.[7] The only remnant of an analytical pursuit in the thesis is found at its end, into the relationship of the Advaita Vedanta and panpsychism.

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[6] See note 20.

[7] In notes 8, 9, 11, 16, 17, and 20, we further expand all these considerations in a more tangible a relatable way.

Introduction

At the first stages of this endeavour our aim was to develop a metaphysical theory that could express our worldview, and show the stark difference between such view and (how we understand) the philosophical theories of our day. A view that had not risen from our path in the academy (although furthered by it), but from the inmost philosophical quest to find the meaning of life. [Which perhaps is the fundamental quest of philosophy and what truly makes us human.]

Since the philosophical tradition that seemed to agree with us the most was that of the Hindus, we thought it adequate to select a renowned contemporary reference that allowed us to expose such tradition, from which our own theory was thence supposedly to be built upon. Little did we know that such selection was about to completely reshuffle our intentions for such work, and subside the somewhat vain impetus of creating a novel metaphysical theory.

To discover the Vedas, particularly the Advaita Vedanta, through the eyes of Sri Ramana Maharshi was an event to the level of learning how to see again after years of blindness. As the research for the thesis moved deeper and deeper into his vedantic teachings, every pre-designs we had for our theoretical exposition became eclipsed, and soon we realised that the most valuable thing we could do was to try and bring into the western philosophical academy an account of such body of knowledge.

Although we cannot claim that such account will be novel, given the various western academical works on the subject matter, we'll try to shed a new light on how the Advaita Vedanta truly differs from anything currently being defended in the philosophical academies of our western world. Be that in the context of metaphysics, ontology, philosophy of mind, philosophy of action, and so on. The challenge thus forward will be to adequately translate the vedantic worldview of Sri Ramana Maharshi, particularly in the forms of *ajata*, *drishti-shristi*, and *shristi-drishti*, into a comprehensive conceptual structure that allows our western minds to realise such difference.

Through the classical and contemporary philosophical problems of being, mind, consciousness, and the existence of a world, we will try to show how the Advaita Vedanta construes its worldview, and from there hopefully evoke the conclusion that our philosophical traditions of physicalism, dualism, and even panpsychism, cannot fit in such view.

We will refrain though from doing it in a critical or analytical fashion (for reasons already discussed above in the methodological considerations), to instead expose it against itself through metaphysical and cosmogonical constructions, supported by extensive references of direct accounts

of Sri Ramana Maharshi on the subject, and furthered by abstract exercises such as the topological metaphor.

In that fashion we will contend that for the Advaita Vedanta all the plethora contained in that which we normally perceive as a world, be that the objective or subjective world, does not exist. That only consciousness (as perceived in the Vedanta) exists. Which will makes us ultimately declare such worldview as uncompromisingly acosmic. We'll thence show that contrary to most worldviews, here there is no world and its unfolding, no locality be that in space or time, no entities or beings, no seer and seen, but only consciousness as the ever aware and undefinable *apeiron* that is *Atman*. More importantly, we'll also contend that we ourselves are that consciousness, and that the only thing preventing us from realising it is our identification with a thought that says — 'I am this or that' —, a thought that is itself the sole responsible for the illusion of an existing world, of a seer and a seen.

Part I

Sri Ramana Maharshi and the Advaita Vedanta

Epigraph

"Know that the world that rises, persists and then sets is wholly the play of *chit-sakti* [the power of consciousness]. […] The imperfect body and the world arise in consciousness, as consciousness, remain in consciousness [and subside in consciousness]. […] As it is consciousness that appears as everything, those who have known the truth of consciousness have known the truth of everything."[8]

Chapter I

Language, Symbols, and Tradition

1. Throughout the ages man has looked at the sky and wondered at his existence, posing the three grand questions — who am I(?), how am I(?) and why am I(?) — and seeing what lied beyond himself, he posed the same questions for what it saw — what is the world(?), how did it came to be(?), and why it exists(?).

2. From time immemorial many stories have tried to satisfy such restlessness. And from time to time, and place to place, some narratives did so to the larger kin of man. Marking such epochs with a particular worldview from which man perceived himself and the world. Most still linger today, apparently fighting for the brighter place in the sun of man's mind.

3. But have these questions really been answered? Or can they really be answered? Is it our language and rational thought capable of doing it so? Better still, have this stories of old answered such questions in a language that is compatible with rational hermeneutics?

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[8] Muruganar, *Padamalai*, translated by T.V. Venkatasubramanian, R. Butler, and D. Godman, edited and annotated by D. Godman, David Godman, USA 2004, pp. 93-94.

4. After the dawn of the illuminists age, it is most rare for man today to escape his father's curse of being blind to what the rational mind can't reach. Leaving all the mythological plethora to mere sterile residues. For too long have the treasures of traditions[9] been seen as the chest that carries them. But those who have dived inwards, have seen that the real *ethos* of its language is not analytical and discursive, but on the contrary, it is symbolic.

5. The *symbolon* is the true language of mythology, religion, and metaphysics[10]. The only language in which such questions can be answered. Not as definitions, not as closed systems or logical prepositions, but as gateways left by those who have lived the pursued reality. As the arcanum of the High Priestess reveals, the book of knowledge that comprises these answers is written from her gnostic sight over the mystical experience of the Magician.[11] Hence these

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[9] We could say that 'traditions' here, refer to the type of bodies of knowledge inherent in religions and esoteric schools. Although, religion is a relatively modern concept that may pervert our meaning. And moreover, esoteric schools here are meant more as the structure and mode of teaching of a given body of knowledge, than a denominated organisation in itself. Hence, 'tradition' seems the more adequate description to our intention — as the notion of an ancient and coherent body of knowledge passed down the ages through a given people. It could be said that 'esoteric traditions' might be a more accurate description still, since here we are mostly talking of spiritual and metaphysical concepts; but these traditions we speak of are not bounded by such distinctions, as esoteric versus exoteric, or subjective versus objective knowledge. Both worlds, if we can call them that, are really one single world to such traditions, providing a unified and coherent worldview that encompasses all our modern categories (and beyond). We say that they are ancient, because it is a fact that most of these bodies of knowledge already existed at the time of birth of our western civilisation. And although some admittedly sprout afterwards, these latter are all arguably branched versions of more ancient ones.

[10] We say that the 'true language' of metaphysics is symbolic, for the fundamental nature of reality (that is its *raison d'être*) and our awareness of it, stand beyond the scope of logical reasoning and rational understanding — as we argued in our previous article *"Penrose's Argument for C & Questions for the Possibility of Combining Positions C and D"*. Hence, using Roger Penrose's adjective to describe Kurt Godel's and Plato's positions, our understanding of the fundamental nature of reality can only be mystical. And as such beyond formal definitions. If such position is accepted, then instead of formal systems that enclose and dislodge reality from itself in sterile approximations, proper metaphysics should only be composed by symbols that invoke such mystical approach. — See appendix 1.

[11] ANONYMOUS, *Meditations on the Tarot*, translated by R. Powell, Tarcher/Penguin, USA 2002, p.42. — Authorship later attributed to Valentin Tomberg.

aeonic whispers[12] point, direct, open, and invoke man to live the mystery posed by such mighty enquiry. Rationality here can only role-play the blind historian that is incapable of living what it documents.[13]

6. Our *cosmogony of consciousness*[14] though, follows the legacy of its forbearers. Remaining a humble testimony of what the teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi have inspired and enlighten, with the intent of partaking as faithfully as is permitted the true treasure that is *ajata vada*[15] and the Advaita Vedanta[16] as a whole.

Chapter II

Beyond the Rational and into the Mystical

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[12] 'Aeonic' for theses bodies of knowledge, as said in note 2, are truly ancient and seemingly atemporal or archetypal in nature (in the jungian sense). And 'whispers' for the apparently occult or subtle way in which they present themselves. Now 'occult' is not in the sense of a secret knowledge by any means, for these symbols and narratives are out in the open at all times. They are 'occult' in the sense that despite being in plain sight, they only evoke their true meaning to those who are ready for such knowledge in a mystical way. What this *way* is, is one of the problematics dealt in the present work, although only expounded through the eyes of the vedantic tradition.

[13] "The Supreme is concealed when the world is seen, and conversely, when the Supreme is seen, the world disappears. Both cannot be seen distinctly, as two separate entities, at the same time, [just as] in a carved statue of a dog, the dog and the stone cannot be seen as two separate entities simultaneously." — MURUGANAR, *Guru Vachaka Kovai*, translated by T.V. Venkatasubramanian, R. Butler, and D. Godman, edited and annotated by D. Godman, David Godman, USA 2008, p. 25.

[14] Title of the second part of the thesis.

[15] "*Ajata vada*" or "*ajativada*" or "*ajata/ajati siddhanta*" literally means doctrine or system of thought — "*vada*" or "*siddhanta*" — of no creation or no origination — "*ajata*" or "*ajati*". "*A*" meaning 'not' and "*jata*" or "*jati*" meaning creation or origination.

[16] The Advaita Vendanta is the oldest sub-school of the Vedanta which is part of the sacred texts known as the Upanishads, the latter in turn being a part of the larger body of the Vedas. "*Advaita*" means not-dual or no-duality — "*a*" [not], "*dvaita*" [dual or duality] —; while "*vedanta*" literally means 'the last part of the Vedas, or alternatively 'the goal of the Vedas' — for "*anta*" means 'the end of' or 'the goal of'. Finally the word 'Veda' comes from the root '*vid*' which means 'to know' in Sanskrit.

7. While most cosmogonies seem univocal, coherent and even unidimensional[17] in their compositions, mythological and religious ones are not so. Like escherian stairs, as the initiates climb, each step of theory and dogma leads to dramatic metamorphosis in the space of knowing.[18] Something that to the uninitiated eye can only be understood as a paradox.[19]

8. This is the nature of the symbolic. It always reveals and occults in proportion to the stage of the initiate. Contrary to horizontal narratives[20] — that are of a formal nature and thusly prone to

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[17] 'Unidimensional' in the sense that what these systems convey and the way that they convey it, is limited to a literal or formal interaction with the system itself. Whereas the mythological and religious ones that we are pointing, have been historically interpreted through different dimensions of understanding, that escape the computational or rational approach. In the Judaeo-Christian tradition for example, four types of hermeneutics are regularly discriminated — literal, moral, allegorical, and anagogical — or alternatively — literal, allegorical, metaphysical, and mystical.

[18] These "metamorphosis in the space of knowing" point to how these cosmogonies' epistemological processes change the mode of knowing and understanding in the subject himself. We do not mean that '*a*' at some point meant '*b*', and that at some other point started to mean '*c*' (although that too), but that the way of the subject knowing '*a*' changed (which naturally can also change what '*a*' means). Hence these metamorphosis relate to the quality and dimensions of knowing, and not to the amount of information or the power to compute.

[19] "Q: *The* Vedas *contain conflicting accounts of cosmogony. Ether is said to be the first creation in one place; vital energy [*prana*] in another place; something else in yet another; water in still another, and so on. How are these to be reconcile? Do not these impair the credibility of the* Vedas*?* A: Different seers saw different aspects of truth at different times, each emphasising one view. Why do you worry about their conflicting statements? The essential aim of the *Vedas* is to teach us the nature of the imperishable *atman* and show us that we are that." — SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI, *Be As You Are*, edited by D. Godman, Penguin Books, UK 2017, p.185.

[20] These two notions of 'horizontal' and 'vertical' narratives, synthesise what we have written in previous stanzas and annotated in notes 10, 12, 17, and 18. These spacial references seem to describe well our intention, where the vertical is related to quality and higher dimensions, and horizontal to quantity and no dimensional change. This is not a novel use to such terms, e.g. René Guenón has extensively written on the subject — *The Symbolism of the Cross*, *The Reign of Quantity and the Signs of the Times*, *The Crisis of the Modern World*, etcetera —, explaining how most traditions have applied such symbols. We should also say, that our notion of 'vertical narrative' adequately expresses the analogical nature of the Hermetic maxim *as above so below*, that so fittingly expresses the whole *ethos* of this thesis.

analytical decoding —, vertical narratives require genuine understanding of the soul[21] to unlock their meanings. Something akin to what Plato realised and the *Acts of Thomas* sung — true knowledge is not acquired but reminisced. Hence traditions have built their cosmogonies more with mementos rather than sensical conceptual structures. Each memento reminding the soul of its true nature.

9. Since most of his life man perceives the world in what has been called a tridimensional space-time, where experience is localised and its eventual unfolding appears linear, he assumes his epistemological process to inevitably behave accordingly. Hence always cumulative, always relative, and always objective. Although in reality it is not so.

10. Knowing transports and transforms man into the living space of meaning, through which the world is seen and the I is experienced.[22] These gnostic dimensions are neither co-dependent nor

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[21] The notion 'genuine understanding' here is a reference to Roger Penrose's cautionary distinction to the use of the term 'understanding' without implying awareness (see appendix 1). Since the 'awareness' that Penrose's speaks, is to us the 'consciousness' that we also freely converse with the term 'soul'; we thusly say that genuine understanding can only happen in and from the soul. Moreover, as explained in note 10, our position is that such awareness is mystical in nature, i.e. it escapes any scientific approach (using Penrose's own categorisation). We apply such mode of genuine understanding to vertical narratives in opposition to horizontal ones, for the latter is palatable to a scientific approach, whereas the former is not. Compatible with this but still going beyond it, the vedantic view that we expose in this work, postulates that this awareness or consciousness is itself the fundamental nature of reality. This implies that all knowledge of reality lies already in consciousness, and thence not gained or accumulated; which is why we reference Plato's epistemology and the Acts of Thomas afterwards.

[22] Note that we are actually saying that man transforms its being into these spaces of meaning, and moreover, that what he perceives as himself and the world is the meaning which he experiences and identifies as himself and the world.

complementary, linear or gradual; they are just the adequate proportion of reality the initiate is able to cope with.[23]

11. Sri Ramana Maharshi partook the vedantic tradition to his devotees through such therapeutic wisdom.[24] [25] For some Sri Ramana would teach *srishti-drishti*[26] *vada*, and for others he would teach *drishti-srishti*[27] *vada*, but he regularly mentioned that the true experience of the *jnani*[28] was *ajata vada*.

Chapter III

Srishti-Drishti

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[23] We say that these gnostic dimensions are not "co-dependent nor complementary, linear or gradual", building upon notes 17, 18, and 20; and in opposition to the view of stanza 9. The dimensional characterisation of the process seems appropriate, since in our view the qualitative jumps undergone by initiates in what they know and understand, do not build upon each other. Each dimension being a kind of absolute space of meaning. Thusly not dependent or complementary to each other in any way, and consequentially not traceable one to the other in any kind of linearity or gradient . One could argue though, that there's always a gradient of sorts to this epistemological process, but that relates to the personal process of the subject and not to the gnostic dimensions themselves.

[24] This is a reference to the notion of therapeutic theology in Christian Orthodoxy, which in essence refers to the same *living* and transformative knowledge we have been describing. Herein, more specifically, it's a reference to the process described in note 23, and Sri Ramana's awareness of it. Moreover, following on the last thought of stanza 10, it also speaks to the foreknowledge of the teacher upon the state of its students, and the adequacy of his personalised teaching.

[25] "I do not teach only the *ajata* doctrine. I approve of all schools. The same truth has to be expressed in different ways to suit the capacity of the hearer." — Ibid. p. 184.

[26] "*Srishti*" literally means 'creation' or 'the world', and "*drishti*" means 'perception' or 'seeing'. Hence the juxtaposition order translates into 'creation of the world before or besides the perception of it'. As such s*rishti-drishti vada* is similar to the doctrine of *krama-srishti* that means gradual creation.

[27] In reference to previous note, "*drishti-srishti*" is its opposite — first perception then creation. This doctrine is known as the doctrine of instantaneous creation, alternatively called *yugapat-srishti* — '*yugapat*' meaning 'simultaneous'.

[28] Sage or wise man. He who has realised the ultimate reality or truth — from '*jnana*', which means 'knowledge'.

12. Most of the answers to these eternal questions are a form of *srishti-drishti vada.* Scientific narratives for example, are exclusively contained within such worldview. Yet in tradition, such [type of] narrative exists as a starting point for the aspirant [*abhyasi*], being mild to the rational mind while also summoning the soul towards a devotional path [*bhakti yoga*].

13. *Srishti-drishti vada* comprises the tangible notions of: the world is real; such world was created; and such creation goes beyond man's perception[29] — both in time and in being. The world existed before its perception and it will continue to do so besides and despite it. In other words, the world's existence and creation do not depend on perception or awareness.

14. Since man's existential remembrance commonly ends at birth, and his provenance from beings born before him, man naturally accepts that the world existed before and besides him. Moreover humankind seems to collectively perceive and experience the same unique world — suggesting its realness, its multiplicity, and ontological primacy. As such, that which man sees as separate from himself is perceived as a real thing existing independently from him, and possibly before him.

15. Besides, man's vulgar perception and experience of life is a linear procession of beginnings and endings — something is born to someday die —, hence an idea of a singular point in which the world begun is perfectly sensical. Herein lies the common understanding of most creation narratives: God or a nothing-from-nothing[30] created a world at some singular point from which everything arose.

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[29] Not as beyond the scope of man's perception, but as not dependent on [its] perception to exist.

[30] Or 'the unknown from the unknown'. Herein, the 'nothing' and 'unknown' do not necessarily need to be taken ontologically, the description also encompasses theories such the *big bang*, where the 'nothing-from-nothing' suits it quite literally. Moreover the notion of creation itself doesn't limit the form of *srishti-drishti* to creationism, it only refers to the idea of beginning or emergence of that which is called universe.

16. Alas, this objective world of *krama-srishti* is only perceptible through pairs of opposites [*dvantas*] and trinities [*triputis*].[31] Otherwise, how can something be seen without being relative to another thing? Or how could there be anything seen without a seer and its seeing? Hence (its) perception is always limited to relativity. Never allowing the ideas of truth, unity, wholeness or infinity, to become truly palatable.

17. Moreover, how can that which is called objective perception or experience even exist, when all is solely perceived or experienced subjectively? Isn't the only self-evident truth of one's experiences the existence of an experiencer? If so, shouldn't this enquiry[32] be instead self-directed, towards he who experiences? That is, instead of asking what is the world, or how and why the world exists, shouldn't one first ask 'who am I' that sees and experiences this world?

18. For the *vedantins[33]* searching for the truth in and through the objective world, is like trying to get out of a labyrinth by going deeper into it. The only way out is to turn back the way one came — i.e. to direct the search inwardly towards oneself.

19. This world of relative existence, of separation and difference, bound to time and space, can only put the aspirant who seeks the ultimate truth [*paramartha*] — that is the boundless unity of the absolute — in the path of devotion to that which it cannot comprehend under such reality and

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[31] Pointing to the unsurmountable and unavoidable universal condition of duality of every [local] being, as well as the ever present trinitary nature of this universal unfolding [point (or any 'thing'), that which is not the point (or the 'thing'), and the plane where both exist], and its perception or experience [subject-event-object; or seer-seeing-seen]. In later chapters these matters will be dealt with greater care when expounding the topological metaphor.

[32] The questions raised in the first stanza.

[33] The followers of the Vedanta.

frame of understanding — i.e. the absolute itself. For those who seek the path of knowledge [*jnana*], this world of *srishti-drishti* will have to be abandoned.[34]

Chapter IV

Drishti-Srishti

20. To this seeker, the world of names and forms, of objective reality, is said to be an illusive creation of the mind [*maya*]. Its existence being solely dependent on its perception [*dristhi-sristhi*] and its illusive creation simultaneous with such perception [*yugapat-srishti*]. Hence the apparent relativity and separation of the objective world being only misperceptions akin to a dream — *"Apart from the seer, there is no seen."*[35].

21. Ergo, contrary to *srishti-drishti* where the primal enquiry[36] was directed towards the objective world — not only to explain it[37], but also through it explain one's own subjective existence[38]

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[34] "***Question:*** *What is the end of devotion [*bhaki*] and the path of Siddhanta [i.e., Saiva Siddhanta]?*
Bhagavan: *It is to learn the truth that all one's actions performed with unselfish devotion, with the aid of the three purified instruments [body, speech and mind], in the capacity of servant of the Lord, become the Lord's actions, and to stand forth free from the sense of 'I' and 'mine'. This is also truth of what Saiva Siddhantins call* parabhakti *[supreme devotion] of living in the service of God [*irai pain nittral*].*
Question: *What is the end of the path of knowledge [*jnana*] or Vedanta?*
Bhagavan: *It is to know the truth that the 'I' is not different from the Lord [Iswara] and to be free from the feeling of being the doer [*kartrutva, ahamkara*].*
Question: *How can it be said that the end of both these paths is the same?*
Bhagavan: *Whatever the means, the destruction of the sense 'I' and 'mine' is the goal, and as these are interdependent, the destruction of either of them causes the destruction of the other; therefore in order to achieve that state of silence which is beyond thought and word, either the path of knowledge which removes the sense of 'I' or the path of devotion which removes the sense of 'mine', will suffice. So there is no doubt that the end of the paths of devotion and knowledge is one and the same." —* MURUGANAR, *Guru Vachaka Kovai*, translated by T.V. Venkatasubramanian, R. Butler, and D. Godman, edited and annotated by D. Godman, David Godman, USA 2008, pp. 181-182.

[35] SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI, *Be As You Are*, edited by D. Godman, Penguin Books, UK 2017, p.184.

[36] See note 32.

[37] The second line of the questioning.

[38] The first line of questioning.

—, *drishti-srishti* starts to direct the enquiry towards the subjective world. This dramatic shift of awareness is very difficult to the ones deeply rooted in objectivity and rationality. Where once reason could cope and excel — being the former *siddhanta* derived from, and constructed with, objectivity —, herein its presence will only hinder.[39]

22. This *siddhanta* postulates perception as the immanent act of creation. That the objective world of names and forms is a creation of the mind. That in reality all *dvantas* and *triputis* are the illusive effect of the *chidabhasa* [reflected consciousness]. And that this effect emerges simultaneously with the emergence of the primal thought 'I'. This primal thought being the root of the mind, of locality [which is the essence of the *chidabhasa*], and by extension of the universe.

23. It is said that mind is rooted in the 'I-thought' because mind has no existence of its own. It only appears to exist while thoughts flow. Once thoughts exhaust their momentum and subside, there is no mind. Since the thought that gives and sustains the momentum of all other thoughts is the primal 'I-thought', it is said that mind has its roots therein.[40]

24. Like the illusion of a serpent in a rope, a mirage in the desert, or a dream[41]; herein the objective world [*jagat* or *loka*] only exists in the eyes of those who are ignorant to the real nature of reality. Since *jagat* is the effect of one's own mind, and the root of one's mind is the primal 'I-thought', one must enquiry into the nature of this 'I' to realise reality.

25. Hence *drishsti-srishti* tells the seeker that both the world and mind are not real — but only the illusion that simultaneously emerged with the 'I-thought' —, and directs his enquiry towards the

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[39] "*It is foolishness to suffer by desiring and struggling to know the Self in the same way that sense objects are known by the suttarivu.*" — MURUGANAR, *Guru Vachaka Kovai*, translated by T.V. Venkatasubramanian, R. Butler, and D. Godman, edited and annotated by D. Godman, David Godman, USA 2008, p. 22.

[40] Hence when it is said that the universe is a creation of the mind, it is really being said that the universe only (apparently) exists as a thought [*sankalpa*].

[41] The three classic vedantic examples used to describe the worldview of *drishti-srishti*. — See BALSEKAR, Ramesh, *The Final Truth*, edited and designed by W. Liquorman, Advaita Press, USA 1989.

nature of such thought by asking 'who am I'. By doing it so, when pursued to its end, the enquirer will ultimately realise the truth in such terms — there is no 'I' but only 'I, I'[42].[43]

26. 'I, I' is the true and only reality. Everything else is *kalpita* [an imaginary appearance]. 'I, I' has been called by many names — *Atman*, *swarupa*, *atma-swarupa*, *arivu*, Brahman, *Brahma-swarupa*, Sivam, *Siva-swarupa*, *sattva*, *padam*, the unity of *sat-chit-ananda*, the heart, or as that which Sri Ramana Maharishi used to call the Self or consciousness. There are many other names, but all point to this ultimate reality as the true nature of oneself — the undefinable, infinite, formless, everlasting, all encompassing, holy mighty, being of consciousness.

27. The realisation of the Self is thus the realisation that there is no seer and seen, that there is no world of names and forms, no separation or difference, no 'I am this or that'[44]; but that only the Self or pure consciousness *is*. What was once seen as separate from oneself is in fact oneself, not as an 'I-thought' or an object, but as the formless consciousness that is all that ever was.[45]

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[42] 'I' being the primal thought of identifying something as being 'I', which could be put in the sense of 'I am this or that', and hence the thought that separates what the 'I' identifies as himself from what it does not. Whence 'I, I' is the realisation that everything is 'I', and thus the end of identification, of separation, and consequentially of a world seen. One could argue that considering that everything is 'I' this could be taken as the ultimate identification. But identification requires difference to exist, or better said, it needs locality, wherein the reality of the *apeironian* 'I, I' is non-local. Ergo it is said that it is in relinquishing identification — in the thought 'I am this or that' — that one can realise the truth of 'I, I'. For such process to take place the Advaita Vedanta (as above stated) directs the subject to enquire the reality of this 'I' by questioning 'who am I'. The subject then, realising the there's no 'I', inevitably forfeits all identification and merges (or subsides) its 'I-thought' into 'I, I' — i.e. consciousness.

[43] "If the mind subsides, the whole world subsides. Mind is the cause of all this. If that subsides, the natural state presents itself. The Self proclaims itself at all times 'I, I'." — SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI, *Be As You Are*, edited by D. Godman, Penguin Books, UK 2017, pp. 32-33.

[44] The use of the word 'that' in here is not to be confused with the use given in the Vedas — see note 66.

[45] "In truth, only the Self, pure consciousness, causes the appearance of all imaginary differences by appearing as the illusory reflected consciousness. Therefore, for true *jnanis* who have known and attained through enquiry the Self that shines equally in everything, all those other things [the imaginary differences] are wholly Self [tanmaya]." — MURUGANAR, *Guru Vachaka Kovai*, translated by T.V. Venkatasubramanian, R. Butler, and D. Godman, edited and annotated by D. Godman, David Godman, USA 2008, pp. 428-429.

28. The world that was experienced and seen, is only the effect of the illusive locality that emerges when consciousness reflects [*chidabhasa*] in the form of 'I-thought'. This apparent locality in consciousness is what gives rise to the illusion of the *triputis* — observer-observation-observed or subject-event-object —, and hence the whole universe. In reality none exist as such but only as the infinite and formless consciousness — *Sadasivam*.[46]

29. Mind, *chidabhasa*, *anatman* [non-Self], the *suttarivu*[47] [directed or externalised consciousness], and even *maya* [the illusory appearance of the world]; are all describing characteristics or effects, of the same ignorant state that arises with the identification of the *jiva* [the individual] with a limited form of consciousness [*jiva-bodha*], that perceives as itself — the ego [*ahamkara* or *anava*].

30. If the non-existent ego and mind are the *jiva's* problem [*anava-mala* and *chitta-mala*][48] arising from identification [the 'I-thought'] — that characterises consciousness reflected and externalised —, the only thing one has to do to solve such problem and realise the truth that is the Self, is to turn the mode of *vishaya-vritti* [mind focused on (or directed to) objects] into the mode of *atma-vritti* [mind focused on (or directed to) the 'I' or the subject].

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[46] "Q: *Is the light which gives the 'I'-sense identity and knowledge of the world ignorance or* chit, *consciousness?* A: It is only reflected light of *chit* that makes the 'I' believe itself different from others. This reflected light of *chit* also makes the 'I' create objects, but for this reflection there must be a surface on which the reflection takes place. Q: *What is that surface?* A: On realisation of the Self you will find that the reflection and the surface on which it takes place do not actually exist, but that both of them are one and the same *chit*." — SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI, *Be As You Are*, edited by D. Godman, Penguin Books, UK 2017, pp. 191-192.

[47] "Arivu *means consciousness or true knowledge, and it is often used in Tamil as an equivalent of* jnana. 'Suttu' *means 'pointed at'*. Arivu *is the true consciousness, the true knowledge that is aware of nothing other than itself. However, when attention is externalised and 'pointed at' phenomena that are assumed to be external, the trinity of seer, seeing and seen arises. This creates the idea of an individual self who sees an external world, and while this* suttarivu *process is functioning, the reality of the undivided Self is hidden*" — MURUGANAR, *Guru Vachaka Kovai*, translated by T.V. Venkatasubramanian, R. Butler, and D. Godman, edited and annotated by D. Godman, David Godman, USA 2008, pp. 21-22.

[48] '*Anava*' meaning 'ego' and '*chitta*' 'mind', whereas '*mala*' means defilement or impurity. The '*malas*' appear in the Vedanta as the three impurities — *anava*, *karma*, and *maya* — that deprive oneself of experiencing Sivam. Not to be confused with the '*mala*' that is the string of beads used in spiritual practices such as *japa*.

31. Self-enquiry [*atma-vichara*] is thence the path to realise the truth inherent in *drishti-srishti.* By investigating the source of the ego and the mind, one will eventually see their root in the primal 'I-thought', and upon so all will subside[49]: "*The mind will subside only by means of the enquiry 'Who am I'? The thought 'Who am I?', destroying all other thoughts, will itself finally be destroyed like the stick used for stirring the funeral pyre.*"[50]

32. This spiritual practice[51] [*sadhana*] is what removes the *jiva's* forgetfulness of the Self [*pramada*] and unveils the way for direct knowledge [*aparoksha jnana*] and direct experience [*pratyaksha*] of the ultimate reality that is the Self.[52]

Chapter V

Ajata

33. "Saying that the Self has fashioned itself as the world is like saying that a rope has fashioned itself into a snake. On close examination, it is found that the snake does not exist at all. By the same token, there was not at any time a world creation in which the Self apparently fashioned itself into the world."[53]

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[49] "Since the word 'world' [*loka*] means 'that which is seen', the world depends on its indispensable seer for its existence. The reality of the seer is questionable. When one enquires into the nature of the seer, it subsides into that which is. That reality shines by itself, of its own accord, as consciousness." — MURUGANAR, *Guru Vachaka Kovai*, translated by T.V. Venkatasubramanian, R. Butler, and D. Godman, edited and annotated by D. Godman, David Godman, USA 2008, p. 34.

[50] Who Am I?, essay version, The Path of Sri Ramana Part One, p. 186.

[51] "Know that investigating inwardly, through the enquiry 'Who is the existing "I"?', into the truth of one's own indisputable and ever-present existence is alone the life-blood which permeates the many religions that teach redemption." — MURUGANAR, *Guru Vachaka Kovai*, translated by T.V. Venkatasubramanian, R. Butler, and D. Godman, edited and annotated by D. Godman, David Godman, USA 2008, pp.155-156.

[52] "*Through forgetfulness the villainous mind will throw away the Self, that which is, and will get agitated. In the state in which one has known the truth without any* pramada*, all names and forms are* Brahman. *The reason why the state of* Brahman *has become different from you is nothing other than your deceitful forgetfulness of the Self.*" — Ibid, p. 23.

[53] Ibid, p. 44.

34. The mementos left by *drishti-srishti*, and consequent change in the mode of enquiry towards oneself, will inevitably lead the *abhyasi* to realise *ajata vada* [as suggested by the 27th stanza]. If everything that *is* is the unbounded and formless consciousness, then how can there be any locality to allow a seer and its world? How can there be any creation at all? And if so, who is making this questions? Who is making the effort to realise such *paramartha*?[54] — In truth "[…] *there is no creation and no dissolution. There is no bondage, no one doing spiritual practices, no one seeking spiritual liberation, and no one who is liberated.*"[55]

35. *Ajata vada* is impossible to digest rationally given that its realisation only occurs when the mind perishes.[56] Only after one establishes itself in its natural state [*sahaja nishta*] of the Self, will one truly attain the meaning of *ajata* — there is no seer nor seen, no creation nor world, and it never has been any of such.

36. For the *jnani* that indwells in the *chidambaram* [*Sivam's* hall of consciousness] the only reality is the Self that never was anything but itself. In the *chidambaram* there's no locality for something or someone to be, for time or space, for a seer or experiencer that sees or experiences

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[54] This questioning sequence shows how such worldview inevitably directs the mind's attention towards the subject. Through this method of self-enquiry [*atma-vichara*], by investigating who is having such thoughts one will eventually reach the dissolution of the questioner into the infinite space of consciousness described in the Advaita Vedanta. This is the only purpose of *ajata* and *drishti-srishti*.

[55] SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI, *The Power of the Presence*, part one, edited by D. Godman, 1st ed, David Godman, US 2000, p. 240.

[56] "For the *Atman* there is nothing to know or to be known. It is the one who has no knowledge who has to make an effort to gain knowledge. This is what takes place in the waking state. *Anatman*, which is the non-self, which can also be called *chidabhasa*, the reflected consciousness, has the ignorance, so this reflected consciousness has to make an effort for *jnana*, or knowledge. Knowing and no knowing happen in the non-self. The Self does not have to obtain knowledge, for it is knowledge itself. When the knower, the reflected consciousness, is felt, at that time *ajnana* or ignorance is present. The one who feels this ignorance then makes an effort to attain *jnana*, which is knowledge. When the reflected consciousness gets the knowledge, it no longer remains. This is because the reflected consciousness always remains with ignorance or *mithyajnana* [false knowledge]." — Ibid, p. 262.

anything. Thus to the *jnani* established in such state it is impossible to declare that there was at anytime a seeker, a knower, a world, etc.[57]

37. The world that was seen was unreal and never existed as such. The seer was also unreal and only pseudo-existed as a thought [*sankalpa*].[58] Never at anytime was a seeker to be realised or anything to realise, the Self being always as *is* — the reality [hence the realised (subject) and that which is realised (object)]. Never has the Self been veiled to its own reality, the one who says that is veiled is a non-existing entity. Fittingly, the *jnani* says that in reality *moksha*[59] requires no effort for it is effortless.

38. Howbeit, *ajata* does not deny the reality of the world (as it might seem at *prima facie*). It is only the world seen through the eyes of the *jiva* that is denied, as is the *jiva* itself. Hence the realness of the world and the realness of the 'I' can only be attested by those who established themselves as the *atma-swarupa* — since only the Self can attest its own reality by being it.[60]

39. Ergo for as long as there is a *jiva* or the *suttarivu*, it has to be declared that there is no world and there is no 'I'. It is impossible to comprehend how and in what terms such is real without the death of the ego and the mind. For with locality still being experienced, how can one attest a

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[57] "If one is a form, then it follows that the world and the Supreme will have form also. If one is not a form, who is there to see their forms, and how? Is there anything that is seen whose nature is other than that of the eye [that sees]? That eye is in reality the Self, the infinite eye." — MURUGANAR, *Guru Vachaka Kovai*, translated by T.V. Venkatasubramanian, R. Butler, and D. Godman, edited and annotated by D. Godman, David Godman, USA 2008, p. 389.

[58] "Understand [well] that the world-scene of empty names and forms, comprising the objects of the five senses perceived in the perfectly pure *swarupa*, the Supreme Self, is merely the divine sport of the mind-*maya* that arises as an imaginary idea in that *swarupa*, being-consciousness." — Ibid, p. 15.

[59] The realisation of God or the Self; the release from the cycle of rebirth [*samsara*] impelled by the law of karma; the transcendental state of enlightenment. From the Sanskrit root '*muc*', that means 'to free or let go, to liberate or release'.

[60] "Only those people whose mind are devoid of the evil power of *maya*, having given up the knowledge of the world and being unattached to it, and having thereby attained the knowledge of the self-shinning supreme reality, can correctly know the meaning of the statement 'The world is real.'" — SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI, *Be As You Are*, edited by D. Godman, Penguin Books, UK 2017, p. 188.

reality that is non-local, self-embedded and all encompassing? Everything is real as consciousness and only through consciousness can such be attested.[61]

40. Thereupon it is said — "Brahman is real, the universe is unreal, and the universe is Brahman.[62] Meaning that the universe is unreal *per se*, but real as consciousness. As so, the universe's relative existence in the movement that comprises, and is comprised by, time and space; is only the mind's misperception upon the reflection of consciousness, effected by a point of view — i.e., locality.[63] In truth there isn't and there has never been such movement, but the movement

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[61] "If you abide as consciousness by knowing consciousness, the profound delusion caused by the frenzied obsession with sense objects will come to an end. Out of all the *sadhanas* that are worth performing, knowing consciousness is the only excellent and definitive one. To abide as the Self, pure consciousness, bereft of the *suttarivu* — this is the meaning of 'knowing consciousness through consciousness'. Know this statement to be the great and glorious meaning of the unique phrase [*summa iru*] that tells you to be still." — MURUGANAR, *Padamalai*, translated by T.V. Venkatasubramanian, R. Butler, and D. Godman, edited and annotated by D. Godman, David Godman, USA 2004, p. 86.

[62] "Q: Brahman *is real. The world [*jagat*] is illusion' is the stock phrase of Sri Sankaracharya. Yet others say, 'The world is reality.' Which is true?* A: Both statements are true. They refer to the different stages of development and are spoken from different points of view. The aspirant [*abhyasi*] starts with the definition, that which is real exists always. Then he eliminates the world as unreal because it is changing. The seeker ultimately reaches the Self and there finds unity as the prevailing note. Then, that which was originally rejected as being unreal is found to be a part of the unity. Being absorbed in the reality, the world is also real. There is only being in Self-realisation, and nothing but being. Q: *Sri Bhagavan often says that* maya *[illusion] and reality are the same. How can that be?* A: Sankara was criticised for his views on *maya* without being understood. He said that

 (1) Brahman is real,
 (2) the universe is unreal, and
 (3) The universe is Brahman.

He did not stop at the second, because the third explains the other two. It signifies that the universe is real if perceived as the Self, and unreal if perceived apart from the Self. Hence *maya* and reality are one and the same." — SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI, *Be As You Are*, edited by D. Godman, Penguin Books, UK 2017, pp. 186-187.

[63] "The reason why the Self remains motionless is because of its nature as all-pervasive fullness. It only appears to have moved on the account of the movement of the mind. In agitated water the reflected image of the sun appears to move, but that agitation is only in the reflection and not in the real sun." — MURUGANAR, *Guru Vachaka Kovai*, translated by T.V. Venkatasubramanian, R. Butler, and D. Godman, edited and annotated by D. Godman, David Godman, USA 2008, p. 47.

seen is real as (the unmoving) consciousness[64] —"Brahman *moves and* Brahman *does not move.*"[65]

Part II

Cosmogony of Consciousness

Epigraph

"[…] The visible whole has come out from that[66] Invisible Whole, yet the Whole remains unaltered."[67]

Chapter I

The Hymns of Tradition and the Metaphor

41. With a metaphor, specifically a topological one, we can attempt to formally display how the seemingly unpalatable notion of *ajata* and its relationship to a world seen through *drishti-srishti* and *srishti-drishti,* can somehow become perceivable. Even if only symbolically.

42. Furthermore the creation hymns of most traditions appear to underlie the same metaphor. And thusly invoking the same realisation. Here, in the context of the Hindu tradition, this elegant

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[64] "The Self abides motionless because of its all-pervasive fullness. Because the apparent connection between the Self and the mind-limitation seems to exist on the account of ignorance — which is the *jiva-*perspective, the reflected consciousness that rises as 'I' — the Self too appears to have experienced movement through the motion of the mind. But the movement of *samsara* that comprises birth and death, bondage and liberation, and so on, is only for the *jiva* and never for the Self, the transcendental reality." — Ibid, pp.46-47.

[65] Ibid, p. 46.

[66] As this translation of the Upanishads notes the indefinite term 'that' expresses the indefinable nature of God or the absolute. Hence the upanishadic 'that' or 'Invisible Whole' refer to the Self or consciousness of Sri Ramana Maharshi.

[67] PARAMANANDA, Swami, *The Upanishads*, Volume 1, 2nd ed, The Vedanta Center, USA 1919, p. 25.

metaphor is found scattered throughout multiple narratives — from the Rig Veda to the Puranas, or even the more philosophical Upanishads.[68]

43. "There was neither non-existence nor existence then; there was neither the realm of space nor the sky which is beyond. […] There was neither death nor immortality then. There was no distinguishing sign of night nor day. […] Darkness was hidden by darkness in the beginning; with no distinguishing sign […]."[69]

44. That which was indistinguishable, that was beyond existence and non-existence, is consciousness as the *atma-swarupa.* The self-embedded infinity of the Self that is truly formless and undifferentiated.[70]

45. In the Rig Veda and in the Puranas it is said that from this undifferentiated and unpalatable state of being beyond being[71], a Golden Embryo arose[72] and God became trice creator, preserver, and destroyer[73]. That from nothing, everything emerged. That from no difference, difference arose.[74]

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[68] All of these are ancient holy scriptures of the Hindu tradition, the Puranas being their own set of holy texts, while the Rig Veda (or Rigveda) and the Upanishads are both an integral part of the larger body of the Vedas.

[69] DONIGER, Wendy, *The Rig Veda An Anthology*, Penguin Books, UK 1981, p.25

[70] Resembling that which the Greeks called *Apeiron*, the Hebrews *Ayn*, and what science in a formal sense calls a nothing.

[71] A literary choice to point the indefinable nature of the Self that is beyond being and non-being, as the citation in the 42nd stanza points.

[72] "In the beginning the Golden Embryo arose. Once he was born, he was the one lord of creation. He held in place the earth and the sky." — Ibid, p. 27.

[73] "In the beginning of creation the Great Vishnu, desirous of creating the whole world, became threefold: Creator, Preserver, Destroyer. In order to create this world, the Supreme Spirit produced from the right side of his body himself as Brahma; then, in order to preserve the world, he produced from his left side Vishnu; and in order to destroy the world he produced from the middle of his body the eternal Siva. Some worship Brahma, other Vishnu, other Siva; but Vishnu, one yet threefold, creates, preserves, and destroys: therefore let the pious make no difference between the three." — WILKINS, William, *Hindu Mythology*, Heritage Publishers, New Delhi 1991, p. 116, citing the Padama Purana.

[74] This undifferentiated consciousness or Self is in the topological metaphor the nothing that is bracketed to give rise to different topological regions. Whereas the bracketing process of the metaphor expresses to emergence of the 'I-thought', of the world, and multiplicity.

46. Difference or form in consciousness (that imply individuation or *jiva bodha*) exist only as the apparent effect that simultaneously emerges with the 'I-thought'. When the 'I am this or that' arises, locality arises — for the 'I am this or that' is an apparent instantiation[75] of consciousness, a virtual point of view from which consciousness apparently differentiates itself.

47. Hence with locality arising, difference and separation arise also. That which this 'I' sees as different and separate from itself inevitably gains form through the difference of what the 'I' identifies as itself. So instantly two forms or two instances of consciousness seem to emerge from the primal 'I-thought' — seer and seen, subject and object, the 'I' and the world.

48. For seer and seen to be, seeing has to occur. For the emergence of the 'I' and the world a sort of time-space needs to exist for their eventual unfolding. Between these two instances of consciousness there has to be a plane where both share its existence. A plane that is neither 'I' or world, but that both 'I' and world are — the wholeness of consciousness, the Self.[76]

49. Hence as soon as the 'I-thought' arises from nothing three distinguishable nothings[77] seem to emerge — 1) that which the 'I-thought' identifies as itself, 2) what it identifies as not itself, and 3) the plane that contains both.

50. In the topological metaphor this is the process of bracketing a nothing into a context-rich topology. For once the undifferentiated nothing is bracketed, instantly it appears the bracketed

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[75] As in the process of consciousness becoming an instance of its whole.

[76] The seeing and the time-space that here compose the notion of event or eventual unfolding, do not characterise the undifferentiated consciousness in itself (or it would be and oxymoron) — i.e. the Self is not the event (although the event is the Self) —, but they do imply it analogically in the local perspective of relative existence: the event being that which enfolds both the I and the world beyond locality. This enfolding must be understood beyond a three dimensional perception of space. Meaning that the event is not only the topological context (the *wholeness*) of the 'I' and the world at a given moment; but that the event (as topological context) is the whole of the existence of this 'I' and the world in time as well. The non-locality of the event relative to both subject and object goes beyond the three dimensional space into time. Time being nothing else but a higher topological space.

[77] See stanza 51 and 52

region of nothing ('I am this or that' — subject), the rest of the nothing (the projection of a world — object), and the surface that the two regions share (the event).[78]

51. Note though, that thrice the bracketed region of nothing, the rest of the nothing, and the derived surface, are still essentially a nothing.[79] Thus, despite the potentially endless process of differentiation from each bracketing[80], all would inevitably and ultimately be the same original nothing — i.e. undifferentiated consciousness.

52. It is now perceptible, at least in symbol, the notion of *ajata* that both seer and seen are mere illusion, and that the reality of both only exists in and through the being of the same all-encompassing and undifferentiated consciousness.

53. It is only from the perspective of the seer[81] — the bracketed region of consciousness — that the nothings appear to have information by being distinguishable in themselves through analogy.[82] From the non-perspective [*paramarthika*] of pure consciousness, there's nothing but itself. Hence Sri Ramana's saying — "*apart from seer there is no seen*"[83] — becomes evident.

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[78] FARREL, Joseph, *Thrice Great Hermetica And The Janus Age*, Adventures Unlimited Press, USA 2014, p. 47.

[79] Ibid, pp. 47, 48.

[80] It's easy to envision in this topological exposition how the process could be endless by continuously bracketing the first bracketed regions. As in a bracketing of the bracketed — i.e. a fractal hierarchy of regions and subregions nested into a multiply connected topology. A connection that is more important than the sameness of their analogical process of differentiation and relative existence, a connection through the sharing of the same essence — i.e. the nothing, the Self.

[81] "Except from the viewpoint of *upadhis* [limiting adjuncts], truly, no division ever arises in the Self, whose nature is consciousness." — MURUGANAR, *Padamalai*, translated by T.V. Venkatasubramanian, R. Butler, and D. Godman, edited and annotated by D. Godman, David Godman, USA 2004, p. 69.

[82] "The pure being is the reality. The others are mere associations. The pure being cannot be otherwise than consciousness. Otherwise you cannot say that you exist. Therefore consciousness is the reality. When that consciousness is associated with *upadhis* you speak of self-consciousness, unconsciousness, sub-consciousness, super-consciousness, human-consciousness, dog-consciousness, tree-consciousness and so on. The unfaltering common factor in all of them is consciousness." — Ibid, p. 69.

[83] SRI RAMANA MAHARSHI, *Be As You Are*, edited by D. Godman, Penguin Books, UK 2017, p.184.

Chapter II

A Topological Metaphor

54. Furthering our metaphor into a more formal structure, and expanding the scope of such process to a wider set of concepts, has its perils. As alerted on the first chapter, to try and answer our primal enquiry[84], one must not be bound by rationality. And that any language or structure that becomes overly formal, also becomes more and more dislodged from reality. Hence, our following exercise in building a cosmogonical theory, that answers such questioning via a topological metaphor, must not be taken by any means as more than a symbol. And an admittedly weak one.

55. Formalising the exercise in name and hierarchy[85], the undifferentiated nothing at the beginning of the topological metaphor, as seen above, corresponds to pure consciousness or the Self. We've also seen that the bracketing of such undifferentiated nothing represents a differentiation from that being of consciousness. To visualise that process in the cosmogonical sense we'll introduce the concepts of meaning, language, time, and space.

56. Meaning here is the *who* and *what* consciousness is and contains as an instance of itself. We say as an instance since without difference there can be no meaning, but without meaning there can be no difference as well. Hence meaning is difference itself alive (so to speak), as an instance of the whole of consciousness that is beyond meaning. In the metaphor meaning is thus the event

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[84] The one raised in the first stanza.

[85] In the topological metaphor of Joseph Farrell the exercise is annotated as such: "Now let us go further into this topological metaphor by notating our three differentiated nothings mathematically. There is a perfect symbol to represent this 'nothing', the empty hyper-set, whose symbol is Ø, and which contains no 'things' or 'members'. Now let our original 'nothing' be symbolized by $Ø_E$. A surface of something is represented by the partial derivative symbol ∂, for after all, a 'surface' of something, even a nothing, is a 'partial derivative' of it. So, we would represent our three resulting entities as follows: 1) the 'bracketed' region of nothing, $Ø_{A-E}$; 2) the *rest* of the nothing, or $Ø_{E-A}$; and, 3) the 'surface' that the two regions share, or $\partial Ø_{A-E \mid E-A}$.". — FARREL, Joseph, *Thrice Great Hermetica And The Janus Age*, Adventures Unlimited Press, USA 2014, p. 47.

of bringing forth consciousness into form. Being as such the root of fiat-information and of differentiation.[86]

57. This event is what generates context-rich topologies in the metaphor, and it does so through language, being language here that which mediates meaning into form. Ergo, reality as a world of context-rich topologies in the metaphor only exists in and through language from meaning.

58. This process seems to occur in a kind of paradoxical time warp where the future appears to create the past upon the first bracketing, although being inevitably simultaneous in the perception of the 'I-thought' itself.[87] *Our* time here though, is performing a role beyond that of

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[86] On the notion of meaning we've written: "Now from the essence that is nothingness and full limitlessness at the same time, all the infinitude that it contains is known in the 'intellectual light' through 'meaning' — the infinite-consciousness of God sees the infinite 'meaning' of Himself from the reflective eye of the intellect that looks upon itself. Thus 'meaning' here is the sense of 'what it is' in God, the 'active intelligibility' of what He is and of whom He is, of what He has and of what He does. […] 'Meaning' is the pure 'gnosis' of *being*, it actuates in *being* through the force that empowers it (i.e. 'will') for *being* to become the *being* that is in 'meaning'. It is the unveiling of *being* to himself, resulting in *being* becoming what is being unveiled." — VILELA, Horácio, *Metaphysics of Tradition*, Independently Published, USA 2017, pp. 69-70. This is suffused with alien concepts to the present thesis, and in the context of a wholly different metaphysical structure that we do not wish to compare or match. We only reference it to help disambiguate our intentions with the notion of 'meaning'. Now, the "infinite 'meaning'" supra quoted stands in our present stanza as 'beyond meaning' — which is consciousness as consciousness. We say 'beyond meaning' for despite 'meaning' only existing in difference, that does not mean that consciousness without difference is meaningless, on the contrary, it is 'infinite meaning' or 'meaning beyond meaning' (akin to previously used adjectives like 'being beyond being'). We say this for in the present cosmogonical *mythos* pure consciousness is all that *is* (as we've extensively explained), and thusly all 'meanings' only exist as consciousness. Hence the apparent existence of 'meaning' in difference is only an effect, its reality standing beyond 'meaning' as consciousness. The quote above might also help to further the idea of the active character of 'meaning' given in the present stanza, as being alive, or as an unfolding process or event — "bringing forth consciousness into form".

[87] See stanza 60.

measuring or duration. Time here is what brings forth the difference in meaning through language into a manifested world.[88] It is the physical medium of objective reality.[89]

59. If time is the expression[90] of the meaning of consciousness through language, that which is expressed is space. Meaning that space here is consciousness in time: the instance of consciousness that is meaning, expressed in time through language results in a space — i.e. instantiated consciousness (the explicate order to the implicate)[91].

60. Space is thus the result of the process of bracketing consciousness. Although the bracketing can only occur with feedback and context present in the first place[92], to give the emergence of reflectivity — i.e. the emergence of the original 'I-thought' that separates undifferentiated nothing from differentiated 'I'. Context here is the information in a given topology, the form of space, the form of consciousness instantiated trough time. While feedback is the inherent reflectivity affected by time-waves against a given context. Every time meaning sprouts, a wave of time emerges to carry meaning into expression as a space, which generates a context. Those time-waves against such generated context reflect it in consciousness.

61. Note that every discriminated step and concepts here always arise in consciousness as consciousness, and never escape being only consciousness itself. Consciousness being, as is its

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[88] We speculate that the combo of 'meaning', 'language', and 'time', in our metaphor could be in some way descriptive of the creative aspect of the *Logos* in Christian theology, notably mentioned in the Book of John 1:1 of King James Bible: "In the beginning was the Word [*Logos*], and the Word [*Logos*] was with God, and the Word [*Logos*] was God."

[89] This conception of time has some resemblance to the one presented in the work of the Russian physicist Nikolai Kozyrev: "In reality, the directivity of time signifies a pattern continuously existing in time, which, acting upon the material system, can cause it to transfer to an equilibrium state. Under such a consideration, the events should occur not only in time, as in a certain arena, but with the aid of time."; and further: "It is possible that the specially formulated biological experiments will be able to prove directly that life actually uses the time pattern as an additional source of energy.". — KOZYREV, Nikolai, *Possibility of the Experimental Study of Time*, The Abraham Zelmanov Journal, Vol.5, 2012, pp. 190-195.

[90] 'Expression' here as the verb, as the act or motion that expresses something.

[91] See BOHM, David, *Wholeness And The Implicate Order*, Routledge, UK 2005

[92] Evoking again the paradox of the future creating the past.

nature, always aware of itself, once it has a background from which to reflect against — i.e. context —, feedback occurs.

62. Ergo, instantiated consciousness has feedback from its own context, generating a kind of holographic projection to itself as being the context. Thusly the emergence of the 'I-thought' and that which is called world or reality. The 'I-thought' is thence consciousness identifying itself to what is reflecting, which in summa is the singularity that results from the whole of the bracketing process.

63. This apparently hierarchical (although ultimately ouroboric) process of bracketing, is only distinguishable from the perspective the bracket itself, i.e. from the 'I-though'. The difference in meaning only exists in its identification with itself as what it means. From the perspective of consciousness there is no difference, there is no world at all. Only for an instance of consciousness exists a context to have feedback from, and as such, to generate an holographic world.[93]

64. Note that before reaching reflectivity, this movement in consciousness that rises from the *Chidakasa* [expanse of consciousness], is what is called the pure light of the intellect[94] or

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[93] An adequate description of *our* physical world seen from this local perspective might be found in David Bohm's quantum theory, and perhaps even more so in Nassim Haramein's holofractographic theory of the universe. The latter not only describing the holographic character of such local perspective, but also quite fittingly displaying the inherent fractal nature of becoming (represented by the bracketing process); and even adequately describing (if only symbolically) what could be the physical appearance of *our* universe as a manifold double torus, where the whole universe in all its multiplicity is coupled and self-embedded. Ultimately though, as is our *telos* with such metaphor, we realise that the fractal hierarchy of a coupled manifold universe is still an illusive description, and that in fact the universe never exists as anything else but consciousness as consciousness.

[94] Which is in accordance with the quote of note 86 on 'meaning'.

Iswara (the personal God of the *vedantins*).[95] It's only after the 'I-thought' rises that the world rises also. Therein, the idea of multiplicity only arises after reflectivity, that creates the illusion of a *jiva* and a world, of beings inside other beings, of minds enfolded by a higher mind. What in our metaphor would be brackets nested inside other brackets of a higher topological order.

65. With the above in mind, we find that language and time are the means for interaction between the *jiva* and world, between the *jivas* themselves, and more importantly between the *jivas* and Iswara, between mind and consciousness. Hence multiplicity in the world of our metaphor is coupled in language through time.[96] [97]

Chapter III

The Play of Chit-Shakti

66. Through such system[98], the subjective world of 'I am this or that', and its alter objective world of names and forms, can only be seen as a thought in play[99]. And more importantly, that its reality exists only in consciousness as consciousness. We do not say that it is a world in which everything is suffused with consciousness, or that consciousness is a fundamental part of reality,

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[95] "*Chidakasa* [the expanse of consciousness] is pure knowledge only. It is the source of the mind. Just at the moment of rising up, the mind is only light; only afterwards the though 'I am this' rises up; this 'I'-thought forms the *jiva* and the world. The first light is the pure mind, the mind-ether [*manokasa*] or Iswara. Its modes manifest as objects. Because it contains all these objects within itself, it is called the 'mind-ether'. Like ether [space] contains objects, it contains the thoughts; therefore, it is the mind-ether. Again, just as the physical ether through accommodating all the gross objects (the whole universe) is itself the content of mind-ether, so also the latter is itself the content of the *chit*-ether [*chidakasa*]. The last one is *chit* itself. There are no things contained within it." — MURUGANAR, *Padamalai*, translated by T.V. Venkatasubramanian, R. Butler, and D. Godman, edited and annotated by D. Godman, David Godman, USA 2004, pp. 64, 65.

[96] See notes 80 and 93.

[97] Much more could be said and explored through the metaphor and its dynamics to symbolically explain being, the world, and their becoming (even onto the minutia of physics); but our intent here is only to express metaphorically what the Vedanta ultimately teaches — everything is consciousness.

[98] The topological metaphor described in the previous chapter.

[99] Here the in "thought in play" references the eventual unfolding of the bracketing process, and its both begetter and begotten (see stanzas 58 and 60) singularity described in the metaphor.

we say that consciousness is the only thing that *is*. That the plethora of matter, energy, mind, spirit, and all other things we wish to discriminate of the world and being, have never been anything else but consciousness. And that its appearance to us as anything besides consciousness (and our incapability of seeing it as such), only rises from our identification with that thought itself, saying: 'I am this or that'.

67. Therein, if in this seemingly paradoxic dance that thought subsides, the world subsides also into consciousness again. Note though, that this apparently creative movement of the unmoving consciousness, is only the play of *chit-shakti* seen through the locality of that thought. A movement that is a mere reflection of such thought against itself. For at no time was there a creative movement *per se*.[100]

68. Is it not possible now to envision how the Advaita Vedanta can conceive the world seen through the eyes of the *jiva* as a thought, or as the effect brought by the life of that thought? As what Sri Ramana Maharshi means when saying that the world only exists while the momentum in thoughts has not been exhausted?[101]

69. This is the cosmogony of *ajata*. A cosmogony of consciousness. Nothing else but it. A cosmogony that shows us how the world is but a dance of *maya* that gushes from the 'I-thought'. And that teaches us that if we forfeit such thought, we ourselves realise and become the dance itself. An unmoving and all-encompassing dance. Consciousness.[102]

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[100] Thoughts here being our described brackets and taken as the primal 'I-thought'. — See chapter IV.

[101] MURUGANAR, *Guru Vachaka Kovai*, translated by T.V. Venkatasubramanian, R. Butler, and D. Godman, edited and annotated by D. Godman, David Godman, USA 2008, p. 18.

[102] This antinomic tension generated by the term 'dance' — which it's easily understood in the first metaphor as the illusory movement of *maya*, but seemingly unjustified for the second metaphor as when the non-local Self is realise —, is purposefully intended. As we've written throughout the thesis this 'dance' does not exist *per se* but exists as consciousness, thence when we forfeit the thought that both creates and separates the dance from us, we become the 'dance' itself by dissolving the *triputis* of 'seer-seeing-seen'. Realising that such 'dance' never was as such, but only as the unmoving and all-encompassing consciousness.

Part III

Chapter I

Panpsychism and the Advaita Vedanta

At first hand one might be inclined to classify our presentation of the Advaita Vedanta as a form of panpsychism, since the universe and its elements as we've described them exist only in the mind or in thought. More specifically this could be akin to a synecological form of panpsychism, where thought or mind are not really attributed to every single thing of the universe but that the ontological foundation of *such[103]* universe is a cosmic mind.[104] Something that resounds with the idealist panpsychism of Royce and Lotze where all matter is essentially a form of mind.

Although on a closer inspection we should note that in the Advaita Vedanta, the fundamental nature of reality is consciousness and not mind or thought. [This might sound ambiguous given the way such terms have been correlated in contemporary western philosophy, but our presentation seems to be clear enough in disambiguating such terms.] Hence recalling Spinoza's panpsychist view of both mind and matter as aspects of God (that would be consciousness in our vedantic terminology). Which may fit well the idea exposed that the universe is always consciousness as consciousness, and never anything but it.

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[103] The universe seen by the 'I-though' and not the universe as it is in reality.

[104] Note though that our exposition of the Vedanta would be incoherent with the idea of cosmopsychism, inherent in the synecological form of panpsychism, that the macro rules the micro. And for that matter, the opposite view of micropsychism would also be incoherent, for reality as consciousness in the Vedanta is non-local. Anecdotally, since for such tradition reality is self-embedded, if one were to follow a path from macro to micro, at some point one would inevitably find himself back at the macro again, and vice-versa — a kind of strange loop. Moreover, the non-locality of the vedantic universe also affects time as we've seen above, thus being also incoherent with the commonly accept temporal idea inherent in cosmopsychism that the cosmos exists prior to individual beings — i.e. first cosmic consciousness, then individual consciousness. The non-local consciousness of the Vedanta is uncompromisable ontologically, the cosmic consciousness is the individual consciousness and vice-versa. As extensively discussed above, what keeps us from realising that is the illusion of locality brought by the 'I-thought'. Finally, if one ponders on the decombination problem of cosmopsychism, we will quickly see that such cannot arise in the consciousness of the Vedanta. Since what the 'I-thought' believes to be its individual consciousness is not real and it's only an effect of the mind. Its true consciousness always being the same absolute and indivisible one.

Since this consciousness is truly undefinable, and any universe perceived by the mind is only an illusory projection of what it really is as consciousness, one cannot immediately discard the neutral monism of William James, where the consciousness that founds reality and is itself reality can be seen as either mental or physical depending of one's perspective; in the sense that anything seen will not be real but a projection of it. Thus to at least conclude that a third element besides the duality of mind and matter is the ontological foundation of reality, has grounds in the Advaita Vedanta.

Furthermore, another panpsychist notion clearly present in the vedantic teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi, forwarded by Schopenhauer, is that our perception of reality from the view of the mind is faulted, and that the only self-evident truth we experience is the existence of oneself. Notion which for the Advaita Vedanta is motive enough to renounce knowing reality from the mind and instead search to know who is this 'I'.

Finally, there's also another panpsychist concept that seems to agree we our specifically chosen terminology and form of presenting the Advaita Vedanta and its universe — that of Whitehead's *events*. Seeing this dynamic, contextual, and continuous process called event, as an essential makeup of what we declare as reality, while not so much the scientific notions of matter, space and time — which is most evident in our analogical exercise of the topological metaphor[105].[106]

So should we classify the Advaita Vedanta, at least through our exposition of the teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi, as a form of panpsychism? We do not think so. Despite the Advaita Vedanta speaking to most panpsychist ideas in someway, its conception of consciousness and the reality of the universe and being as that consciousness, seem to forbid such categorisation.

To us panpsychism entails some insights that its bearers experienced mystically[107] and brought back to fit with the everyday reality seen by the mind. The problem is that for the Advaita

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[105] The notions of 'time' and 'space' in our topological metaphor are not to be confused with their scientific counterparts (as understood today) discarded here as fundamental by Whitehead.

[106] Naturally, the 'process philosophy' of Whitehead is only comparable to what we as 'I-thoughts' declare as the experienced reality, which is ultimately an illusion. Hence it would be incoherent with the ultimate *telos* of the Advaita Vedanta to say reality is comprised by this notion of 'event'. Nonetheless it does seem a valuable comparison to how the non-substantial universe in *drishti-srishti* is seen from the perspective of a bracket in our metaphor, in opposition to the substantial universe of *srishti-drishti.*

[107] As described in the first chapters.

Vedanta one reality is not the same as the other. One is real, the other it's not. To vedantic tradition the world seen by the mind is unreal, it arises there in the mind as a thought, which itself arises from another thought — the 'I-thought' (itself also unreal). While at the same time saying that the world is real, but only as consciousness, which is impossible to describe and only known through consciousness itself. Which taking the adjective used before, would be some akin to become or realise the mystical itself.

So we cannot really ascribe the world of panpsychism to any of these vedantic worlds — the unreal and the real. For in former, although it seems to be a radical idealist form of panpsychism, it claims that such world does not exist. Which we doubt is the intention of any panpsychist theory. While the latter really says nothing of the world which panpsychists are trying to describe. It probably agrees with it in somethings more than most philosophical worldviews, notably in that a third element besides mind and matter is the true foundation of reality — i.e consciousness —, but it also restrains reality from being anything but it. Meaning that at no time was there any mind or matter, and only this third element has ever existed. Ergo contrary to panpsychist forms, consciousness in the Advaita Vedanta does not constitute anything, nor gives emergence to any kind of thing.[108]

Of course we cannot exclude the possibility that some panpsychists are claiming this very acosmic view. But that would be extremely odd, since it seems that all forms of panpsychism point to everything having consciousness, be those things substantial or non-substantial (as in Whitehead's version), starting always from the premise that there are entities possessing or suffused with consciousness. Whereas in the acosmism of the Advaita Vedanta there are no real entities to start with, no things or events, no cosmos or universe, only consciousness existing in the first and last place.

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[108] Also being contrary to the panprotopsychist view, since for the Advaita Vedanta there's no protophenomal properties that in some combinatorial way give rise to consciousness. It might be useful to read the argument for the non-computability of consciousness in our article — *Penrose's Argument for C & Questions for the Possibility of Combining Positions C and D* — to understand why any combinatorial argument for the constitution or emergence of consciousness is to the Advaita Vedanta oxymoronic. — See appendix 1.

Conclusion

Having settled the proper language to deal with the enquiry raised in the first stanza as the symbolic, and having understood that the traditional method of imparting knowledge is personal, we have found the adequate disposition to investigate the Hindu tradition. A disposition that refrained our rational impetus to over formalise, and that suspended our ever hasty judgement, enabling us to comprehend (at least) the *ethos* of the vedantic worldview.

This disposition allowed us to cohere what seemed antinomic or contradictory between the three presented theories of *ajata, drishti-srishti,* and *srishti-drishti*; and understand their ultimate aim: to set the initiate in a path that removes the sense of 'I', making him realise that only God, the Self, or consciousness exist, and that he is *that*.

In this (a)cosmogony of consciousness, for lack of a better name, we've reached the conclusion that contrary to our main western philosophical traditions of physicalism, dualism, and panpsychism, the Vedanta seems to ultimately say that there are no real entities, be those substantial or non-substantial, that there are no bodies, nor minds, or a world that unfolds them in time and space. That all these discriminations and categories are but illusions brought by a non-existing 'I-thought', and that in reality only consciousness exists.

We've thusly seen that consciousness in the Advaita Vedanta does not arise from a body, but neither is a reality independent from the body, that it is not constituted by anything, but neither constitutes anything as well. Moreover, that it is not ubiquitous in the sense that suffuses all things, nor anything possesses or accesses it. Uncompromisingly, we've declared that in the Advaita Vedanta nothing exists besides consciousness as consciousness. Note, that it's not just that only consciousness exists, but only consciousness as consciousness. Meaning that consciousness never fashions itself as something besides itself.

As outlandish and incomprehensible as it may sound, through our settled disposition we have realised that such cannot be and it's not intended to be processed rationally. In fact, it is the illusion of rationality, or the mind and body that seem to exert it, that prevent us from understanding the truth of such terms. As we've said, the exact *telos* of this tradition is to remove these entities, to discard the idea of an 'I' or a doer as illusion, and upon so subside what we've documented as the root of such illusion, i.e. the 'I-thought', into that consciousness. And although it might seem self-contradictory to say that nothing arises or exists besides consciousness, and then say that to realise that one has to subside his 'I-thought' into that consciousness, that assessment is, for the Advaita

Vedanta, taken from the local perspective of the 'I-thought' itself and that once one realises its illusory existence and stands non-local, as in consciousness, it would be impossible to say that anything ever arose or existed from it. Thence for the *vedantin* this in not self-contradictory but merely incomprehensible as long as we hold to that sense of 'I'. That only from the non-local perspective of consciousness could we actually understand and realise such radical and outrageous worldview.

We've tried though, to metaphorically expose how could this be perceived symbolically and how the above mentioned theories could co-exist coherently, in an abstract exercise that we've called (but not coined) the topological metaphor. In this analogical exercise we've shown how from nothing — i.e. consciousness — can a context rich topology be derived in the form of three different kinds of nothings, and that through such difference they are rather mistakenly taken as things — the 'I', the world, and the event that enfolds them both. Affair which is only experienced as such from the local perspective of their relative existence. Hence the metaphor for how consciousness can be all that exists, remain always as consciousness, but still be apparently experienced as something besides it in the illusory perspective of the local 'I-though'.

Tentatively, we've ventured deeper in our efforts for this topological metaphor, to describe how the unfolding of such process might be seen from the cosmogonical to the personal sense. Meaning how could we explain the origin of the Cosmos from there, and how could that affect us personally, or what would be our roll and experience in and of such process. Efforts which, although admittedly frail and completely speculative, did help opening our minds a bit further to try and grasp (if only symbolically) the reality as envisioned in the Advaita Vedanta.

Finally, we would like to say that more important than any philosophical conclusion or conceptual development we might have taken in this thesis, is the realisation of how crucial it is to bring to the fore of western philosophical academia the exquisite body of knowledge that the Hindu tradition carries. It deserves a proper place of investigation in our quarters not only to help further all contemporary philosophical endeavour, but to bring about novelty.

Appendix

I

Penrose's Argument for *C* & Questions for the Possibility of Combining Positions *C* and *D*

Horácio Ferreira Martins de Araújo Vilela

Introduction

This paper intends to argument for possible problems existing in some conceptions in the philosophy of mind today — when talking about mind and consciousness and their apparent (to such conceptions) computable existence. Through the body of work of Roger Penrose, specifically and mainly in "Shadows of the Mind", an argument for the non-computability of consciousness will be given, intending to show that another, better, conception of mind and consciousness is needed.

Roger Penrose philosophy of mind has its argumentative cornerstone in the concept of awareness. For him this passive phenomena is a necessity when talking about genuine understanding and (consequentially) intelligence. As such, when arguing against the possibility of

human minds and the phenomena of consciousness/awareness[109] to be entirely computable[110] (and hence passable of being created in what is called artificial intelligence), he presents awareness as the something that is non-computable and fundamental for consciousness to exist. Thusly, and without doubt, affirming that it is impossible to compute consciousness or the human mind into an artificial device. Mind and consciousness are to Penrose, something that is beyond what such theories assert and describe.[111]

After presenting Penrose's argument and discuss some of its conclusions, I'll try to raise a questioning into the possibility of another position still. One derived from the outlined (four) possibilities presented in "Shadows of the Mind".

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[109] It's not clear that a real distinction should be made between consciousness and awareness in Penrose's thought. Both seem to be interchangeable in their meaning, specially in the context of the present discussion. Awareness though, might be more intuitively understood as to what it points to or describes, than the more historically complex concept of consciousness (hence plausibly more effective). Penrose explicitly entails the character of passiveness of awareness in consciousness, while entertaining the idea that free-will would be the active principle in consciousness — nevertheless in the context of Shadows of the Mind, it's a non-issue, meaning that awareness and consciousness could be used to mean the same thing throughout Penrose's argument.

[110] "What is a computation? In short, one can simply understand that term to denote the activity of an ordinary general-purpose computer. To be more precise, we must take this in a suitably idealized sense: a *computation* is the action of a *Turing machine*. But what is a Turing machine? It is, indeed, a mathematically idealized computer (the theoretical forerunner of the modem general-purpose computer)— idealized so that it never makes any mistakes and can run on for as long as is necessary, and so that it has an unlimited storage space." — PENROSE, ROGER, *Shadows of the Mind*, Oxford University Press, USA 1994, p.17.

[111] This, if one accepts the argument, creates, in my opinion, a profound crisis to the way we look at the world today. Specially to the popular scientific consensus we find ourselves in. Somehow, the *weltanschauung* that language can and does describe the world (and its nature) in its entirety and without flaws (at least in theory), has rooted itself in the world's present day psycho-sphere. Giving us its bizarro-children in endless forms. Here though, I am concerned with philosophy, specifically philosophy of mind. And for that, Penrose's thought and argument will be this paper's weapon to expound the flaws in such worldview.

I

Penrose's *A,B,C* and *D*

     Roger Penrose approach to the philosophy of mind comes from the context of mathematics and (as an extent of it) physics. Through them, he finds the questions and answers to counter-point several descriptions of what is it involved when we speak of mind, understanding, awareness and consciousness. Of what is plausible to assume or speculate, and also what seems impossible to propose. Here, when investigating the possibility of such concepts being encapsulated in a formal way — enabling their recreation (or even just their simulacrum) through the computation of algorithms inputed in artificial devices — Penrose, describes four main possible stances one can have when facing such possibility:

> "*A* - All thinking is computation; in particular, feelings of conscious awareness are evoked merely by the carrying out of appropriate computations.[112]

> *B* - Awareness is a feature of the brain's physical action; and whereas any physical action can be simulated computationally, computational simulation cannot by itself evoke awareness.[113]

> *C* - Appropriate physical action of the brain evokes awareness, but this physical action cannot even be properly simulated computationally.

> *D* - Awareness cannot be explained by physical, computational, or any other scientific terms."[114]

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[112] Strong AI position.

[113] Weak AI position.

[114] Ibid. p. 12.

Penrose's thought arguments for *C*, where one could say that its core principles are that (1) awareness exist[115] and (2) is the essential component for understanding, (3) that it is a fundamental attribute or quality for what is called mentality and consciousness, (4) that it is evoked by physical action; (5) that it is (categorically) non-computable; and (6) that its existence is approachable scientifically, although (7) since all existing physical theories are passable of being computable, to approach the problem of awareness in a scientific way a new physics is required[116][117][118].

As to the other positions, Penrose's describes *A* as a worldview where (1) the entirety of the physical world operates computationally, including of course awareness[119], (2) that as such all

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[115] "Other proponents of *A* might differ as to how they interpret the meaning of the words 'awareness' or 'consciousness'. Some would not even allow that there *is* such a phenomenon as 'conscious awareness' at all, whereas others would accept the existence of this phenomenon, but regard it as just some kind of 'emergent property' (cf. also §4.3 and §4.4) that comes along whenever a sufficient degree of complication (or sophistication, or self reference, or whatever) is involved in the computation that is being performed." — Ibid. p. 13.

[116] "[…] I shall strongly contend — by *use* of scientific argument — that an essential ingredient is missing from our present day scientific picture. This missing ingredient would be needed in order that the central issues of human mentality could ever be accommodated within a coherent scientific world-view. I shall maintain that this ingredient is itself something that is *not* beyond science — although, no doubt, it is an appropriately expanded scientific world-view that we shall need." — Ibid. p. 7.

[117] "A scientific world-view which does not profoundly come to terms with the problem of conscious minds can have no serious pretensions of completeness. Consciousness is part of our universe, so any physical theory which makes no proper place for it falls fundamentally short of providing a genuine description of the world. I would maintain that there is yet no physical, biological, or computational theory that comes very close to explaining our consciousness and consequent intelligence." — Ibid. p. 8.

[118] "However, my own strong opinion is that such non-computational action would have to be found in an area of physics that lies *outside* the presently known physical laws."— Ibid. p. 15.

[119] "*A* is an implication of a highly operational attitude to science, where, also, the physical world is taken to operate entirely computationally. In one extreme of this view, the universe itself is taken to be, in effect, a gigantic computer; and appropriate subcomputations that this computer performs will evoke the feelings of 'awareness' that constitute our conscious minds." — Ibid. p. 13.

physical systems are computational entities[120] subject to mathematical laws[121], and consequentially (3) that the sheer enaction of the appropriate algorithms evokes mentality (or more to Penrose's point — awareness). In the practical sense, for *A*, (4) if "any computer-controlled robot which, after sustained questioning, convincingly behaves *as though* it possesses consciousness, must be considered *actually* to be conscious"[122].

This last point is exactly what distinguishes *A* from *B*, for for *B* (1)"a robot could perfectly well behave exactly as a conscious person might behave without itself actually possessing any of this mental quality"[123]. Hence *B* "like *A*, it affirms a view that all the physical objects of this world must behave according to a science that, in principle, allows that they can be computationally simulated. On the other hand, it strongly denies the operational claim that a thing that behaves externally as a conscious being must necessarily be conscious itself."[124] For *B* (2) the actual material constitution of a physical object is the essential component to bring forth mentality, thus the computations that are involved or that describe the mind are of secundar importance[125].

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[120] "[…] physical systems are to be regarded as merely computational entities." — Ibid.

[121] "[…] from a belief that physical objects are themselves merely 'patterns of information', in some sense, that are subject to computational mathematical laws. Most of the material of our bodies and brains, after all, is being continuously replaced, and it is just its *pattern* that persists. Moreover, matter itself seems to have merely a transient existence since it can be converted from one form into another. Even the *mass* of a material body, which provides a precise physical measure of the quantity of matter that the body contains, can in appropriate circumstances be converted into pure energy (according to Einstein's famous $E = mc2$) — so even material substance seems to be able to convert itself into something with a mere theoretical mathematical actuality. Furthermore, quantum theory seems to tell us that material particles are merely 'waves' of information. (We shall examine these issues more thoroughly in Part II.) Thus, matter itself is nebulous and transient; and it is not at all unreasonable to suppose that the persistence of 'self might have more to do with the preservation of *patterns* than of actual material particles." — Ibid. pp. 13-14.

[122] Ibid. p. 14.

[123] Ibid.

[124] Ibid. p. 15.

[125] "On view *B*, the presence or absence of consciousness would depend very much upon what actual physical object is 'doing the thinking', and upon what particular physical actions that object is performing. It would be a secondary matter to consider the particular computations that might happen to be involved in these actions. Thus, the action of a biological brain might evoke consciousness, whilst its accurate electronic simulation might well not. It is not necessary, in viewpoint *B*, for this distinction to be between biology and physics. But the actual *material* constitution of the object in question (say, a brain), and not just its computational action, is regarded as all-important." — Ibid.

[As it can be deduced from position *C*, to it, not even a correct simulation of mentality could ever be achieved by a computer-controlled robot[126], since a fundamental part of mentality, i.e, awareness, is non-computable.]

The worldview of *D* sees mentality as (1) something not palatable to a scientific approach, (1a) something that can neither be explained by the physical actions described in physics, nor (1b) by the computations that (could possibly) evoke or render it (as for *A* and *B* respectively)[127]. As such the nature of awareness for *D* is something beyond the scope of human reasoning and language, unknowable by such means, hence Penrose's remarks on the mystical character of such position.

II

The Concepts of Awareness and Understanding in Penrose

For Penrose awareness is (1) a something that really exists, (2) that is self-evident to conscious minds (and as such is intuitively felt[128]), and that (3) is the essential quality in a mind that enables genuine understanding of something[129]. Whereas "the term 'understanding' certainly implies that a genuine possession of this quality would [1] require some element of *awareness* to be present. Without any awareness of what some argument is all about, there can surely be no genuine understanding of that argument. At least, this seems to *me* to be an unexceptionable use of words,

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[126] "[…] but viewpoint *C*, on the other hand, would not even admit that a fully effective simulation of a conscious person could ever be achieved merely by a computer-controlled robot. Thus, according to *C*, the robot's actual lack of consciousness ought ultimately to reveal itself, after a sufficiently long interrogation." — Ibid. pp. 14-15.

[127] "The point of view expressed in *D*. which negates the physicalist position altogether and regards the mind as something that is entirely inexplicable in scientific terms, is the viewpoint of the mystic; and at least some ingredient of *D* seems to be involved in the acceptance of religious doctrine." — Ibid. p. 12.

[128] "We shall need to rely, to some extent, on our intuitive perceptions as to what these words actually mean." — Ibid. p. 38.

[129] "[…] it seems clear to me that awareness is indeed *something*, and this something may be present or absent, at least to a degree. If one agrees that awareness is a something, then it seems natural that one should also agree that this something must be part of any genuine understanding." — Ibid. p. 37.

though in some contexts, proponents of AI might appear to use the terms 'understanding' and 'awareness' in a way that denies such an implication. Some proponents of AI (either *A* or *B*) would claim that a computer-controlled robot 'understands' what its instructions are even though no claim would be made that it is actually 'aware' of them. To me, this is a misuse of the word 'understands', though it is a misuse that has a genuine heuristic value for descriptions of computer functioning. When I am trying to be clear that I am [2] not using 'understands' in this heuristic way, I shall use the phrase 'genuinely understands', or 'genuine understanding', for that activity for which awareness is indeed necessary."[130]

For Penrose (1) genuine intelligence requires this type of understanding, which (2) in itself requires awareness, and as such (3) mentality and consciousness[131] only exist if awareness is a constitute of them. Since, in his argument, (a) awareness is of a non-computable nature, it follows, (b) that mind and consciousness can not be evoked or render by any computation.

III

Godel's Theorem

Godel's theorem or incompleteness' theorem (and its following enhanced versions) essentially demonstrate that "no *formal system*[132] of sound mathematical rules of proof can ever suffice, even in principle, to establish all the true propositions of ordinary arithmetic."[133] Meaning that no set of rules can ever be sufficient to ascertain all mathematical truths.

As an example, imagine that it is told to a computer to find a solution (or to halt in the practical case of a turing machine) to a problem such as — find the odd number that is sum of two even numbers. Although it might seem fairly obvious to humans that there's no such number, to a

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[130] Ibid.

[131] "Awareness, I take to be one aspect — the *passive* aspect — of the phenomenon of *consciousness*." — Ibid. p. 39.

[132] "[…] it will not be important to know what a formal system actually is, provided that we have a reasonably clear idea of what is meant by a computation or an algorithm. Even for this, a rigorous definition will not be necessary." — Ibid. p. 65.

[133] Ibid. pp. 64-65.

computer, if no extra procedure has been previously inputed — where when this question is posed the computer answers according to such procedure — it will endlessly (literally) search for such number. What Godel demonstrated is that there's no 'extra procedure' — i.e. meta mathematical statement — that can both demonstrate that the answer to the question posed is non demonstrable and remain consistent with itself[134]:

"Godel showed (i) how to construct a formula G of PM that represents the meta-mathematical statement: 'The formula G is not demonstrable using the rules of PM'. This formula thus ostensibly *says of itself* that it is not demonstrable. […] In Godel's argument, the formula G is […] associated with a certain number *g* — namely, its Godel number — and G is so constructed that it says 'The formula that has Godel number *g* is not demonstrable'.

But (ii) Godel also showed that G is demonstrable if, and only if, its formal negation ~G is demonstrable. […] However, if a formula and its own negation are both formally demonstrable, then PM is not consistent. Accordingly, if PM is consistent, neither G nor ~G can be formally derivable from the axioms. In short, if PM is consistent, then G is a *formally undecidable* formula.

Godel then showed (iii) that, though G is not formally demonstrable, it nevertheless is *true* arithmetical formula […]. G is true in the sense that it claims that a certain arithmetical property defined by Godel is possessed by no integer — and indeed, no integer possesses the property, as Godel shows.

Step (iv) is the realization that since G is both true an formally undecidable (within PM), PM must be *incomplete*. In other words, we cannot deduce all arithmetical truths from axioms and rules of PM. Moreover, Godel established that PM is *essentially* incomplete; even if PM were augmented by additional axioms (or rules) so that the true formula G could be formally derived within the enhanced calculus, then another true formula 'G' could be

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[134] "He demonstrated that there could be no formal system F, whatever, that is both consistent (in a certain 'strong' sense that I shall describe in the next section) and complete — so long as F is taken to be powerful enough to contain a formulation of the statements of ordinary arithmetic together with standard logic." — Ibid. p. 90.

constructed in a precisely analogous manner, and G' would be formally undecidable inside the enhanced calculus. Needless to say, further enhancement of the already-enhanced calculus, so as to allow derivation of G', would merely lead to yet another formula G'' undecidable within the doubly augment system — and so on, ad infinitum. This is the meaning of "essentially incomplete."

In step (v), Godel described how to construct a formula A of PM that represents the meta-mathematical statement: 'PM is consistent'; and he showed that the formula 'A ⊃ G' is formally demonstrable inside PM. Finally, he showed that the formula A is not demonstrable inside PM. From this it follows that the consistency of PM cannot be established by any chain of logical reasoning that can be mirrored within the formal reasoning system that PM itself constitutes."[135]

The conclusions of the Godelian argument have, for Penrose, far-reaching consequences that go well beyond logic and mathematics. For example one could say that under such conclusions, reality or the world always escapes the language that describes it, or that human consciousness or human mentality to be aware of the meaning of concepts such infinity (or that there is no odd number that can result from the addition of two even numbers), something non-computable must be present.[136] Before expanding Penrose's implications from Godel's theorem, he himself, gives some caveats for those who might contend that such theorem has little relevance outside mathematics:

"What serious relevance do sophisticated issues of mathematics and of mathematical philosophy have for most of the matters of direct interest to artificial intelligence, for example? Indeed, many philosophers and proponents of AI are quite reasonably of the opinion that although Godel's theorem is undoubtedly important in its original context of mathematical logic, it can have very limited implications, at best, for AI or for the philosophy of mind. Very little of human mental activity is directed, after all, at issues

[135] NAGEL, ERNEST & NEWMAN, JAMES, *Godel's Proof*, ed. Douglas Hofstadter, NYU Press, USA 2008, pp. 92-94.

[136] "It is our *awareness* of what a 'number' can actually mean that enables us to latch on to the correct concept. When we have this correct concept, we can — at least in principle — provide the correct answers to families of questions about numbers that are put to us, when no finite set of rules can do this." — PENROSE, ROGER, *Shadows of the Mind*, op.cit., pp. 59-60.

relating to Godel's original context: the axiomatic foundations of mathematics. My answer is that a great deal of human mental activity involves, on the other hand, the application of human consciousness and understanding. My use of the Godel argument is to show that human understanding cannot be an algorithmic activity. If we can show this in *some* specific context, this will suffice. Once it is shown that certain types of mathematical understanding must elude computational description, then it is established that we can do *something* non-computational with our minds. This being accepted, it is a natural step to conclude that non-computational action must be present in many other aspects of mental activity. The floodgates will indeed be open!"[137]

And:

"The reason is that it is only within mathematics that we can expect to find anything approaching a rigorous demonstration that *some*, at least, of conscious activity *must* be non-computational. The issue of computation, by its very nature, is indeed a mathematical one. We cannot expect to be able to provide anything like a 'proof that some activity is not computational unless we turn to mathematics. […] Moreover, I must attack the functionalist's computational model (i.e. viewpoint *A*) on its home ground, so to speak; for it is the contention of the functionalists that all qualia *must* indeed be somehow evoked by merely carrying out the appropriate computations, no matter how improbable such a picture may at first sight seem. For, they argue, what else can we indeed be usefully doing with our brains unless it is performing computations of some kind? What is the brain for, if not just some kind of — albeit highly sophisticated — computational control system? Whatever 'feelings of awareness' the brain's action somehow evokes must, they would claim, be the result of this computational action. [138]

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[137] Ibid. p. 51.

[138] Ibid. p. 52.

IV

Argument for the Non-Computability of Awareness

Penrose's arguments that (1) if anyone can visualize[139] formally unfathomable concepts such the unending sequence of natural numbers[140], something beyond computation must be present on such visualization;[141] and if such premise is accepted, (2) it must suffice to refute positions *A* and *B*, and (3) force one into either accept *C* or *D*[142]. Since (4) *D* is out of the scientific question, one should be force to accept *C*, which implies (5) a platonic worldview, where our mind have some direct access to the platonic realm of pure forms (6) through awareness.[143]

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[139] "Thus, the 'visualizations' that I am referring to are more concerned with the general issue of 'awareness' than with things that necessarily relate to the visual system. In fact, I do not know of any argument that has a direct bearing on the computational nature, or otherwise, of our powers of visualization in this literal sense of 'visual'. My belief that our actual acts of visualization must indeed be non-computational is an inference from the fact that *other* types of human awareness *do* seem to have a demonstrably non-computational character." — Ibid. p. 59.

[140] "Specifically, the awareness that I claim is *demonstrably* non-computational is our understanding of the properties of the natural numbers 0, 1, 2 , 3, 4 , …. (One might even say that our concept of a natural number is, in a sense, a form of non-geometric 'visualization' .)" — Ibid.

[141] "But a powerful case can also be made that his results showed something more than this, and established that human understanding and insight cannot be reduced to any set of computational rules. For what he appears to have shown is that no such system of rules can ever be sufficient to prove even those propositions of arithmetic whose truth is accessible, in principle, to human intuition and insight — whence human intuition and insight cannot be reduced to any set of rules." — Ibid. p. 65.

[142] "[Godel] found himself seemingly driven in the mystical direction that I have denoted by *D* — that the mind cannot be explained at all in terms of the science of the physical world." — Ibid. p. 128.

[143] "If, as I believe, the Godel argument is consequently forcing us into an acceptance of some form of viewpoint *C*, then we shall also have to come to terms with some of its other implications. We shall find ourselves driven towards a *Platonic* viewpoint of things. Plato's world is an ideal world of perfect forms, distinct from the physical world, but in terms of which the physical world must be understood. It also lies beyond our imperfect mental constructions; yet, our minds do have some direct access to this Platonic realm through an 'awareness' of mathematical forms, and our ability to reason about them. We shall find that whilst our Platonic perceptions can be aided on occasion by computation, they are not limited by computation. It is this potential for the 'awareness' of mathematical concepts involved in this Platonic access that gives the mind a power beyond what can ever be achieved by a device dependent solely upon computation for its action." — Ibid. pp. 50-51.

In his own words:

"Human mathematicians are not using a knowably sound algorithm in order to ascertain mathematical truth. It seems to me that this conclusion is inescapable. However, many people have tried to argue against it […] and certainly many would argue against the stronger deduction that there must be something fundamentally non-computational in our thought processes. The reader may indeed wonder what on earth mathematical reasoning like this, concerning the abstract nature of computations, can have to say about the workings of the human mind. What, after all, does any of this have to do with the issue of conscious awareness? The answer is that the argument indeed says something very significant about the mental quality of *understanding* — in relation to the general issue of computation — and, as was argued in §1.12, the quality of understanding is something dependent upon conscious awareness. It is true that, for the most part, the foregoing reasoning has been presented as just a piece of mathematics, but there is the essential point that the algorithm *A* enters the argument at two quite different levels. At the one level, it is being treated as just some algorithm that has certain properties, but at the other, we attempt to regard *A* as being *actually* 'the algorithm that we ourselves use' in coming to believe that a computation will not stop. The argument is *not* simply about computations. It is also about how we use our conscious understanding in order to infer the validity of some mathematical claim — here the nonstopping character of *Ck(k)*. It is the interplay between the two different levels at which the algorithm *A* is being considered — as a putative instance of conscious activity and as a computation itself — that allows us to arrive at a conclusion expressing a fundamental conflict between such conscious activity and mere computation."[144]

And:

"*Any* set of rules *whatever* will be insufficient, if by a 'set of rules' we mean some system of formalized procedures for which it is possible to check entirely computationally, in any particular case, whether or not the rules have been correctly applied. This may seem a pessimistic conclusion, for it appears to imply that there are computations that never stop,

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[144] Ibid. p. 76.

yet the fact that they never stop cannot ever be rigorously mathematically ascertained. However, this is not at all what Godel's theorem actually tells us. What it *does* tell us can be viewed in a much more positive light, namely that the insights that are available to human mathematicians — indeed, to anyone who can think logically with understanding and imagination — lie beyond anything that can be formalized as a set of rules. Rules can sometimes be a partial substitute for understanding, but they can never replace it entirely."[145]

V

Conclusions in 3.28[146]

In the chapter 3.28 Penrose concludes that (1) "[…] human mathematical understanding cannot be reduced to (knowable) computational mechanisms[…]"[147], and (2) "[…] there is something essential in human understanding that is not possible to simulate by any computational means"[148]. Such conclusions (3) seem to deny both position *A* and *B* and (4) rest on *C* or *D*.

Although both being problematic on their own, if (5) we believe in *D* — the position where awareness is not explainable by any physical, computational or any other scientific terms — "[…] then we must ask why it is that our minds seem to be so intimately associated with elaborately constructed physical objects, namely our brains. If mentality is something separate from physicality, then why do our mental selves seem to need our physical brains at all? It is quite clear that differences in mental states can come about from changes in the physical states of the associated brains. […] It would seem hard to maintain that mentality can be *completely* separate from physicality. And if mentality is indeed connected with certain forms of physicality — apparently *intimately* so — then the scientific laws that so accurately describe the behaviour of physical things must surely have a great deal to say about the world of mentality also."[149]

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[145] Ibid. p. 72.

[146] Ibid. pp. 201-208.

[147] Ibid. p. 201.

[148] Ibid.

[149] Ibid. p. 213.

As for *C* — "[…] What reasons are there for believing that Nature can actually behave in a way that defies computation? […] Are there any indications whatever that this is in any way a temporary phase in scientific development? Why should one contemplate the possibility that there can be anything in physical action that is immune from effective computational treatment?"[150] — and as said — "If we are looking, within *existing* physical theory, for signs of an action that cannot entirely be subjected to computation, then we must come away disappointed."[151]

Hence (6) a strong version of *C* — where a new physics theory is pursued — must be followed. This should be done by (7) looking in for critical points of the existing physical theories. Such as the "[…] entirely random ingredient […] involved in the process of 'quantum measurement'[…]"[152] — a procedure with inconsistencies that, having this essential randomness to it, "[…] provides an apparent physical action of a quite different character from what is familiar from other fundamental processes."[153] With that, on the background of what as so far been deduced and extrapolated from the Godelian argument, Penrose opens the prospect to a new theory from (8) the possibility of replacing[154] the random atribute of quantum theory with "[…] something else, where essentially *non-computable* ingredients will play a fundamental role."[155] Although that prospect, even is successful, is not sufficient to sustain *C*, since (9) "[…] we must also ask for a

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[150] Ibid. p. 203.

[151] Ibid.

[152] Ibid. p. 204.

[153] Ibid.

[154] "Perhaps, also, the phenomenon of consciousness is something that cannot be understood in entirely classical terms. Perhaps our minds are qualities rooted in some strange and wonderful feature of those physical laws which *actually* govern the world we inhabit. rather than being just features of some algorithm acted out by the so-called 'objects' of a *classical* physical structure. Perhaps, in some sense, this is 'why' we, as sentient beings. must live in a quantum world, rather than an entirely classical one. despite all the richness. and indeed mystery, that is already present in the classical universe. Might a quantum world be *required* so that thinking, perceiving creatures, such as ourselves, can be constructed from its substance? Such a question seems appropriate more for a God, intent on building an inhabited universe. than it is for us! But the question has relevance for us also. *If* a classical world is not something that consciousness could be part of, then our minds must be in some way dependent upon specific deviations from classical physics." — PENROSE, ROGER, *The Emperor's New Mind*, Oxford University Press, USA 1989, p. 226.

[155] PENROSE, ROGER, *Shadows of the Mind*, op.cit., p. 205.

plausible basis for this putative physical behaviour to have genuine relevance to brain action [...]".[156]

VI

Questions for the Possibility of Combining Positions *C* and *D*

Can (1) awareness not be computable as in *C* and *D*, (2) not evoked by any physical action as in *D*, but still (3) be somewhat explainable scientifically as in *C*? Does the causal effect of the physical — on the bringing forth of awareness — exhausts all conceivable scientific explanations? Is it not conceivable that awareness could be (4) not a mental quality or attribute, (5) nor a result of the body (physical action), but something on the lines of the inverse? Meaning, (6) minds and bodies existing only as projections[157] screened or rendered through awareness itself?

Of course here, awareness would have to be something beyond the intuitive operational description Penrose gives, but if one sees it also as (7) something interchangeable with the nature of *that* which *is* — God, Simplicity[158], Spirit, Atman[159]— could it not be that (6a) mind and body, or the phenomena of mentality and the physical existence of material bodies, only exist in and through this awareness?

Is it not conceivable that (6b) mind and body could be not really different things, but only different states or phases of the same thing[160]? A kind of immensely rich projection of the awareness of *that* which *is* of itself? That (8) their apparent distinction could be the effect of awareness

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[156] Ibid.

[157] "One discovers, instead, both from consideration of the meaning of the mathematical equations and from the results of the actual experiments, that the various particles have to be taken literally as projections of a higher dimensional reality which cannot be accounted for in terms of any force of interaction between them." — BOHM, David, *Wholeness And The Implicate Order*, Routledge, UK 2005, p. 237.

[158] In the Neo-platonic conception.

[159] A hindu conception similar to spirit but also entailing awareness, both being completely interchangeable.

[160] "That is to say, we may regard each of the 'particles' constituting a system as a projection of a 'higher-dimensional' reality, rather than as a separate particle, existing together with all the others in a common three-dimensional space." — Ibid. p. 238.

localized? Just like in a dream, when we distinguish objects and perceive them as separated from us, but in reality that's only an effect of our ephemeral local awareness — identifying the dreamer as the origin of the awareness and the dream that observes as outside itself — that once it's ended such distinctions and separation are understood as illusions; could it not be the same?

The opening of this questioning seems to evoke a new scientific theory just as in *C.* One that would explain how the phenomena of mentality and the physical existence of material bodies could be the same thing in different phases or perspectives, and how awareness might be beyond it. Alas, as beyond it — i.e. non local[161] — it would forcibly be (10) not palatable to objective observation, thence leaving some of its existence on the lines of the mystic approach of *D.*

The character of position *C+D* (or *E* for a more practical use) — besides the already accepted argument for the non-computability of awareness as in *C* and *D* — could thusly be twofold: a) a scientific approach to awareness from what it seemingly enfolds[162] — bodies and minds — meaning a new scientific theory answering to the questions above; and b) a mystical approach (using Penrose's term) to the subjective — non local — experience of awareness — beyond the bodies and minds of the objective experience of the world. *Ea* serving as metaphor for *Eb*, directing the scientific investigation towards the mystical experience.

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[161] Non local here, points to the dissolution of the dynamic subject-object/observer-observed; where their apparent distinction and separation perceived under localized awareness — from a point of view — is extinguished, since there is no *point* of view — all is *that* which *is*. Hence objectivity or observation are seemingly impossible, all is subject — thusly being mystical. Note though, that awareness is *that* here, and as such always present; this serving only as a caveat to the confusion that might arise from the idea of the non existence of observation could have some effect on the existence of awareness — it doesn't.

[162] "The *srutis* [scriptures] and the sages say that the objects are only mental creations. They have no substantive being. Investigate the matter and ascertain the truth of that statement. The result will be the conclusion that the objective world is in the subjective consciousness. The Self is thus the only reality which permeates and also envelops the world." — GODMAN, David, *Be As You Are: The Teachings of Sri Ramana Maharshi*, Penguin, UK 2017, p. 65.

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Glossary

abhyasi - initiate; aspirant.

Advaita - non-dual; non-duality; see note 16.

Advaita Vedanta - the oldest sub-school of the Vedanta which is part of the sacred texts known as the Upanishads; see note 16.

aham - the 'I'; source of the 'I'; the Heart; the Self.

ahamkara - the ego; the false Self; the 'I-thought'.

ajata - non-creation; non-causality; see note 15.

ananda - bliss; the bliss that results from experiencing the Self.

anatman - the non-self; synonym of *ahamkara* and *suttarivu.*

anava - the ego; *anava mala* being the impurity that prevents one from realising the Self; see note 48.

Aparoksha-jnana - direct knowledge; direct knowledge of the Self; direct knowledge of reality as the Self.

Apeiron - that which is unlimited, boundless, infinite, and indefinable; see note 70.

arivu - the Self; see note 47.

Atma vichara - Self-enquiry; the spiritual practice of enquiring into the nature of oneself.

atma-vritti - mind focused or directed towards subjectivity, or the Self; see *vritti* below; see stanza 30.

Atma-swarupa - the real nature of one's own Self; *Atma* being the Self and *swarupa* being one's real nature; both terms being interchangeable as the ultimate reality of the Self as 'I, I'.

Atman - the Self.

Ayn - Nothing; Nothingness; the absolute and incomprehensible nothingness of God; the first or ultimate negative veil of God in the jewish esoteric tradition of the Kabbalah; see note 70.

dvantas - pair of opposites; dualities; dyads.

bhakti - devotion to God.

Brahman - the ultimately reality.

Brahma-swarupa - the true nature of Brahma; the Self; Brahman.

chidabhasa - reflected consciousness; the reflection in consciousness that projects a world.

Chidakasa - the expanse of consciousness; see note 95.

Chidambaram - Siva's hall of consciousness; where the true consciousness of Siva indwells.

chit - consciousness; undifferentiated consciousness; unmediated Self-awareness.

chit-shakti - the creative power of consciousness.

chitta - mind; see note 48.

drishti - perception; sight; seeing; see notes 26 and 27.

ethos - character; the character of a thing; the spirit in which a thing is done or intended; the set of beliefs of someone or a culture.

Iswara - the personal God of the Hindus; see note 95.

jagat - world; the material or physical world; the world perceived by the mind.

jiva - the individual; the individual soul; the individual self.

jiva bodha - limited consciousness; individual consciousness.

jnana - true knowledge; knowledge of reality as the Self; direct knowledge of the Self.

jnani - wise man; one who has attained knowledge of the Self; enlightened being; see note 28.

loka - world; a division, station, or dimension in the universe; the higher and lower realms or worlds of the universe; also synonym of *jagat*.

kalpita - imaginary appearance;

kartrutva - the doer; agent of action; see note 34.

krama - gradual; step-by-step progression; succession; see note 26.

Logos - God, specifically the Person of Jesus Christ; that from, with, and through which all things are made; the essence or inmost reality of something; it can also be taken as meaning and language, reason or thought, norm or rule, and even function or action (thus its translation to 'verb' sometimes); see note 88.

manokasa - pure mind (not the same conception of mind as that which emerges with the 'I-thought'; mind-ether; personalised in the deity Iswara; see note 95.

maya - illusion; the power the generates the illusion of a world.

mithyajnana - false knowledge.

mythos - oral transmission of a tradition; narratives that import the truth or meaning of a given tradition.

moksha - liberation or release from the karmic cycles of rebirth [*samsara*]; spiritual enlightenment; realisation of God or the Self; see note 59.

Paramarthika - the supreme perspective the Self; the ultimate state of the absolute; ultimate reality.

Paramartha - supreme or ultimate truth.

pramada - forgetfulness; forgetfulness of one's true nature; forgetfulness of the Self.

Prana - vital energy; life-force; breath.

Rigveda - A body of Hindu sacred scriptures that are an integral part of the Vedas; see note 68.

Pratyaksha - direct experience of the Self.

Puranas - A body of Hindu sacred scriptures; see note 68.

Sadasivam - the pure consciousness of Siva.

sadhana - spiritual practice; spiritual exercise.

sahaja-nishta - one's natural state.

saiva - follower/s of Siva; something pertaining to Siva.

samsara - the perpetual cycle of birth, death, and rebirth which the *jiva* is subjected by the law of *karma* until it attains liberation; worldly life.

sankalpa - thought; intention; imagination.

sat - being; ultimate being.

sat-chit-ananda - being-consciousness-bliss.

sattva - purity; harmony.

shakti - power; the power that creates and sustains the world; also the name of a goddess that personalises such power.

siddhanta - worldview; theory; dogma; doctrine; canonical text-book; see note 15.

Sivam - the ultimate reality; the true consciousness of Siva; the Self.

srishti - creation; world; creation of the world; physical or material world; see note 26.

suttarivu - directed or externalised consciousness; the illusory state of consciousness that sees a world, and sees itself as separated from that world.

symbolon - something that goes beyond its form to represent the identity or meaning of something not revealed in the extrinsic form of the *symbolon* itself.

tanmaya - wholly Self; entirely consisting of the Self; fully absorbed in the Self; see note 45.

telos - the purpose or goal of something; the ultimate object or aim.

triputis - trinity composed of the aggregate of agent, object and action; seer-seeing-seen; knower-knowing-known; subject-event-object; see note 3.

upadhis - false identification or association; see notes 81 and 82.

Upanishads - A body of Hindu sacred scriptures that are an integral part of the Vedas; see note 68.

Vedas - A large and ancient body of religious and philosophical Hindu scriptures.

vedantins - followers of the Advaita Vedanta; see note 33.

that the Hindu tradition carries.

vishaya-vritti - mind focused or directed towards objectivity, or externals objects, or an external world; *vishaya* being an object of worship, also a domain or world, and often denoting the range of the senses and their objects; see *vritti* below; see stanza 30.

vritti - mental mode; mental activity.

yugapat - simultaneous; at once; see note 27.