

Robert W. Luyster The concept of the self in the Upaniṣads:
Its origin and symbols

I

The earliest philosophical views in India regarding the nature of the self present an interesting example of the intimate relation between philosophical and popular thought in India. The early Indian philosophers by no means constructed their doctrines of the self from whole cloth or through a systematic doubt concerning the veracity of popular notions of the subject. The first tendency of Indian thought seems to be toward conserving and reinterpreting popular belief rather than rejecting it. Thus in examining the earliest philosophic doctrines of the self in India, we find consistently that they are based upon concepts and images which are in fact inherited by the philosopher from the popular culture. Rather than denying the validity of these from the outset, the philosopher seems to prefer to reinterpret them in such a way that his own particular views will appear to emerge from rather than replace them. Before going into the nature of this reinterpretation of beliefs regarding the self, however, I wish to mention certain features of the tradition that was being reinterpreted. In the first place, the most frequent word used for the self was *ātman*, the literal and original meaning of which was "breath." In later times in India the self was increasingly thought of as an immaterial or ideal entity, but in the earlier period of thought it was, on the contrary, usually something quite substantial and specific, usually one's breath.¹ Since those without it were dead, it must have seemed evident that breath must be the principle of life. The seat of the breath—or self, or breath-self—was, furthermore, thought to be in one's heart.² Again, men apparently supposed that it was the agitation of the air inside it which caused the heart to pump, and the absence of this air, when the self had once and for all left the body, which caused the heart to stop pumping.

The self might leave the body only temporarily, however, and this accounts for the peculiar importance of the state of sleep in early India. It was popularly believed that during sleep the self of the sleeper was likely to leave his body, usually in the shape of a bird. Dreams, in other words, were not understood as mere fictions, whose characters and events exist only in our minds; they were considered rather to be genuinely objective occurrences, the real journey

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¹ Cf. Maurice Bloomfield, *The Religion of the Veda* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1908), pp. 271 ff.; A. A. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology* (Strassburg: Karl J. Trubner, 1897), p. 166; P. Deussen, "Ātman," *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, II, 195 ff. The translations in this paper are basically those of S. Radhakrishnan in *The Principal Upaniṣads* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1953). In the interests of consistency and clarity I have here and there made minor changes.

The word 'soul' for *ātman* would probably be more natural and appropriate for earlier popular beliefs regarding the self, but in order to avoid the appearance of dealing with two separate entities, the word 'self' is used throughout.

² *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* I. 2. 20; *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad* IV. 3. 7; *Praśna Upaniṣad* III. 6.

and adventures of one's self as it briefly left the body and went out to meet the world independently. The state of sleep was not only important but also dangerous, for it was always possible that the self would be prevented for one reason or another from returning into the body, and thus bring about one's death. This could happen either through the self's being captured or hurt in its wanderings, or through some action of one's own which impeded its return. Thus we find the admonition that one should never awaken a man suddenly who is asleep and dreaming, since his self might not have sufficient time to re-enter his body, in which case he would die.³ Sleep and death, then, were closely related states in the early tradition of India. Sleep involved the temporary absence of the self from the body, while death was but its permanent absence. In death the journey of the self was at once more final, difficult, and distant. In death the self made the arduous trip to a new home, where it would henceforth live in a disincarnate condition. The exact goal of this last journey was variously conceived, but frequently men thought of the sun as the home of the dead, especially the virtuous dead. We find a number of passages in the religious literature of early India which state variously that the sun is the final abode of the dead,⁴ that they there become immortal,⁵ that even now they can be seen as the rays of the sun,⁶ that those go there who are especially wise,⁷ or perform meritorious actions,⁸ or expensive sacrifices,⁹ especially of cows.¹⁰ Doubtless the importance of the sun in this connection was associated with its being one of the supreme divinities of the period.

With the development of speculative reason in the period of the earliest Upaniṣads these traditions regarding the nature and destiny of the self became subject to an increasingly drastic transformation. We may begin by observing that the earlier notion of the breath-self was considerably enlarged. It now became the inner embodiment of the absolute principle of the universe, Brahman. He who does not know this, we read, becomes the slave of his own servants, the senses, but he who knows this masters and is thereby free of them. Moreover, he who knows this secret also becomes wealthy, for just as the mind and the senses bring information to the self though he does not ask for it, so the charitable will press offerings upon those who know this though they beg not.¹¹ Even more extravagant claims are made for this knowledge, for we read

³ *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* IV. 3. 11-14.

⁴ *R̥g Veda* IX. 113. 9., X. 107. 2, X. 154. 5.

⁵ *Atharva Veda* VII. 53. 7.

⁶ *R̥g Veda* I. 109. 7; *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* I. 9. 3. 10.

⁷ *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* I. 2. 11.

⁸ *Anugītā* II. 34.

⁹ *Maitrī Upaniṣad* VI. 36; *Satapatha Brāhmaṇa* IV. 6. 2. 1.

¹⁰ *Law of Manu* IV. 231.

¹¹ *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* II. 1; *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* III. 3; *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* III. 4. 1, III. 9. 9, III. 9. 26, IV. 1. 3; *Maitrī Upaniṣad* I. 1, VI. 7; *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* IV. 10. 5; *Aitareya Upaniṣad* II. 3. 8.

elsewhere that he who knows that the ultimate is breath (*prāṇa*) holds the key to immortality. He goes to the *svarga* world, heaven, and becomes one of the gods.¹²

On the other hand there were those who sought Brahman, the universal principle, not within but without, and there are accordingly many Upaniṣadic passages which identify Brahman with the sun.¹³ Again, the prephilosophic thought of India had all along regarded the sun as one of the highest gods, but now the assertion is enlarged and recast. The sun is no longer merely the most important or dominant phenomenon in nature; it is now understood rather as constituting in some sense the essence or nucleus of all other phenomena. This helps explain many of what otherwise might be very puzzling or perhaps even nonsensical Upaniṣadic assertions, such as, "he who abides in the heart and he who abides in the sun, they are one and the same."¹⁴ And again: "All things are *prāṇa* (breath), for it is *prāṇa* who shines as the sun."¹⁵ He who abides in the heart is, of course, the breath or breath-self, and it shines as the sun and is the sun because the two are ultimately only the two alternative forms, subjective and objective, of the same underlying principle of the universe, Brahman.

The most complex and interesting elaboration of this idea occurs in the *Maitrī Upaniṣad* (VI. 1-2):

The Self bears himself in two ways, as he who is Breath and he who is the Sun. Therefore there are two paths for him, within and without, and they both turn back in a day and night. The Sun is the outer self, the inner self is Breath. Hence the course of the inner self is inferred from the course of the outer self. For thus it is said, "He who knows and has freed himself from evil, the overseer of the senses, the pure-minded, firmly grounded, looking away from external objects, he is the same." Likewise the course of the inner self. For thus it is said, "The golden person who is within the sun, who looks upon this earth from his golden place, is the same as he who has entered into the lotus of the heart and devours food." Now he who has entered the lotus of the heart and eats food is the same as he who enters the sky as the fire of the sun. He is called Time, and being invisible, devours all beings as his food.

This would appear to have the following meaning: Knowing the ultimate truth of things, the self can seek fulfillment and transcendence in two ways or by two paths, that of the day, which is ruled by the sun, and that of the night, ruled by the breath. The former is the outer way, the latter the inner way. As we have seen previously, the self is properly the overseer and master of the senses, and so should look away from all earthly objects. It dwells in the heart,

¹² *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* III. 2.

¹³ *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* III. 19, IV. 11. 1; *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* IV. 3; *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* II. 1. 2, III. 7. 9; *Maitrī Upaniṣad* VI. 16.

¹⁴ *Maitrī Upaniṣad* VII. 7.

¹⁵ *Aitareya Upaniṣad* II. 2. 3. 4. Cf. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* I. 3. 1-3, I. 11. 5-7; *Aitareya Upaniṣad* II. 2. 1, II. 2. 4. 6, III. 2. 3. 8, III. 2. 4. 7; *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* II. 8. 5.

which—as we find here—was often compared to a lotus, and there absorbs or “devours,” so to speak, the information of the mind and senses. The golden self of the day dwells in the sun, where it devours all beings as its food, and this we call Time.

In the Vedic period, as we have mentioned, it was popularly believed that the events of the dream were the real adventures of the self as it roamed independently of the body, and for this reason the condition of sleep was one of particular importance. When the philosophic mentality of the Upaniṣadic period brought to the sleep state its own special preconceptions and interests, it continued to regard sleep as a uniquely significant condition, but for different reasons and in a rather different way. As in the cases of the breath and sun, in other words, the specific concerns and subjects of philosophic inquiry can be seen to emerge rather directly from prephilosophic thought, even though there remains between them a divergence of content and method. In the Upaniṣadic interpretation of the dream state, the self is not thought to leave the body in order to undergo the dream experience, but rather to create the dream adventure itself from within the body. In the dream the self creates its own world and lives in it. In its first and normal state, therefore, the self exists in its everyday world, while the dream world constitutes another and second state of the self. To these, however, the Upaniṣadic philosopher adds a third state which is declared to be of even more importance than the first two. This is the state in which sleep has become so sound that we no longer dream at all. To this state, we read, the self hastens as does a bird when, tired of flight, it folds its wings and returns to the nest. Here again we find the philosophic acceptance of a somewhat primitive metaphor—the comparison of the journey of the self to the flight of a bird—but only as pressed into the service of specifically philosophic interests. Dreamless sleep is the nest, the true home of the self, where alone it becomes conscious of true happiness and freedom. The greatest bliss possible during a man’s life comes when he is completely and soundly asleep, for it is only in this state that the bifurcation of the world by our normal, waking consciousness into a conscious subject and an external object is overcome. The world of Brahman is homogeneous, and pure as the ocean; when one has entered it there is no longer any “other,” one “knows nothing that is without, nothing that is within.”¹⁶

In the most exact description of this pristine or dreamless state of the self it is usually defined as brought about by the immersion of the intelligent or perhaps empirical self (*prajñā, manas, jīva*, etc.) in the true or fundamental self, the breath-self (*prāṇa, ātman, brahman*) in the heart: “Just as a bird tied by a string, after flying first in every direction without finding a resting place, settles down at last on the very place where it is fastened, so also the

¹⁶ *Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad* IV. 3. 9-32.

mind, after flying in every direction and finding no resting place, settles down in breath, for indeed mind is fastened to breath.”¹⁷

Elsewhere we find reflections of the identification discussed earlier between the breath, the self of man, and the sun, the self of the universe. The everyday world of the self sinks back into it in sleep just as do the rays of the setting sun. Nor is this a mere literary touch, for certain passages assert a genuine, material connection between the two. The arteries (*hita*) surrounding the heart are the subjective counterpart of the rays surrounding the sun, and are indeed actually connected with them. They are, so to speak, the inner and outer extensions of a single series. Thus it is that the arteries of the heart and the rays of the sun contain exactly the same colors, and that when one proceeds through the arteries toward the heart, he also obtains the light of the sun. In dreamless sleep the self enters the one pole or center of being, the breath in the heart, and at death he journeys to the other pole or center, the sun. The highways between them men call on our side the arteries, but on the farther side the sun’s rays. Again we see that the traditional belief regarding the emigration of the dead to the sun is not overturned by the early Indian philosopher, but is merely given a new meaning. The sun is now identified as the universal essence, Brahman, and only he goes there who knows this truth.¹⁸

That there are three states of consciousness associated with the self, and that the dreamless or third is the true and highest of these, is the most frequently encountered Upaniṣadic teaching on this subject: It is strange that the two most widely-known Upaniṣadic passages in this connection, however, are both exceptions to this generalization. Both are later additions to the original teaching of the Upaniṣads,¹⁹ and both add a fourth state to the original three, though of a different sort and for different reasons. The first is the well-known story of Indra’s years as a student under Prajāpati. After ninety-six years of study, we read, it was finally revealed to Indra that the supreme state of the self is that of dreamless sleep, and as this is what is consistently taught elsewhere in the Upaniṣads, we would here expect the tale to end. Surprisingly, it does not, for Indra sees difficulties in this doctrine. When a person is in a deep, dreamless sleep, says Indra, “in truth he thus does not know himself that he is I, nor does he know anything that exists. He is gone to utter annihilation.”²⁰ His objection, in other words, is that dreamless sleep seems uncomfortably closer to *unconsciousness* than a state of *blissful* consciousness. Here the absence of an “other” is not taken as a positive but as a negative factor.

¹⁷ *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* VI. 8. 2. Cf. *Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad* III. 3; *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* II. 1. 17-20.

¹⁸ *Praśna Upaniṣad* IV. 2; *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* VIII. 6.

¹⁹ Cf. Arthur B. Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1925), II, 567 ff.

²⁰ *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* VIII. 11. 1.

Prajāpati then has Indra serve still another five years as a student and finally reveals to him that there is yet another state of the self which is in truth its highest. This is the state in which the body releases the self at death, and it is thus able to travel to the world of the sun, where it is pictured as being able to fulfill its each and every wish, laughing, playing, rejoicing with women, and so on.²¹ I am inclined, therefore, to view this story and the teaching that it puts forward as, let us say, something of a reaction to the more advanced beliefs of the period concerning the nature and states of the self. The feeling of revulsion that some may experience when the apparent unconsciousness of the dreamless state is glorified as the highest state of man seems to have found its counterpart in ancient India. The average man, sensuous and self-centered in the past as well as the present, envisions his ideal fulfillment not in the total loss of identity that the self may undergo when reabsorbed into its spiritual source, but rather in the very sort of deification and exaltation of identity that the freed self here finds in heaven. Consequently, the nondual state of the self in dreamless sleep is not particularly attractive to him, nor is he minded to interpret it as the most ideal of all states.

The other Upaniṣadic doctrine of a fourth state of the self is found in the very brief but highly regarded *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*. The state is called simply *Turiya*, the Fourth, and is described in this way :

Turiya is not that which is conscious of the internal world, nor that which is conscious of the external world, nor that which is conscious of both, nor is it a mass of consciousness. It is not consciousness, nor is it unconsciousness, It is unseen, indescribable, incomprehensible, unknowable, unthinkable, and unnameable. It is the origin of the conscious self and that into which phenomena are again resolved. It is peace, bliss, and nonduality. This is Turiya, this is Ātman, and this is to be realized.²²

The heart of this passage lies in the simple declaration that the fourth and true state of the self is neither consciousness nor unconsciousness, and therefore that definitions and concepts simply cannot apply to it. It is incomprehensible, unthinkable, beyond description of any kind. The ultimate state of the self cannot be known or explained, and can only be referred to as the Fourth State. This is not really, then, an objection to received doctrine in the name of an opposing doctrine, as was true in the case of Indra. No positive doctrine is opposed to that based upon the third or dreamless state. What we are really dealing with here would seem rather to be part of the awakening in ancient India of the more critical spirit in philosophy. There is an effort here to remind reason of its limitations by observing that the ultimate and true state of the self is finally beyond our understanding. Whereas the author of the teaching embodied in the tale of Indra appears to have been representative of the

²¹ *Ibid.*, VIII. 11. 3-12. 3.

²² *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad* VII.

reaction of the typical, unsophisticated man against the rationalism of the philosophers, we find quite the opposite sort of reaction behind the present Upaniṣad. Here the objection arises rather from the very hypersophistication of our author and his correspondingly acute awareness that the apparent rationality of his predecessors is not in fact rational enough. The authentic and awakened intelligence knows when it does not know, and this critical awareness of the limits of our knowledge of the self is precisely what the author attempts to inculcate. It is surely for this reason that the *Māṇḍūkya* is often claimed to be the most important of all the Upaniṣads and the philosophic progenitor of the Advaita Vedānta. What was originally an objection to the standard Upaniṣadic doctrine of the self and its states thus became in turn the new standard of teaching on the subject.

II

With this account of the origin of Upaniṣadic beliefs concerning the self and the meaning of the symbols by which it was conveyed, let us turn now to a more systematic analysis of the concept itself. We shall begin by asking this question: What interests and commitments was the Upaniṣadic concept of the self intended to accommodate and how did they influence one another? We may then go on to inquire into the logic behind the evolution of the concept and suggest that a similar logic has determined related philosophical developments in the West.

I think that one may identify at least three strands in the composition of Upaniṣadic doctrines concerning the self. The first may be described as properly philosophical: the search for an absolute. For some three or four centuries prior to the development of Upaniṣadic speculation, the Brahmanic priesthood had come increasingly to suspect that secret relationships and correspondences obtained between widely disparate phenomena, and that the key to their control lay in discovering the exact nature of these correspondences. This belief in hidden principles of unity culminated finally in the more radical claim of the Upaniṣads that beneath all phenomena there lay a single principle, identified as Brahman. Since the world of phenomena, furthermore, was characterized by various contrasts, oppositions, and dualities, that which alone could contain and generate these must be supposed to lie beyond them, or in other words, must be nondual. This principle of ultimate unity, finally, since it constituted the true reality of all phenomena, must constitute the true and inner reality also of man; and since the fundamental reality supporting man's life had from prephilosophical times been identified with the breath, the presence of Brahman in man was naturally localized within his *prāṇa* (breath) or *ātman*.

A second line of thought may be identified as soteriological. The Upaniṣadic

period brought the quest for salvation, for a state beyond the fears, griefs, and evils of mortal life, a state usually characterized by the attributes of immortality, freedom, and bliss. The direction and meaning of this quest could hardly avoid being influenced by the philosophical interests of the period, and the result was the belief that this state of being could be found only through a profound immersion in that reality which also transcended the normal conditions of mortal existence, the one and supreme reality, Brahman. It is this that would seem to account for the constant Upaniṣadic equation of bliss and nonduality: it is constantly assumed that each is a necessary condition of the other, and therefore that to achieve one is automatically to have gained the other also.

The last of our three strands may be identified as psychological. We find in the Upanisads the earliest serious investigation in ancient India into the nature of the self. This investigation begins with a classification of the various states of consciousness of the self, which turn out at first to be three in number: the waking, dream, and dreamless states. The question then becomes one as to which of the three states is more fundamental. Which is the true form of the self? As we have already indicated, the Indian philosopher had by now evolved two criteria which he could bring to bear upon such a question; these were the attributes of nonduality and bliss. The true state of man, he was led to believe, must be a state characterized by nonduality and bliss. From this point of view it is evident that neither of the first two states could qualify, for both are marked by just that duality and pain which Brahman and immersion in Brahman transcend. In the dreamless state of man, however, we are unaware of such dualities and no longer suffer pain; hence here, it was thought, must be the true and ultimate state of the self. And since the ultimate is breath, it must also be the case that in the dreamless state we enter into and reside in the breath. With this settled the Upaniṣadic sage could now return to the first two states and explain them in the light of their basis, the third. Hence his claim that the third, true, and nondual form of the self gives rise to the second, the empirical self or mind; and since the true self is the breath, we have also the assertion that the mind is fastened to breath. The second in turn is seen as giving rise to the first, the dream self, in other words, to the waking, for just as the true self generates the mind, the mind generates the senses. That is, the dream world was thought to be created by the mind, the waking world by the senses.

Now behind the belief that the dreamless state is the true self was the assumption that the self is to be found beneath all particular mental events, or to put it in another way, that all particular events belong to a consciousness, which is identified as the fundamental self. This is the mental substance view,

often associated in the West with Descartes. However, in both ancient India and the modern West some philosophers, despite essential agreement with it, have been forced to transcend this initial resolution of the problem of the self. This further development is found in India most notably in the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*, which we have already described, and most recently in the West, we would suggest, with the views advanced by Edmund Husserl. The difficulty with the earlier view may be put most simply as follows: in Husserl's terms, consciousness is intrinsically intentional; that is, there is no consciousness without an object of consciousness.²³ Yet if this is so, then the absence of objects may be taken to signify the absence of consciousness, and if consciousness be identical with the self, this would suggest the loss of the self as well. Implied in the view that the self is dependent upon an external content, therefore, is the criticism that it is actually no more than a general term for the totality of mental events, and thus ultimately a convenient fiction. This is the argument of Hume, and to it we shall return shortly. One way of attempting to meet a challenge of this sort, however, may be found in Husserl (whose entire philosophy is admittedly in many cases simply an extension and refinement of the Cartesian *cogito*), who sees the dangers inherent in the substantialistic formulations of Descartes and instead places the transcendental ego beyond all possibility of knowledge or description.²⁴ We may liken Husserl, then, to the author of the *Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad*, who employs exactly the same stratagem, describing the self as "unseen, indescribable, incomprehensible, unknowable, unthinkable, and unnameable." The last involved, as we saw, description of a fourth state of the self, one not easily available to consciousness but nevertheless the hidden substratum of all of its other states. This fourth state, *Turīya*, is identified with the true self, the Ātman.

As we might expect, there are many further comparisons between the Ātman doctrine of the Upaniṣads and Husserl's notion of the transcendental ego, and it is interesting to note that these rather striking similarities have recently become the subject of some study.²⁵ We might mention also that phenomenology, the "science of essences," proposed by Husserl, bears more than a few resemblances to the mental science based upon Upaniṣadic teachings, that of Yoga. Both are, in fact, the practical expression of the conceptual system upon which they are based, and both may be regarded as an effort to return to the

²³ Edmund Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations: An Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. Dorion Cairns (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960), section 30.

²⁴ Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Phenomenology*, trans. W. R. Boyce Gibson (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1931), section 36.

²⁵ Peter Koestenbaum, "Religion in the Tradition of Phenomenology," in *Religion in Philosophical and Cultural Perspective*, ed. J. Clayton Feaver and William Horosz (Princeton, N.J.: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1967), pp. 185-199.

ultimate foundations of consciousness. Both are constituted by the movement within consciousness that Husserl called "reflexion," in which the subject withdraws from the objects of the world into the zones of its own self-awareness. Both share also the same goal: immediate knowledge of the ultimate self (the Ātman or transcendental ego).

The classic critique of the mental-substance understanding of the self of Descartes is found in the writings of Hume, who observes that nowhere in the whole series of mental phenomena do we find anything corresponding to our notion of the self. Introspection yields only a bundle of disparate mental phenomena; we do not experience anywhere among or behind these a "self." We believe that this general position corresponds with the views of the Indra-Prajāpati story cited earlier, where it was seen that the absence of objects of consciousness, as in dreamless sleep, was taken as sufficient indication of the annihilation of the self, and where the concept of the self finally advanced was one intrinsically wedded to an empirical content. I would suggest also that the point of view here exemplified may be taken as either a forerunner of or a parallel to the *anātman* beliefs soon to be developed by the Buddhists, in which the existence of an abiding self was definitely rejected and the sequence of mental events was regarded as self-created and self-sustaining. Behind the series of mental phenomena there lay *śūnya*, nothingness; man was regarded as "empty." Again, returning to the West, there are interesting resemblances here not only to Hume's criticisms of Descartes, but also to those made by Sartre of Husserl. Sartre also believes that analysis of consciousness yields "nothing" behind it, and he too takes just this as the ultimate nature of consciousness: nothingness.²⁶ Furthermore, just as Sartre concentrates his philosophic attention less upon the reflexive than the intentional, or so to speak "centrifugal," thrust of consciousness and makes "back to things themselves" the program of his philosophy, so, too, early Buddhist thought consists not in Upaniṣadic speculation about ultimate substance (Brahman, Ātman), but rather in the exhaustive analysis of the dharmas or real constituents of "things themselves."

Naturally, along with the broad similarities to which we have pointed, there are also significant differences between the views we have compared, but there is space to do little more than suggest that these are principally connected with the prevalence of an idealistic ontology in Indian philosophy as against a predominantly realistic one in the West. For it is this which determines whether we go on to say that the self determines the total character and contents of all possible experience or merely its form and conditions (Husserl,

²⁶ Jean-Paul Sartre, *The Transcendence of the Ego*, trans. F. Williams and R. Kirkpatrick (New York: Noonday Press, 1957), *passim*.

Kant, and others). This difference, finally, seems related also to the fact that whereas in the West the self has had a tendency to become almost totally absorbed in the object-world to which it has granted a fundamental reality, in India the self has never yet fully reawakened to the world of grief and pain which in the Upaniṣads it left behind in its quest for the deep, dreamless, and blissful sleep of total self-absorption.