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Abstract: The special issue of *The Times o f India* commemorating the golden jubilee of Indian Independence, characterises the "great Divides" of India as: The Whole vs. The Parts, Villages vs. Cities, Bharat vs. India and Pakistan vs. India.1 These "Divides" sum up the philosophical, cultural, economic, religious, and political divisions or diversities and the resulting conflicts of the Indian subcontinent. These "Divides" have become all the more acute because of the unstable political situations both at the centre and in some of the prominent states. The impression that politics has become associated with criminal elements has aggravated this situation of disharmony. Further, the prevalence of seeming lawlessness in public life has strengthened the roots of the division. In this article an attempt is made to study the issue of pluralism from the perspective of the Indian nation and suggest a possible model to live with the diversity that India is.

Keywords: Great Indian divides, Bharat, Advaita, Pluralism

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Advaitic Model of Pluralism for India

An Indian Christian Contribution

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The special issue of *The Times of India* commemorating the golden jubilee of Indian Independence, characterises the "great Divides" of India as: The Whole vs. The Parts, Villages vs. Cities, Bharat vs. India and Pakistan vs. India.[1] These "Divides" sum up the philosophical, cultural, economic, religious, and political divisions or diversities and the resulting conflicts of the Indian subcontinent. These "Divides" have become all the more acute because of the unstable political situations both at the centre and in some of the prominent states. The impression that politics has become associated with criminal elements has aggravated this situation of disharmony. Further, the prevalence of seeming lawlessness in public life has strengthened the roots of the division.

In this article an attempt is made to study the issue of pluralism from the perspective of the Indian nation and suggest a possible model to live with the diversity that India is. It may be noted that the article deals with the topic mainly from a philosophical point of view. It tries to go beyond religious pluralism about which much has been written. The attempt here is to articulate a philosophy of pluralism which will do justice to the full diversity of India in its cultural, political, social and religious dimensions. Because it is philosophical it will remain at a general level and will not offer any concrete suggestions. But it is hoped that the issues raised and the model offered will stimulate a better understanding of the Indian reality. Further, it is hoped that the model offered will enable us to cherish the diversity of India and lead to a more conscious and authentic life which respects the other. This may help us in journeying to a healthy integration. That could be a living tribute to the Jubilee Year of the nation's Independence and a possible model for a united India.

I shall use different expressions like pluralism, plurality, diversity, multiplicity, oneness and commonality. Without attempting to define these terms precisely, we accept the commonly understood meanings of these terms. The whole perspective in this article is neo-Thomistic. I begin by analysing the metaphysical concepts of the one and the many, and the analogy of being from this neo-Thomistic perspective. The typical model we elaborate is primarily Indian for the obvious reason that we are dealing with the Indian reality. This Indian model, based

on Bede Griffiths, has also a neo-Thomistic nuance. Griffiths, though not a strict neo-Thomist, was an ardent admirer of Aquinas. In this article I want to study the relation between the groups and cultures of the Indian subcontinent, using the traditional Indian concept of *advaita*. I shall attempt to modify slightly this profound concept of *advaita* based on a neo-Thomistic philosophy. For this I use Bede Griffiths' understanding of *advaita*.

1. The Issue

It is not an exaggeration to claim that no other country in the world is stamped so indelibly with pluralism and diversity as India. Linguistic, cultural, ethnic, religious and economic diversity with an amazing variety and form has been our heritage for about 3500 years.[2] Different areas of thought and philosophy have generally coexisted peacefully, with the exception of some violent outbursts. This has led some Indian thinkers to look for a philosophical basis for pluralism. But the spurt in communalism and the violent assertion of local identities in recent times coupled with a fragmented and fragile political system and weak government in the Indian subcontinent are serious concerns. So the problem discussed in this paper is that of pluralism in general. How do we live in a reality which is divergent and pluralistic? We keep in mind the Indian subcontinent when discussing some of the issues related to pluralism. This grave problem calls also for an intellectual response. So in this paper an attempt is made to pose the problem of pluralism in general and to offer a response to pluralism using the ancient Indian philosophical notion of *advaita*. Such a response, I believe, would be liberative for the Indian nation, with its individual groups and identities. It may be further mentioned that we deal not exclusively with religious pluralism, though it is also a very significant factor in the Indian society. Our concern is the whole issue of pluralism in general, and we can treat religious pluralism as one paradigm case of a pluralistic society.

This paper has three sections. In the first one, an attempt is made to elaborate the fact of pluralism philosophically. For this we make use mainly of classical Scholastic terms modified to suit the modern times. Here we introduce some fundamental notions with a view to indicating the actuality of change, diversity and pluralism. After having established the metaphysical fact of pluralism, in the second section we look at the metaphysical possibility of pluralism. This too is dealt with primarily within a modified Scholastic framework. In the third section our concern is an existential one. Here we look for a model to live by with the fact and possibility of plurality. Since our context is Indian and the issue is also Indian, here the model we propose is basically Indian. We propose that a modified *advaitic* model could be a suitable model to live the plurality that India is, within the three horizons of individuality, comprehensiveness and integration. Thus it is hoped that our work will be a modest contribution towards developing an integrated India where plurality is affirmed and unity maintained.

2. The Fact of Pluralism: A Philosophical Perspective

2.1. Pluralism as a Fact: Metaphysical Considerations[3]

At a philosophical level, we have to start with the fundamental question of the very reality of diversity or pluralism. Is plurality real? When Indian thinkers speak of the world as *māya*, this is not necessarily an avowal of nihilism and a-cosmism (denial that the world exists). More often than not it is a way of asserting the *relative* unreality of the beings of our daily sense experience – another manner of indicating their contingency. Only the Absolute can be called unqualifiedly real: it exists necessarily, it cannot not-be and depends on nothing else for its existence.

However, some thinkers deny the reality of plurality altogether. They do not deny that we observe changes taking place around us. There is no quarrel over the phenomenon. What they do is to reject the validity of sense experience. Preferring to go solely by reason they argue that reason alone is a valid means of obtaining knowledge, and hence sense experience is defective. Now reason, they argue, reveals that change is impossible. Therefore, following the reliable guide of pure reason and eschewing the false leads of sense experience, we should deny the reality of the phenomenon of change. It is all pure illusion. Let's take a closer look at how they present their case.

2.2. Parmenides' Problem

The first recorded philosophical exercise in the West originated with two rival stalwarts and their two antagonistic schools in direct confrontation with each other. Heraclitus and his fellow Ionians, relying more on the information of sense, maintained the reality of change and the illusory nature of permanence. Parmenides and the Eleatic school held directly the opposite view: i.e., leaving aside the sophistries of Zeno they take seriously only the riddle of Parmenides, which alone is worthy of serious attention.

According to Parmenides, all that we can affirm is: "Being is." Reality is a single, uniform and unchanging being (not a becoming). After all, to really change means to acquire something new, something that was not there before. Now this "something new" which is allegedly acquired in a change must be either a being or a non-being: there is no "third possibility." But being cannot change by acquiring being, for that is nothing new; it is already being. Nor can it change by acquiring non-being, since non-being is nothing; acquiring nothing means not changing. Thus, as far as Parmenides and his disciples are concerned, change is shown to be effectively impossible. It is merely an illusion and no more. So is plurality too!

2.3. Aristotle's Answer

It was not until Aristotle that a clever and pertinent response to Parmenides' dilemma was provided, thanks to Aristotle's theory of *act* and *potency*. This theory gives a good basis for a dynamic and an *advaitic* worldview.

To grasp further this valuable insight, let us begin with the common

parlance terms *actual* and *potential*, which come from our everyday experiences. We can take a stone and a mango seed as examples. Both are obviously not a mango tree, but there is a difference. True, neither of them is an actual mango tree, but the mango seed is at least a potential mango tree: it has a certain orientation, an in-built capacity to become a mango tree, given a certain environment. But the stone is not a potential mango tree at all. There is nothing you can do to it, no environment you can provide it with, which will enable it to evolve into a mango tree some day. Thus, there is a halfway meeting place between being and non-being: potential being. A mango seed is an actual mango seed but a potential mango tree. A stone is an actual stone and not a potential mango tree (it may be a potential statue in the hands of a clever sculptor).

So we are in a position to understand better *act* and *potency*. In its most general sense, *act* means a perfection and *potency* means a capacity or readiness for a perfection. *Potency*, in turn, may be of two kinds, passive and active. A passive *potency* is the capacity to receive a certain perfection, e.g., a human person has the capacity to acquire fatness. An active *potency* is the capacity to do a particular perfective action. The faculty of sight, for instance, has the active *potency* to perceive colour – but not sound. Strictly speaking, we can find a minimal measure of disposition or orientation. A human person has the passive *potency* to acquire philosophical knowledge. But this is only because there is in the person some active inner disposition for it, which a chair lacks!

Going back to Parmenides, we can affirm that change and so multiplicity can be shown to be rationally possible by introducing Aristotle's understanding of *act* and *potency*. The beings of our experience are both actually what they are (a stone or a mango seed) and potentially something else (a statue or a mango tree). When they acquire this "something extra" which they were potentially, they acquire something genuinely new and so change! This explains multiplicity.

2.4. Change Is Not Substitution

All change and multiplicity imply some degree of composition. Not only must something new be acquired, but something of "the old" must be carried over to underlie the process. There is something in the stone which remains in the statue; it is the same seed which has now "become" a tree. In other words, something within the seed, some common substratum has survived into the tree. If every single element of the "old being" were totally wiped out and the "new being" was absolutely radically new, then there would be no real change but the annihilation of one being and its replacement or substitution, somehow or the other, by the new one! Now we can understand Aristotle's definition of change: "The fulfilment of what exists potentially, in so far as it exists potentially."[4] By "fulfilment", here, is meant the process of actualising what was existing potentially. The final state "in so far as it exists potentially" is added because otherwise we

shall be referring to the completed, final change, whereas, as we have seen, by change we mean the process of passing from *potency* to *act*.

The related problem of the one and the many is also to a large extent resolved. The problem refers to the fact that if being is one and it suffices, why are there many? In other words, is the multiplicity of beings around us real or only apparent? Are they really different individuals or actually various parts or manifestations of one single being? If there is only one being, how do we account for the apparent multiplicity or pluralism? If we accept a multiplicity of beings which are independent of each other, how do we explain the apparent unity and inter-connectedness that we experience in reality? Still, let us admit at the outset, it is much more logical to assume that there is one being, rather than many.[5] After all, if "to be," or existence, is the characteristic note of being, then what would there actually be to provide the multiplicity and individuation of beings?

Once again, Aristotle's approach provides us with an answer. Being is not just pure existence (as in God's case). In that situation, being would be necessarily infinite, unique and not multipliable. But, as the direct judgement has revealed to us, being is more than just existence, pure and simple. There is also the limiting element of essence in the beings we affirm. Thus there can be several existences limited by several essences. The infinite (unlimited) being is one, unique, and unrepeatable; finite (limited) beings are multiple because of their limiting essences. If there are different essences, we have different types of beings. If there is further an element of prime matter within the essence, we have further individuation within the species (many horses, many human beings, many mango trees and so on).

According to Desbruslais, a truly comprehensive and integrated metaphysics will provide a basis for both the essential plurality of beings as also their basic inter-connectedness.[6] In practice, however, Western thought has tended to exaggerate the isolatedness of individual beings and has ignored the organic unity that interlinks the cosmos. The Indian world vision, on the other hand, emphasises a holistic understanding of reality, seeing the entire cosmos as one, almost to the point of either ending up in monism or pantheism, or being misunderstood as such.[7] Contemporary thinkers do recognise now the solidarity that exists between all that is. Not only are "the things of this world" intimately linked to the Unlimited, the Infinite Being by participation, but there is also a kind of bonding between themselves, which could be better understood in terms of analogy.[8]

2.5. Relation between One and Many: Philosophical Reflections

We understand everything that is in reality as entities, because Being is constitutive of them. So the question, to what extent does the totality of existing reality form a basic unity, is proper.[9] This question of the cosmic unity and the universal unity is a basic question in the history of

thought. Even the early Greek thinkers, before 600 BC, had thought of everything as forming a oneness and attempted to bring the totality of reality under one universal law and to explain it from the "basic constituent of everything" (*archē panton*). The classical metaphysics of Plato and Aristotle were also similar attempts.

From the beginning of thought itself there was the temptation to equate this unity with monism. Parmenides, as we saw (500 BC), conceives of only one eternally resting *Sein* or Being. All plurality and change is for him only appearances. This thought continued in the neo-Platonism of Plotinus (3rd century AD) and in Proclus (5th century AD). For Plotinus the first and highest divine basis of existence is the One (*to hen*), out of which by necessary emanation (radiating out or flowing out) everything else comes about. Finally, everything else must return to its origin and so unify itself with the original One.

This thought has a significant influence on almost every kind of pantheistic view of the Middle Ages and in the mystical traditions of Judaism, Islam and Christianity. Even in the humanistic tendencies of the modern age, such thoughts were presented by Giordano Bruno (1660). They base themselves primarily on Neo-Platonism. For Aquinas, oneness has ontological priority over plurality.[10] Accordingly, in the substance-monism of Spinoza (17th century) there is only one divine Substance, which realises itself and presents itself in finite things as its various 'modes.' In the German idealism, Schelling speaks of the "*Absolute Identity*" in which everything is finally dissolved into one. But he later went beyond this thought. As against him, Hegel understands the Absolute as a Unity that develops itself dialectically, synthesising the thesis and the antithesis of progressive evolution, and comes to itself in the finite beings. This Absolute One later becomes the Spirit and returns to itself as the Absolute Spirit. Hegel's idea is thus a dialectical and all-encompassing unifying thought, which stays close to Proclus and Spinoza and has its influence to this day.

Metaphysically it must be said that Being is the principle of unity of all beings, in so far as and because it itself has a being, and constitutes an all comprehensive unity of beings. This comprehensive unity is applicable not just for the particular beings, but also for the totality of all beings. At the same time it is absolutely necessary to note that the unity of the whole does not suppress the unity of the individual.[11] Every individual being is in itself an unconditional and substantial validation of beings. It stays in specific and generic commonality and mutual relationship with others and it also stands for an analogous commonality of all beings in Being.

So, a brief metaphysical consideration of the relationship between unity and plurality is also necessary for us. It is true that unity or oneness does not add anything to being.[12] Still it must be affirmed that

unity is prior to plurality.[13] Plurality cannot even be thought of, much less exist, without unity, difference without commonality. Plurality presupposes unity. Unity (or oneness) does not necessarily presuppose plurality. To that extent unity has primacy over plurality. So they are not equal in all respects. If there is a plurality of beings, there must be a commonality of beings. But the reverse is not metaphysically true.

Pure plurality or a disconnected plurality without any relationship between its constituting elements can only lead to Humean empiricism, where no causality, no necessity and no laws whatsoever are present. Also pure unity, without plurality would be imaginable, but then there would not be any real world existing, nor any human beings to perceive it. There is in our actual world a commonality which relates plurality to unity.

Commonality as the unity in plurality cannot have its basis in the plurality as such, but only in unity. Unity in plurality presupposes therefore a unity before plurality, that is, a common basis for beings, which enables and forms the conditions for the possibility of the existence of plurality. Only such a unity can guarantee the plurality and diversity of beings.[14] The unity of the totality of reality is the unity of Being as such, which analogously develops itself to the plurality of beings. Such a plurality can be ultimately justified and understood only in the unity of the absolute Being.

Coming to the Indian *advaitic* perspective, we can see somehow a relationship involving *advaita* in pluralism. Between a mango seed and the tree there is a relation which is lacking between a mango seed and a stone. From an Indian perspective we can say that there is something in the mango seed which enables it to grow into a tree. And so the relationship between the mango seed and the tree could be visualised in terms of an *advaitic* union. Their's is not a relationship of identity or oneness. Nor is their relationship one of duality or complete separation. The category of *advaita* can help us here. Obviously, between the mango seed and the stone there is a *dvaitic* (dualistic) relationship in this particular context. More about this in the third section.

Thus we see that metaphysically though unity is primary, commonality has to be respected, and pluralism is a fact. Our next attempt is to see the relation between various beings with a view to applying it to various cultures. Such a relationship between beings, or in our case between the being of divergent cultures, we believe, could be achieved by the category of the analogy of being.

3. The Possibility of Pluralism: The Analogy of Being[15]

The way we understand being is crucial for our philosophical understanding of Indian pluralism. On the one hand we can assume being to be totally one with the Absolute, neglecting the ordinary beings of concrete existence. This will lead to non-realism of the world. On the other hand, we can hold

that all beings stand in the same relation to the Absolute, and then we would end up in pantheism. Is there a way out of the dilemma of non-realism on the one hand and of pantheism on the other (the terrible options that Sankara and Ramanuja, the great Indian metaphysicians, had to face)? Our answer is in the affirmative, and we hold that it is achieved by way of the analogy of being. Apart from the analogy of being it is difficult to visualise a philosophical response to this dilemma between "acosmism" and panthèism!

3.1. Terminological Considerations

Language implies words and concepts, both of which refer to things – the things about which we speak. Concepts may roughly be defined as mental signs of things, and words as verbal signs of things. In practice we can identify concept with meaning. If so, it should not be too difficult for us to recognise that though concepts may remain the same for different people, the actual words used by various languages to refer to a given thing may be quite different. For instance, a thing with four legs that wags its tail and barks, summons up the same concept in different people, no matter what language they may speak. Yet, each of these people still use a different word to designate that reality (or sum up its concept.) An Englishman will say dog, a Hindi-speaker will say *kuttā*, a Frenchperson *chien* and a Keralite *paṭṭi*. All these sounds are chosen arbitrarily, by pure convention. It would be ridiculous to ask which of the above words is more "fitting" or "natural" to apply to the thing concerned. Neither spoken word nor (its corresponding) written equivalent in any way imitates the shape of the animal or the sound it makes! In fact, there is even no correspondence between the sound of the word in question and the way it is written. That too is purely arbitrary. The element of arbitrariness and conventionality is part and parcel of every language.

We can go on to see how we actually use words and their corresponding concepts. Sometimes we come across a case where one word and one single concept or meaning is applied to one unique reality. This is so with all proper names, such as Pune, Jnana-Deepa Vidyapeeth and so on. Such a linguistic usage is called singularity. However, if all linguistic practice were to be like this – if we had separate words for each and every individual existent – it would be utterly impossible to communicate! Would-be speakers would have to know an infinite number of words!

Happily, there is the more frequent occurrence of univocity. Most of our words are of such a nature. Here, a single word, with the same, identical meaning, is applied to a host of different realities, all individuals within a particular species. Thus, the word horse or cat or dog is referred to each of the various specimens of the animals in question that inhabit the globe.

At the other end of the spectrum we find equivocity. In this case, one and the same word is used, with varying meanings or concepts, and is given to things that are totally different from each other. An example is the word, *date*. It has at least three different meanings (concepts):

i. A particular fruit; ii. A time period indicated on a calendar; iii. An appointment with a loved one of the opposite sex.

Or take, as another example, the term *bark*. It could refer either to the sound made by a dog or to the outer covering of a tree. There is no logical reason why, in either case, the same verbal sound should be used with reference to such divergent beings: pure arbitrariness, again. And yet, so it is in every language.

Analogy is a kind of halfway house between the two extremes of univocity and equivocity. An analogous word, then, is one which is applied to many things with a meaning somehow the same and somehow different. Now this "somehow the same and somehow different" can, itself, allow for two further understandings. It could imply, on the one hand, that part of the definition is verified by one of the things concerned, while another part of that same definition is not. For instance, we talk about the foot of a human being and the foot of a hill. The word "foot" is used analogously here, in the sense that the foot of the hill partly fulfils the definition of foot, which the human foot does completely – in as much as "foot", in both cases, indicates the lowest part of the reality referred to. But a human foot is not merely the lowest part of the body: it is also an instrument of locomotion, whereas the "foot" of the hill cannot enable it to displace itself. This is a case of what we might call extrinsic analogy. But there is another situation, called intrinsic analogy, where all the things concerned verify the definition of the word totally, but to different degrees. Take, for instance, the word "life", which could be defined as "self-perfective activity" or "self-developing activity". Now, we recognise that plants, animals and human beings all have self-perfective activity. The plant has, however, the lowest level of self-perfective activity: nourishment, reproduction, growth and repair. The animal has, besides these "vegetative" activities, also locomotion and sensitivity, which the plant does not have. Finally, a human person enjoys all of these and, over and above them, is also capable of conceptual language, religion and creative breakthroughs. Each of these three groups have "life," but, while they fully verify the meaning of life, they do it in evidently varying degrees.

3.2. The Analogy of Being

If we were to define *being*, for instance, in a manner that only God could truly fulfil (as "that which necessarily exists" or "that which requires nothing other than itself to account for its existence"), then we would be obliged to call this world of people and things non-being. Hence would stem those various "world-negating" philosophies, as the views of Sankara and Berkeley are traditionally held. On the other hand, if we want to maintain the reality of this world while still accepting the above definition of being, the consequent way out would be via pantheism: maintaining that this world is but, fundamentally, an expression of God. This is the way of Ramanuja.

There was also J. P. Sartre, who defined *being* in terms of two watertight compartments, *being-in-itself*

(*être-en-soi*, being that is unconscious and static) and *being-for-itself* (*être-pour-soi*, being that is conscious and dynamic). As a result of this arbitrary approach to and definition of being, he literally "defined" God out of existence!

The medieval thinker, Duns Scotus, was one of several philosophers who sought to define being in a purely equivocal manner by identifying being with existence: being is that which exists. By that token God and the things and persons of this world are all beings on an equal footing. Then would result the difficult problem of trying to get out of pantheism by introducing various subtle and confusing distinctions and refinements in the whole discussion!

For these reasons, it seems best to fall back upon the traditional Scholastic definition of being – *id quod suo modo existit* – "that which exists in its own way." As we shall now proceed to indicate, this definition is analogous in nature and so, among other things, is able to save both the transcendence of God and the reality of the world.[16]

God and creatures both verify the definition fully: God exists necessarily, with an unreceived, uncreated and unlimited existence; creatures exist by virtue of a received, created and limited or finite act of existence. God and creatures each have their "own" act of existence, in their "own way," and the difference lies in their way of existence.

So I am a being, the dog is a being and the cow is a being. What about my height and my weight? Are they beings too? Do they exist in their own way? For Scholastic philosophy the answer is certainly in the affirmative. They certainly "exist" – my height and weight are by no means illusory. They do not, of course, exist by subsisting, that is, they do not exist "by themselves", by a separate act of existence, by "inherence" as the classical term has it. In Scholastic idiom, "accidents" (such as one's height and weight) "inhere in the substance", that is, they share in the same act of existence that I possess in and through my substance.

All these are instances of the notion of being used analogically, with intrinsic analogy, that is, the full definition is verified in each case, albeit in different degrees. Do we have any instance of the notion of being used with extrinsic analogy, namely, in such a way that the full definition is not always implied?

Going back to the Scholastic tradition we can affirm that this is the case when we refer the word *being* to what has been called "possibles" and "relative non-beings". A possible, as the name implies, is not an actually existent being; it is an idea. Examples would be the pictures that the artist hopes to paint or the poem the poet plans to pen. Of course, once these people execute their projects, we no longer have possibles, but an actual landscape or a sonnet. Relative non-beings are pure negations, as non-cat or non-dog. However, it is usual to classify "evils" among such, for instance, blindness and cancer. An evil, in the Augustinian-Thomistic tradition is not a positive reality; it is a privation, a lack of a due perfection in a positive reality. Blindness is lack of sight in a person or any other being that is meant

to have vision. Inability to fly is a privation (hence an evil) in a crow, but not so for a human being. Sickness in general, as also in its various concrete manifestations (which would include cancer), is not conceived as a positive entity but as merely the lack of health in a positive reality in which it is due, such as a human person or a dog. Of course, few people nowadays would see cancer or leprosy as a mere lack of health, but as the actual presence in an organism of some noxious germ or virus or whatever. However, as indicated by Desbruslais, medical science had not made many strides in the days of Augustine or Aquinas, and so that is why they came to their particular conclusions about disease being a "relative non-being."

So, according to Scholastic tradition, we may speak of non-dog, disease and deafness as beings. And then we would be using the word *being* according to extrinsic analogy. The full definition of being is "that which exists in its own way." But, as we can infer, these things do not really exist: like possibles, relative non-being and non-beings are merely isolated essences. Thus, calling them "being" is like speaking of the "foot" of a mountain or calling God a "rock." They are terms used analogically.

We would have little difficulty in calling possibles and relative non-beings as being, by extrinsic analogy. Where we might have our reservations is whether disease is a relative non-being or not. However, that is not the point under discussion at the moment. We were in search of a definition of being, one that would steer us clear between "the Scylla of non-realism or a-cosmism and the Charybdis of pantheism."[17] And we have found that definition, "that which exists in its own way," fits the situation admirably, being of itself open to analogous application. As for diseases, well, we shall not call them relative-non-beings but actual beings (a concrete disorder in an organism caused by the actual presence of some observed or observable harmful entity). Then these would be beings by intrinsic analogy.

3. 3. Analogy of Proportion and Proportionality

Thomas Aquinas did not invent (or even discover) the idea of analogy; Plato and Aristotle spoke of *analogia*. Neoplatonic and Augustinian exemplarism gave it a new development, and it came to the Angelic Doctor through his compatriot Albert the Great and through the medieval Muslim thinker Averroes. Aquinas has made elaborate use of analogy in his work though he has not really dwelt much on analogy itself.[18]

For the purpose of our study here, it is sufficient to append what Aquinas holds about analogy of *proportion* and of *proportionality*.[19] The distinction crops up for the first time in the *De Veritate* (*On Truth*). In the former there is a resemblance between two things (e.g., the numbers four and eight, where one is twice the other), whereas in the latter the resemblance is between the proportion or relation of one pair of things compared to that of another pair of things (thus, eight is to four as six is

to three). To take a non-mathematical example, it would be analogy of proportionality were we to speak of "vision" with regard to ocular as well as intellectual perception. The meaning would be that as corporal vision is to the eye, so intellectual apprehension is to the mind.

Later on,[20] there developed tedious arguments among commentators on Aquinas as to whether he went on to abandon analogy of proportionality in favour of analogy of proportion, in the whole business of "God-talk" or attributing perfection to God.[21] This point is irrelevant to us here. However, in passing, I might point out that in his famous *Commentary on the Sentences* he listed both types of analogy, and the mere fact that he emphasised proportion more than proportionality in his more mature works like the *Summa Theologica* and the *Contra Gentiles*, is no conclusive evidence that he had shelved the notion!

3.4. Towards an Analogy of Being

Finally let us remark that unless one were to go along with the most drastic of monistic systems, we would be compelled to admit that the things around us are not plainly and simply of a piece, and yet, in order to make such a plurality intelligible, the tendency to a basic unity within the diversity has to be admitted. In other words, some kind of theory of analogy of being is inevitable for practical everyday life and communication.

Our next step would be to apply this theory of analogy of being not just to the various entities (*beings*) present among us, but also to the various cultures and divergent groups identities in the Indian subcontinent (being of cultures or of groups). Such a jump would certainly be a legitimate one. We do not need to justify this jump by referring to the concept of corporate personality. As we saw, if height, age and sickness could be considered as beings in diverse degrees, we could certainly apply the notion of analogy to collective beings, to group entities, and all our insights of analogy of being would apply to the collective beings too. If so, we could also talk of the analogy of beings of the various cultures and group identities. That would provide us with a possibility and legitimisation for the existence of various identities.

Coming to the *advaitic* vision, we could hold, from a Thomistic perspective, that analogy could be broadly compared to *advaita*. Just as analogy is central to the Thomistic framework so is *advaita* to the Indian framework. They make discourse possible both in Thomistic philosophy and in Indian philosophy. Without *advaita* there would be only total separation or identity which would make discourse impossible. So is the case with analogy in Thomism. So is the case with the possibility of pluralism. Without *advaita* there would be only mere disconnected entities not related to one another. *Advaita* provides us with a metaphysical and hermeneutical function to understand and to respond to beings. In the order of beings there are beings. But at the most fundamental level there is commonality in the Being. This commonality (or foundation) in Being is emphasised both by analogy and by *advaita*, without negating the beings.[22]

4. Encountering Pluralism: An *Advaitic* Model of Living Out Plurality

Here in this final section we try to generalise our approach to pluralism, going beyond the treatment of religious pluralism which is common today. Here we can broadly classify the two extreme views of understanding religious pluralism as monism and dualism. Without dwelling on them we go directly to our preferred model of a modified *advaitic* vision of Indian diversities.

The monistic approach to pluralism is one which seeks for the victory of one's own religion (or culture) over the others.[23] This approach builds walls against the other religions or groups, and tries to assert the supremacy of one's own group over other groups.

The dualistic approach to pluralism is the other extreme view. It is basically a way of "peaceful co-existence."[24] Here the emphasis is on a democratic right of the other to exist. Though there may be covert attempts at influencing the other, the underlying principle is that one has as much right as the other to exist and that each should leave the other alone. This is the notion of the "free market" of ideas and world-views. Here diversity is accepted as necessary and there is no overarching or underlying or indirect unity. That would be pure unconnected plurality which cannot be philosophically justified except through Humean empiricism.

The model that we follow is based on an *advaitic* approach.[25] A word of caution is called for. The term *advaita* is not used here as it is classically used, but as developed by Bede Griffiths. We use it in a specifically, Griffithsian understanding. Still we prefer to keep to this same termiology because it is our conviction that Sankara's *advaita*, interpreted classically, might have been one-sided. So we still use the term *advaita* where a larger relationship of general comprehensiveness, individual identity and overall synthesis is maintained. Though traditional *advaita* is not interpreted this way, it is our contention that a modified understanding as given below could still be called *advaitic*.

So the *advaita* we propose here is a slightly modified *one* as attempted by Richard De Smet and Bede Griffiths and influenced by their Thomistic philosophies. We presuppose that the basic *advaitic* intuition implies three things:

i. All existing beings have their existence depending on Brahman.

ii. All existence has meaning in relation to Brahman.

iii. All existence, including that of cultures, reveals something of Brahman.

If we apply such an *advaitic* model to understand the existence of cultural identities, it would make dialogue possible and imperative.

To develop such a model we base ourselves not just on the thought pattern but the whole life of Bede Griffiths, a Christian Sannyasi or a Westerner who was at home in India.

We shall briefly elaborate his understanding of *advaita* and apply it to the rich analogy of being in the cultures that exist in India. As such we try to appreciate the commendable aspects in Griffithsian *advaita* under three general categories: comprehensiveness, individuality and integration.

4.1. Comprehensiveness

One thing that strikes anyone who reads Griffiths' works or who is acquainted with his life is the enormous sense of wholeness or comprehensiveness in his vision of life. In all his writings, there is this comprehensiveness or totality, that accompanies and guides him. By comprehensiveness, we mean a way of looking at reality, by which there is no positive exclusion of any aspect, but an affirmation of all the various aspects of the reality.

We can have an initial idea of this comprehensiveness from a significant symbol which he uses for it: the symbol of the gothic cathedral. This symbol is articulated by him in his writings on the Thomistic philosophy. About the deep admiration he himself has for Thomistic philosophy he writes: "I began to read St Thomas for myself but I saw his shadow cast on the poetry of Dante and I recognised in the ordered structure of Dante's thought and the comprehensiveness of his vision something of the grandeur and immensity of a great cathedral. I had still only a very imperfect conception of its real significance."[26]

In fact, the comprehensiveness which he so much admired in Aquinas is evident in his own life. The vast amount of influences he had allowed to be exerted on himself, the diverse literature he had so ardently read, his various artistic interests cannot otherwise be explained.

Further, it must be emphasised that this comprehensiveness is not just at the epistemological level. It is a comprehension which goes from epistemology to a world-view and world vision (*Weltanschauung*). Further this comprehension extends itself to envelop the whole reality at a metaphysical level. Even in the reality itself he sees a gradation of being. Thus accepting the analogy of Being, he is convinced of a totality of Being which unifies the beings. So the comprehensiveness itself is for him strictly comprehensive.

To elaborate a bit more on the comprehensive nature of his works: his interest in science, psychology, evolution; his involvement with music, art, painting and literature; and his engagement with the conscious and the unconscious (and even the supra-conscious) are clear indications of this characteristic in him from an early stage. Even if "there was probably a good deal more of enthusiasm than discrimination in all this reading,"[27] it is evident that this enthusiasm for the whole is part and parcel of his own life.

Another simple illustration of the concern for the whole is his own description of the future of reality. Such a vision is for him something that involves "the earth and ... the

natural resources of the earth, ... the sea and all the creatures in it ... the animal world as a whole, ... and the outer space."[28] So such a comprehensiveness, which is at the same time interdependent and interacting is present all through his mystical and intellectual endeavour.

Further his efforts at arriving at a unified vision also indicate this same comprehensiveness. The unified vision is something which does not exclude anything, but is all inclusive and all encompassing. Methodologically, it is first from the perspective of this whole that he will later on go to find integration and unity. So it is an integration in the totality.

In this whole, everything, including the evil and the inappropriate, have their place. Even though he is vehemently critical of modern science, he does admit a place for it. Even the *avidya* and *māya*, which are generally not appreciated, become facts of life and so have their own proper place in his vision of things.[29]

It would be our contention that it is this all too evident comprehensiveness in his thinking and experience that could be easily misinterpreted as syncretism, though the two are certainly different. Syncretism would be a narrow and uncritical acceptance of the other, without in any way making it critically part of the system. Comprehensiveness is a view which is total, holistic, and which at the same time does not deny anything in the reality. There is a positive affirmation of different and contradictory aspects.

This aspect of comprehensiveness is extended very much to the sphere of religious faith and religious traditions towards the end-phase of his life. His last book, *Universal Wisdom*, is a clear case. There he tries to study the totality of religions within his grasp to see the basic insights of all these religious traditions.

Evidently the symbol for this comprehensive view for Griffiths is the gothic cathedral as already mentioned. He goes on further to elaborate the symbol of the cathedral. "It was no longer simply the outward form of beauty, the triumph of craftsmanship and of the almost unconscious union of humanity with Nature which impressed me. I saw that behind all this there lay the power of a vast intelligence, not merely of an architectural genius but of a whole philosophy of life."[30]

From a Christian perspective of the Trinity the Father could be the symbol of this comprehensiveness and totality. Since he is the source of the whole creation and he is the origin of everything that is, he could easily be understood as comprehensiveness itself.

4.2. Individuality

The normal danger with comprehensiveness and totality is that of forgetting the individual, the concrete. There is the temptation in contemplating the beauty of the rose to forget the petals that constitute it. Moreover if one knows the totality, then there is no need to get mere individual pieces of knowledge! For, the indi-

vidual pieces of knowledge one acquires, are not going to add anything new to the totality of knowledge that one already possesses. This could make one close to other systems, to other sources of knowledge. So a totality of knowledge could actually lead to inhibition of further knowledge! But this is particularly the defect which Griffiths avoids. For him the real is really important and not just in the context of the whole. So there is great respect for uniqueness, differentiation, particularity and concreteness.

So the second clearly marked feature in his whole thinking process is that of individualisation or concreteness. The comprehensiveness that we have dealt with above is never a comprehensiveness that dissolves itself in the totality. It is a comprehensiveness that positively accepts the differences, the diversity and even the contradictions.

The best example for this is given in Griffiths' vehement criticism of *Śaṅkara's* pure *advaita*. His effort to revive "relationship and reality" in the doctrine of pure *advaita* is a clear case of Griffiths' insistence on the individual existence. Both the additional aspects of realism and relationship imply individuality. Clearly, Griffiths is not speaking of a generalised and an all comprehensive reality, when he insists on the need for reality of the individual souls (*jīvātman*). Again, as he himself shows for the existence of love or relationship, individuality is the bare necessity. That is precisely what Ramanuja and Madhva were looking for in Indian philosophy without finding it.[31]

Further, his own emphasis that he is in no way attempting a syncretism is remarkable. He is very careful not to mix the differences in different traditions and then to attempt an artificial and superficial synthesis. "The danger in the encounter with Hinduism is always that of superficial syncretism, which would regard all religions as 'essentially' the same, and only differing in their 'accidental' characteristics. Needless to say, this is destructive of all serious dialogue and makes real understanding impossible."[32] Avoidance of syncretism implies that there are differences which cannot be easily bridged, which cannot be easily reconciled. So there are individual concrete ideas (or entities) which have to be accepted in their differences. Further it may be noted that it is the respect for the uniqueness that prevents him from accepting syncretism in any way. Each individual is not to be seen in the totality, but has its own uniqueness which does not give way to syncretism.

It is this individuation which gives the metaphysical basis for pluralism. To talk of pluralism without genuine respect for the individual (be it a person, a culture or a religion) will be unmetaphysical and ultimately meaningless.

That is why for him the best symbol for this aspect is that of the drop of water in the ocean, which actually retains its identity even in the

vastness of the ocean. For him the traditional drop-ocean analogy, wherein the individual soul is dissolved in the ocean of Brahma at the final awakening and wherein the individuality is finally lost, is clearly unacceptable. We can recall once again Griffiths' question about the drop in the ocean. He asks: "would the drop in the ocean not cry out in great joy: 'True, I am living, yet it is not myself who lives, but this ocean lives in me, and my soul is hidden away in its depths'? The soul that flows into God does not die, for how could she die through being drowned in life? ... Rather, she lives by not living in herself."[33]

From the perspective of the Trinitarian symbol this individuation is clearly found in Christ. The incarnation is the concretisation of the divine in the earthly. There is the role for differentiation, rootedness and involvement with the particular in Jesus.

4.3. Integration

The third all pervading characteristic that we find in Griffiths is that of integration. It has been with him from the very beginning of his intellectual career when he started to deal with the integration of the intuitive and the discursive faculties of knowing. It has remained with him till the end, where this aspect of integration has found manifold expressions. One can even affirm that integration is the key to understand Griffiths' intellectual and even spiritual journey.

Further, the actual relation between the various elements of totality and identity could be sought after only through categories of integration, though it may be mentioned that 'comprehensiveness' and 'individuality' do not belong to the same category. One is more than the other. Comprehensiveness encompasses individuals. So we cannot really speak of a 'marriage' between two 'equal' partners in this case.

The key symbol of integration would be that of 'marriage', as the very title of his second autobiography indicates. In marriage, just as there is an integration of the male and the female resulting in the offspring, we can see integration as an organic union between two 'extremes' resulting in an offspring. It is more than a convenient coalition of partners. Actually the very process of integration itself could be seen as a 'marriage' between the two above-mentioned characteristics: comprehensiveness and individuality.

It is here that the Holy Spirit comes in as the Trinitarian symbol for integration. Just as it is biblical to see his action as unifying and integrating the whole creation and taking the whole cosmos in Christ to the Father, we can understand this integration also from the perspective of *advaita*.

It may again be mentioned that for Griffiths a metaphysical relationship involving these three above characteristics is *advaitic*. It is an organic unity affirming the totality, the unity and the integrating transcendence. We shall be speaking of this *advaita* further to see it as the hermeneutic key in the interreligious encounter.

To sum up once again the main characteristics of an *advaitic* relationship as visualised by Griffiths:

- Individuality is respected and maintained, though in a transformed manner.
- Ever seeking for wholeness *advaitic* relationship is always open for the more.
- There is always an integration, a further growth and continued relationship which respects the differences between the partners.
- The horizontal, dialogical, circular and mediating characteristics in understanding could all be applied to an *advaitic* relationship.[34]
- In the final state, which is more than the sum of the parts, there is always a 'surplus,' that is, a deeper or holistic dimension.

As already indicated the best human example at a physical level is that of a marriage where the partners unite themselves, and the child would result. The final product, the family, is certainly more than the individual sum of the two partners.

5. Conclusion

Our basic question was the philosophical question of the existence of the Indian reality in its pluralism and diversity. What essentially constitutes the Indian reality is not our basic concern here. Our concern is a phenomenological understanding of the rich diversity of the Indian phenomenon and to expose ourselves to the metaphysical and hermeneutical challenges of this phenomenon. We have indicated that metaphysically pluralism is a fact and it is founded on oneness. And hermeneutically pluralism is a serious challenge for deeper encounter with and respect for the other without sacrificing the individuality of oneself or the other. This phenomenon of pluralism has its paradigmatic case in religion. It is our contention that even other dimensions of life like culture, economy and social groups could be understood from this perspective. It must be accepted that we have not been able to respond to the problem and challenge of pluralism comprehensively in this article. This article is only a first step at answering some of these challenges from a metaphysical perspective. We must admit that we have not been exhaustive in dealing with this controversial issue. For instance, we have not been able to address the issue of the identity of groups which are annihilative of other groups. We have not been able to position such violent terrorist groups in our spectrum of group identities.

We saw briefly that the monistic or dualistic approach to pluralism would be unsatisfactory. So we proposed an *advaitic* model of pluralism and unity. Such a model, based on the writings and life of Bede Griffiths, offers us a way of focusing the problem facing the Indian reality. Though it cannot be a panacea for all India's ills, especially for its political turmoil, it does offer a significant vision which could be beneficial for India, with its diverse and unifying dimensions.

Such an *advaitic* vision of pluralism based on an analogy of being, when extended to the phenomenon of

Indianness, could have quite surprising consequences.[35] The diversity and resulting conflicts that occur in the Indian subcontinent could then be handled creatively. The attempts of various ethnic and minority groups at self-determination could be approached more positively. The tension between the economic classes and social castes could be understood more comprehensively. The competition between linguistic groups and state interests could also be viewed from different perspectives. Even such a vision however would not be able to resolve all the difficulties of pluralism. But it would be a small step in the proper direction.

The comprehensiveness of the Indian reality visualises itself in our common approach to the notion of India. We would realise ourselves as Indians and our actions would stem from that basic conviction. Thus it is the general sense of oneness and wholeness with the other groups, cultures and entities that gives us the identity of being Indian. Such a view is holistic.

Within this holistic vision of the Indian reality, in spite of the tensions and conflicts, the existence of the individual group is seen as positive and something desirable, and therefore the need to eradicate the other displeasing one, disappears. There might still be scope for tension but that tension, would not be an annihilative one. There is a proper place for creative tension within the main frame of the Indianness of our society. In such a vision the disappearance of a single linguistic or cultural group would be taken much more seriously, then the disappearance of an endangered species in ecology.

The positive existence of the individual is not just affirmed and respected but also encouraged. The individual groups are maintained, affirmed and promoted. This could be very liberative for some minority groups which are threatened with extinction. The existence of individual groups based on the metaphysical notion of analogy gives them separate and at the same time related identities.

Our metaphysical approach ensures that the basic unity is affirmed and the individuality is respected. The separate identities of the different cultures and groups are identities shown to be metaphysically essential and their identities ontologically related. Thus the venture requires from us respect both for the individuality and the commonality.

When we relate the basic categories of our modified *advaita* to the Christian doctrine of the Trinity, we do not attempt to compare the two doctrines. Our aim is to show that we could approach the issue of pluralism and oneness from the Trinitarian perspective, which needs to be worked out further.

A better, harmonious, individual relationship with the other groups is also seen as a positive value where the other is respected for its otherness. Its basis would also be philosophical. When the individual identities are seen as hermeneutic opportunities for the existence of the Indian nation, we have an imperative to work for collaboration, which is creative and mutually enrich-

ing. That could be inspired by our understanding of the analogy of being of cultures. This could lead to an overall comprehensive view of the Indian totality which according to Nehru is a "bundle of cultures in which the cow and the tractor march together."[36] Viewed thus, the great philosophical, cultural, political and religious "Divides" of India could be opportunities to build an individuated, integrated and comprehensive India. If so, the "culture of coalition" could be promoted to a "culture of integration" and extended from political governance to that of religious and cultural domains, replacing the "culture of confrontation."

Notes

1. *The Times of India*, Mumbai, August 15, 1997, special supplement, pp. 41, 50, etc.
2. Ignatius Puthiadam, "Diversity of Religions in the Context of Pluralism and Indian Christian Life and Reflection" in M. Amaladoss et al., ed., *Theologizing in India*, Bangalore, TPI, 1981, pp. 400ff. Just to give one example: more than 1652 languages and dialects coexist in India within an area of 3,287,263 sq.km.
3. For this section we are indebted to Cyril Desbruslais, *Philosophy of Be-ing*, Pune, JDV, 1997, 61-75.
4. *Physics*, III. See also Desbruslais, 63ff.
5. This would be the view of Parmenides!
6. This is our justification for introducing non-dualism or *advaita* in the latter part of the article.
7. We also recognise the dualistic tendencies in Indian philosophy and especially in the Samkhya tradition. The basic anthropology is also dualistic. Still we can hold in general that Indian tradition is more holistic compared to the Western tradition.
8. See next section.
9. Emerich Coreth, *Grundriß der Metaphysik*, Innsbruck, Tyrolia, 1994, 5.2.4.
10. Here it is useful to refer to the traditional understanding of the relationship between one and many according to Thomas Aquinas. See his *Summa Theologica* I, 11, 2.
11. Cf. Coreth, *Grundriß*, 142.
12. Aquinas affirms in *Summa Theologica* I, 11, 1

    I answer that, "One" does not add any reality to "being" ; but is only a negation of division; for "one" means undivided "being." This is the very reason why "one" is the same as "being." Now every being is either simple or compound. But what is simple is undivided, both actually and potentially. Whereas what is compound, has not being whilst its parts are divided, but after they make up and compose it. Hence it is manifest that the being of anything consists in undivision; and hence it is that everything guards its unity as it guards its being.
13. It might also be mentioned that at the epistemological level plurality is prior. Since we deal with the relationship between plurality and unity at the ontological level the priority is for unity.
14. Cf. Coreth, *Grundriß*, 70.
15. This section is from the chapter "The Analogy of Being" in Cyril Desbruslais, *The Philosophy of Be-ing*, Pune, JDV, 1997, 31-42.
16. Cf. Desbruslais, 37. This suggestion made by Desbruslais is accepted by us. So we

stick on to the classical definition of being with some modifications for our present times.

17. *Ibid.*, 39.
18. It may be noted that Aquinas did not want to elaborate a treatise on analogy as such. His intention was to use analogy with regards to speaking about God. Cited in Desbruslais, 41.
19. We do not intend to elaborate on this aspect. See E. Gilson, *The Christian Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas*, trsl. L.K. Shook, New York, Random House, 1956, 105. Cited in Desbruslais, 41.
20. Even now the trend continues, though in a subdued manner. See Klubertanz, *St. Thomas Aquinas on Analogy*, Chicago, Loyola University Press, 1960. Cf. Desbruslais, 41-42.
21. This brings us to the modern problems of talking about God, which cannot be elaborated here. Cf. Desbruslais, 41.
22. Here we bring in Heidegger's famous distinction between Being (the activity or the mode of being) and beings (the entities or objects of concrete existence).
23. Puthiadam, 407.
24. *Ibid.*, 408.
25. Puthiadam does not elaborate on this approach though he mentions it (*Ibid.*, 408). We attempt to elaborate this method based on Bede Griffiths' writing and life.
26. Bede Griffiths, *The Golden String: An Autobiography*, Springfield, Templegate Pub., 1954 (*GS*), 62-63.
27. *GS*, 23.
28. Bede Griffiths, *New Vision of Reality: Western Scence, Eastern Mysticism and Christian Faith*, Felicity Edwards, ed., Springfield, Templegate Pub., 1990 (NVR) 282.
29. We are aware that both these concepts have some profound significance and they have also positive and healthy functions. Here we take their more popular understandings.
30. *GS*, 62.
31. So Griffiths could hold without any hesitation: "The world is not an emanation from God nor an appearance of God, but a creation; a relative mode of being dependent on his absolute Being, existing temporally not eternally and dependent for its existence no less than for its essence on him. It is this doctrine which gives that reality to the world, distinct from God yet totally dependent on him, which Ramanuja and Madhva were seeking." Bede Griffiths, "Indian Spirituality and the Eucharist" in *India and the Eucharist*, Bede Griffiths, ed., Ernakulam, Lumen Institute, 1964, 14-15.
32. Bede Griffiths, *Christ in India: Essays towards a Hindu-Christian Dialogue*, Springfield, Templegate Pub., 1966, (*CI*), 46.
33. Bede Griffiths, *Return to the Centre*, Springfield, Templegate Pub., 1976, (RC), 144-145.
34. Cf. Kuruvilla Pandikattu, *Christian Advaita as the Hermeneutic Key to Bede Griffiths' Interreligious Dialogue*, Ph. D. Diss., Innsbruck, Univ. of Innsbruck, 1996, 2.2.1.
35. It is interesting to note that the identity of an Indian or the Indianness of the nation cannot be understood univocally. These terms are vague and open to many interpretations. To some extent it is also proper. Here it is interesting to note what the famous industrialist Hinduja says of Indianness or better Hindu identity. He contends that "the word Hindu refers to all Indians who live in India, similar to the words, Americans, British, Israelis, Persians, Arabs and Africans, all of which refer to people living in

that particular region of the world." (Srichand P. Hinduja, "Our 'Hindu' Identity: A Vision for the Millennium" in *The Times of India*, Mumbai, December 11, 1997, 13). He adds further that the word "Hindu refers to all Indians and should only be used to encourage a national identity and not a religious one." (Hinduja, 13). Our concern here is not with this terminological consideration. Still these notions of Hindu identity and Indian identity are worth considering while dealing with the Indian nation.

36. Quoted in Robin J. Dannhorn, ed., *Fodor's Guide to India*, London, Hodder and Stoughton, 1979, 76.

Metaphorising of Reality

A philosophical look into symbols,
myths and metaphors in life

Kuruvilla Pandikattu, SJ

In *Metaphorising of Reality* an attempt is made to visualise human living as a series of dynamically and mutually interrelated and enriching activities. Metaphors, like symbols and myths, not just add colour to language (P. Ricoeur) but change and recreate language. Thus living metaphors are inevitable to a living language. The domain of metaphors could be extended from language to actual human life. Living is a hermeneutic encounter and can be visualised as a metaphorical innovation. Living is creating new meaning and new reality. Authentic living could be characterised by a transformation of reality, a metaphorical or mutually transforming encounter with. This leads to a deeper and radically new significance to self and to the cosmos.

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