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THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL STATUS OF LIBERATIVE KNOWLEDGE (WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ADVAITA VEDANTA)

University of Hawaii

PH.D. 1986

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THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL STATUS OF LIBERATIVE KNOWLEDGE
(WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ADVAITA VEDĀNTA)

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN PHILOSOPHY AUGUST 1986

BY KIM SKOOG

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I would like to take this time to first thank my wife, Andrea, for her seemingly unending patience during the years it took for me to complete this work. I seriously question whether I could have acted with similar selflessness if the tables had been turned. I would further like to express my gratitude to all the members of my dissertation committee for their help and support in seeing me through this study. I am particularly grateful to Professor Eliot Deutsch and Roger Ames for their many informed suggestions and criticisms, to Professor Winfield Nagley for his timely encouragement, and to the chairman of my committee, Professor K.N. Upadhyaya for his constant support and keen insights into Advaita philosophy. Lastly, I am indebted to Professor Irving Copi who thru several candid discussions, lit the fire under me which resulted in the completion of this dissertation. I also wish to thank Lee Ann Sakihara and Helen Carey at the UH Computing Center for helping to make my relationship with the IBM computer a happy and productive one.
This dissertation addresses the problem of determining the epistemic worth of mystical based insights. Previously, the epistemological analysis of mysticism has resulted in one of two positions, philosophers have argued either that the mystical experience has no epistemic worth because it does not satisfy all of the necessary criteria for knowledge, or that, counter to commonly held opinions, mysticism does share common characteristics with knowledge and should be recognized as such. Neither of these positions is satisfactory due principally to the simplicity of their analyses. The first position is reached due to an overly restrictive definition of knowledge while the second position is generated out of a contrived and distorted portrayal of mysticism.

This dissertation does not follow either of the forementioned approaches, rather opting for a more detailed analysis of both our theory of knowledge and the nature of mysticism. Appropriating the widely accepted justified true belief (JTB) theory of knowledge, it can easily be demonstrated that mystical knowledge (or a specific type which I term "liberative knowledge") does not satisfy the conditions of the JTB account. The question then must be raised as to whether the failure of liberative knowing to
qualify as "knowledge" is due to the actual nonepistemic character of liberation itself, or is it due to an overly stringent, inaccurate set of criteria given in the JTB theory. The strategy adopted to answer this question is to undertake a critical analysis of the adequacy of the JTB theory. One way to judge the adequacy of a theory is to ascertain whether it adequately describes the phenomenon it is formulated to give an account of. Here, one must determine whether the JTB theory (which in this case is also acting as a theoretical definition) is consonant with common usage of what constitutes "knowledge." It was determined that there are a number of modes of knowing, e.g., moral, aesthetic, intuitive, religious, which appear to be outlawed by the justified true belief account. On the basis of this determination, an overhaul of the JTB theory of knowledge was begun. The principal feature of this new account was to recognize that it is not possible to give a universal or single definition of knowledge. Rather, there exist numerous distinct modes of knowing, and each mode contains its own distinct conditions that define it. Any account of knowledge must then take on a piecemeal approach which attempts to outline the various modes of knowing. There are obviously overlapping characteristics, but they do not constitute a set of necessary and sufficient conditions. This stance opens the way to a consideration of whether a mystical based knowledge is possible. Ultimately, the question of acceptance or rejection of liberative knowing
comes down to the particular epistemological hierarchy of knowing modalities each individual adopts. One needs to consider the assorted factors or grounds that leads one to adopt or dismiss liberative knowing into one's hierarchy of knowing modalities. But one cannot attempt to dismiss one mode, such as liberative knowing, on the basis of not satisfying the criteria applicable for another mode, such as factual knowing. In the past, arguments rejecting the epistemic content of liberative knowing have violated this prohibition.
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The study of mysticism has increased sharply in the last thirty years. This increase has surfaced in a number of fields including anthropology, psychology, history, sociology, literature, religious studies, as well as philosophy. Within the parameters of philosophical study, this interest has occurred in—if not limited exclusively to—the area of philosophy of religion. Philosophers specializing in areas also relevant to mystical study, i.e., epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, etc. have by and large ignored the phenomenon of mystical experience/knowledge. Given the linguistic focus of much of contemporary philosophy, reluctance to study such an ostensibly introverted, infrequent, and (according to some mystics) ineffable experience is understandable; yet can we justifiably overlook this kind of experience as a potential resource of human knowledge? Given the recurrence and personal significance of mystical encounters one cannot legitimately fence off these states from the purview of epistemology without compelling grounds.

The "knowledge" state that attends mystical experience often present the philosopher with a particularly engaging, multifaceted epistemological problem; specifically, some who have had such an encounter claim not only that this experience has yielded a knowledge distinct from sensory
based knowledge, but that it has revealed that all hitherto valued sensory knowledge about the world is inadequate, if not in error; thus, the epistemologist is presented with knowledge claims based in the mystical encounter as well as value judgements stating the superiority of mystical knowledge over sensory knowledge. As such (i) How is he to classify mystical experience within a general epistemological mapping? (ii) How is he to evaluate the epistemological and metaphysical claims of the mystic? and (iii) How is he to regard normal data sources (i.e., perception, inference, etc.) as means to knowledge given these claims?

Arguments in support of the NEC thesis

In an attempt to deal with such questions, philosophers have devised a number of arguments: arguments to establish the noncognitive and/or nonepistemic nature of mystical states. These arguments are put forward to support the position that the mystical experience is an emotional outpouring, an expression of religious faith that has no epistemic content—the mystical encounter does not give one knowledge. In what follows, I will discuss several of these arguments. For the sake of brevity I shall refer to the thesis that these arguments support as the NEC (no-epistemic-content) thesis.
One line of argumentation in support of the NEC thesis finds its basis in the presumed "intersubjectivity" requirement of knowledge. At times incorporated into the "verification principle" of empirical investigation and at other times in the "nomological net" of science, it is held that experience must be confirmed (at least potentially) by other facts and/or experiences. Knowledge is "triangulated" by other areas of evidence. Consider this first argument.

1. Direct, "first person" experiences attain to the status of "knowledge" through the process of verification whereby the object of the experience can be checked by other parties (subjects) and the said encounter exhibits lawful relationships between the experiencer and the object of the experience.

2. Mystical experience, though often claimed to have a similar, analogous verification network of experience amongst fellow mystics in a communality of experience, actually does not lend itself to a process of verification because the "object" of the mystical encounter cannot be observed other than via the mystical experience itself.

3. The fact that one mystical experience is allegedly duplicated or shared through a small number of experiences by other mystics does not establish that the experience or its object have anything to do with reality. "Intersubjectivity" does not mean merely "communality of experience." Knowledge should be
substantiated by various, often heterogeneous, areas of evidence.

4. Thus, the NEC thesis is true regarding mystical experience.¹

A second argument for the NEC thesis attempts to show that mystical experiences differ from other purely subjective states such as pain; it argues along similar grounds as the first argument, namely, that immediate, introverted experiences—such as in mystical experience—must be substantiated by independent checks. It is as follows.

1. To establish the existence of a certain entity or the occurrence of an event on the basis of a praeternatural experience or set of such experiences, one must have (potentially or actually) both independent criteria for determining the truth or falsity of the claim as well as proof that a real correlation exists between such an experience and its object of attention.

2. Consider the case in which we judge that a person has a cavity because he is experiencing a toothache. This judgement is warranted because we have independent criteria (e.g., dental examination, a black hole in a tooth, etc.) by which we can establish the existence of that cavity and we know from past experience that toothaches and cavities are correlated.
3. But mystical experiences, which are also praeternatural experiences, do not lend to independent checks because neither the entity encountered (i.e., God, Brahman, Nature, etc.) nor the event undergone (i.e., identity transformation, denial of selfhood, etc.) can be discovered by other means.

4. Therefore, the existence of an entity or the occurrence of some event cannot be established on the basis of a mystical experience.

5. Hence, the NEC thesis is true. ²

The next argument is a modified version of Norman Malcolm's argument³ which contends that dreams are not verifiable memory reports and as such should be treated differently from other memory reports about conversations, perceptions of physical objects, etc. The following argument contends that statements about mystical experiences—like dreams—offer no other means to check or verify the accuracy of the reports than the experiencer's memory of it. As such, one cannot afford to give these sorts of claims the same status as normal claims about physical objects or public events.

1. If one thinks philosophically about memory the following sort of paradigm is generally given: I spoke certain words to you yesterday. Today I am requested to give an account of what those words were. The account I
give is right or wrong. This is determined by whether it agrees with your account and that of other witnesses of our conversation.

2. When we hear someone's own memory report about his own psychological event such as dreaming or a mystical encounter, we have access to nothing outside of this personal account upon which to base a judgement regarding whether this account is right or wrong. And because of the fact that in a dream or mystical experience one can do the impossible or perceive anything, we can make no sensible reference to what we commonly know as possible or right to check such accounts. (The one slight exception is where an account of a dream or mystical experience varies so radically each time it is related that we infer that the person speaking is either lying or mentally deranged.)

3. We do not have direct access to another person's dream or mystical experience, but only to their memory of it. Our reference to a particular dream or mystical experience denotes not the "actual" encounter (whatever that might be), but the account of that experience--the experiencer's reflective and conceptual version of what happened.

4. For a memory account to have epistemic worth, there must be some means to substantiate it in addition to the memory account itself.

5. Therefore, the NEC thesis is correct.
The strength of these arguments lies in the presumably solid assumption that accounts of first person experiences gain their epistemic status of certainty through a combination of direct and indirect verification. While we may feel sure about the occurrence and nature of someone's experience, we attain certainty about its truth only if we are assured that other facts corroborate such accounts. Even in the case of our own personal experience as for example, seeing a physical object, not only do other people report seeing the very same object, but we ourselves can also touch it, smell it, taste it, hear it, we can presumably sense it in a similar fashion tomorrow, next week, or a year from now.

Mystical experience, on the other hand, does not satisfy the sort of criteria generally employed in an inductive investigation. Though someone may claim to have "seen" God or Brahman through a mystical vision, we (as non-mystics) cannot corroborate this claim with our ordinary avenues of sensory perception. The vast majority of people do not have mystical experiences, and as such do not have access to such supersensual phenomena. And while a select few mystics may testify to sharing similar sorts of experiences of such objects, the relative oddity and infrequency of occurrence of this phenomenon disqualifies such claims for intersubjectivity amongst knowing subjects.
Let's now turn to a different kind of argument given against the epistemic worth of mysticism based on the disparity that exists amongst mystical accounts.

1. Knowledge claims about the same object or phenomenon should resemble each other in content and not conflict or contradict each other.
2. As knowledge claims are based on veridical experiences, any conflicts among alleged knowledge claims indicate some or all such claims are erroneous and were not derived from veridical experiences.
3. Thus, within any set of experiences that are responsible for conflicting knowledge claims, all must be doubted as being veridical—at least until the source of the conflict is resolved.
4. Mystical accounts conflict regarding the nature of their object (e.g., Allah, Yaweh, Jesus, Brahman), as well as the nature of the experience itself (e.g., monistic, polytheistic, monotheistic, etc.).
5. Therefore, mystical experiences presently cannot be regarded as veridical experiences and the NEC thesis is correct. 4

This argument might be seen as coercive if it is accepted that all mystical experiences have the same object. That is, is it true that all mystics share the same sort of experience and consequently, should experience the same kind
of object? As it is, very few mystics would agree that all fellow mystics share the same sort of experience or that they experience the same object(s). Serious students of mysticism also do not support this assumption. As such, the fact that mystics who are experiencing different objects conflict in their mystical accounts represents no epistemological problem. For this argument to be successful, it must limit itself to one tradition or set of traditions that espouse the same mystic experience of the same object. It would then have to be demonstrated that differences remain amongst various mystics' account within that tradition.

For example, Christian mystics at times appear to describe the God of their mystical experience differently; consequently, their accounts do not corroborate each other's accounts; thus, one would have some basis to argue that there is something spurious in the very nature of these mystical experiences. For if mystic x and mystic z both abide by the same church dogmas and worship the very same God, and yet have conflicting mystical experiences (and consequently verbal reportage), then one must question the veracity of one or both experiences. One way, traditionally given, to check these inconsistencies in experience is to see if either conflicts with church doctrine. Presupposing the certitude of church dogma, only those mystical experiences which conform with accepted doctrine are acceptable. Problems of conflict might not be so easily
resolved, however, in the case where the two or more conflicting mystical experiences deal with issues not covered in church doctrine.

At any rate, the author of this argument might not accept the "certitude" of church dogma; as such, it may be difficult, if not impossible, to determine the veridical status of either experience given that mystical experience cannot generally be checked or verified by other types of mundane experience or knowledge. Thus, the author could argue that one must disregard both conflicting experience/knowledge claims because neither can be substantiated on grounds independent of the mystic's own account.

A fifth and final argument for the NEC thesis has been constructed in response to a specific type of mysticism. Certain mystical accounts flatly state that there is no object in their experience, as the usual subject-object dichotomy "drops off" when the mystical experience occurs. It is argued that such an encounter goes beyond any reasonable semblance of what could qualify as knowledge, as all knowledge is intentional in character, directed toward an object or content of knowledge. This line of reasoning might be expressed as follows.

1. All knowledge states are intentional in character.

To know something, is to know about some particular
thing, e.g., a quality or fact about an object, or about some event occurring temporally.

2. For an experience to have an epistemic content, it must be directed toward some phenomenon, an object of knowledge. (After all, for an experience to have a "content"—epistemic or otherwise—one's attention must be directed towards what this content is about.)

3. Mystical experience is described (by at least some mystics) as lacking an object, as the subject-object condition of knowing does not exist during this experience.

4. Hence, the NEC thesis is true regarding mystical experiences of an objectless character.

The success of this argument rests principally on the plausibility of assuming that all forms of knowledge are intentional. Given the way we normally think and know, it seems a rather obvious assumption. For in our waking and dreaming states, are we ever merely "conscious" and not "conscious of" some object of our attention? It does not seem conceivable to talk of a contentless or objectless conscious state, let alone view this as some state of knowing.
General reaction to arguments

Given the elitist character of mysticism, it is only natural that resistance is encountered when the mystic attempts to proclaim the correctness of his world view and the falsity of the non-mystical point of view. It might be felt that anyone can make wild claims about the world based on some alleged experience or experiences; are we, then, automatically to accept these claims as true and have the entire population of the world reject their view of the world on the basis of this one man's "new" perception of the world? Even if such a revolutionary viewpoint is held by several thousand people, would it still make any sense to have billions of people alter their commonsense view of the world in response to them?

Philosophers, who hold themselves as being more systematic, objective, and open than the precritical thinker, often have difficulty assessing the merits of the mystical phenomenon. Basically, one is presented with one or more spiritually oriented individuals, often disagreeing with each other on the nature and significance of their personal encounters, claiming to have access to a "new" knowledge that none of us (as non-mystics) have access to. Not only do they boast of the transcendental, elite character of this knowledge, but also that it ultimately renders false most of what we hold to be true. While such
philosophers are not theoretically opposed to the infusion of such new "knowledge" and in fact welcome it, they are not provided with any grounds of support regarding the truth of this new "knowledge." Not only are they not provided with adequate arguments or proof for the veracity of mystical knowledge, but further they cannot verify the truth of these experiences by any of the normal processes of empirical checks and evaluations. It is stated by mystics that the object (if there is one) of their "vision" is not available to sensory observation, nor can it be adequately understood or generated from intellectual understanding. Yet intriguingly, many philosophers remain fascinated and challenged by the phenomenon of mysticism.

While this curiosity may be simply the expression of a deep psychological need to hope for something more or greater above and beyond that which makes up the perceived universe, it appears to be more likely that these mystical accounts touch upon an element of human experience that is shared by all of us to a greater or lesser extent. Though few of us will ever encounter a full blown mystical experience, most of us have experienced the wonder and "beyondness" of some sort of religious communion or the "breath-taking" splendor of a natural scene of beauty or artistic expression. Most feel the presence of an area of experience that lifts us beyond the commonality of daily mundane existence. This perhaps is why mysticism gains a certain credibility in many minds that a purely fictitious
account cannot. The shared experience of mysticism by many individuals, separated in time and geography, often by centuries and thousands of miles, also supports the belief that the mystical experience is a genuine faculty or capacity in human consciousness.

Summation of concerns expressed in arguments

By way of a generalized summation of the concerns developed within these arguments the following points are expressed.

1. Mystical based knowledge cannot be checked or verified by other facts; consequently, others (mystics and non-mystics alike) have no means to confirm or verify the content of a mystic's experience. All other types of knowledge claims can be checked by reference to other related knowledge accounts.

2. Not only do we as non-mystics have no way to verify the mystics' knowledge claims, we do not have access to a referent for the object his account attempts to denote. Our conception and reference to a mystical experience is limited exclusively to unconfirmable memory reports by those claiming to have had such an experience.
3. Given that mystics frequently disagree over the nature of their mystical experiences and its object, or whether there is an object in their experience, one must conclude that mystical experiences are not veridical and as such cannot generate knowledge. For knowledge claims held by a multitude of people about a specific object should resemble and concur with each other about its nature.

4. The monistic type of mystical experience in which the subject-object dichotomy ceases to occur can possess no epistemic content as all knowledge states are intentional in character.

Before I can address these concerns I must specify what I am denoting by the expression, "mystical knowledge;" in addition, it is necessary to provide a working definition of the term "knowledge" and what are the criteria employed in verifying a knowledge occurrence. Put simply, I must first clarify what is meant by "mystical knowledge" or "mystical experience" and secondly, contrast this account with what we generally identify as "knowledge."

**Generalized vs. specific approach to mysticism**

When dealing with such a broad and ambiguous term as "mystical experience," one must take great care in
specifying or identifying the types of experience one wishes to include under the term. There are at least two ways to accomplish this task: (i) one can develop a definition broad enough to encompass all said occurrences of mystical experience while excluding all other nonmystical experiences: or (ii) one can select one particular case or type of mystical experience to focus one's study upon.

The first approach, the one most frequently employed, engages the researcher in the construction of a set of delimiting conditions which serve to identifying whether a given experience is a bonafide mystical experience. While such a strategy enables one to speak about a set of similar experiences simultaneously, it also necessarily compromises accuracy and detail: the account must be extremely generalized and simplified so as to link together sorted accounts. To give greater precision to this sort of account, a typology of mystical experience is usually constructed to identify the various strains of mysticism. Yet such sweeping cross-cultural typologies are problematic if not impossible due to the inherent inaccuracies in first person accounts because of cultural, religious, and intellectual biases and expectations. Ultimately, one is lead to the difficult problem of interpretation, namely, is the disparity between mystics' accounts due to actual differences in the experience itself or merely between the interpretations of one basic experience? With this approach to the topic, then, one is enabled to address a wide range
of experiences that have been called "mystical experiences," but at the same time one must face several problems that are incurred with such a generalized study.

In contrast, by choosing to focus on one particular account of mystical experience—though limiting the scope of one's investigation—one is enabled to probe into great detail regarding the nature of that experience with a minimum of inaccuracies in formulation (by not having to generalize one's definition). Further, since one voluntarily limits oneself to a specific type of mystical experience, the concern over the disparity between mystical experiences and the issue of interpretation are lessened. As one is not directly confronted with the disparity between mystical accounts (experiences), one can avoid judgement regarding whether disparity in mystical accounts represents a difference in experience or the experiencers' conceptional understanding of their experience once it is over.  

In this study, we will focus on one sort of experience. This experience is the seminal insight that lies at the foundation of the predominant school of Indian philosophy, namely, Advaita Vedānta. For Advaita Vedānta, like all schools of Indian philosophy, the principle purpose and goal of their teaching is to lead their pupils to liberation—to undergo a profound mystical awakening. Advaita philosophers prefer to speak of this awakening awareness (jnāna) as something akin to knowledge, a bold new unfolding of
awareness or knowledge of reality "as it really exists," in consequence of this awakening, preliberative knowledge of the world is viewed as defective.

Liberative experience and liberative knowledge

Though Advaita Vedānta at times speaks about "direct awareness" (avagati or anubhaya) of ultimate reality (Brahman), for the most part it talks in terms of mokṣa 'liberation'. This can be explained by the fact that liberation, for Advaita Vedānta, constitutes a new, unchanging state of consciousness, rather than a momentary experience. Liberation is not a transitory experience, but a nonreversible transformation within the aspirant himself, affecting his perspective of the world and himself as a part of that world. To reflect this emphasis on a permanent liberation process as espoused by Advaita Vedānta (in contrast to a temporary intuitive "flash" often identified with mysticism,) I shall employ the assorted neologisms, "liberative experience," and "liberative knowledge," to denote the sorted aspects of Advaita's conception of liberation. By using this specific terminology I shall also avoid some of the misleading connotations (e.g., trance, religiosity, secretive) attached to expressions such as "mystical experience" or "mysticism."
Liberative experience, then, is a nonreversible transformation within a person's consciousness whereby he gains a new awareness of ultimate reality or Brahman, and simultaneously radically alters his perspective of selfhood and the world at large. Liberative knowledge is this awareness of Brahman and the transformed view of one's self and the world.

These definitions are useful in tracking down what shall be meant by "liberative knowledge," but it is only a beginning. A considerably more detailed account of liberation is needed if this study is to prove fruitful. The remainder of Chapter One will consist of four central statements about Advaita Vedānta's conception of liberation, along with auxiliary commentary to elucidate each point.

Liberation is not an activity

The point to bring forth here is that for Advaita, "achieving" liberation is not an activity or any sort of "real" transformation—as we are always liberated. While it is true that the Sanskrit word for liberation, "mokṣa," literally means "to untie, shed, detach, or emancipate" carrying an active, transitive connotation, philosophically, such a literal, etymological interpretation is misleading if not inaccurate. Throughout the works of Śaṅkara, a
principle exponent of Advaita Vedānta, it is stressed repeatedly that liberation or liberative knowledge cannot be construed as an action. Actions are coextensive with ignorance (which liberation attempts to remove) and so cannot be responsible for destroying ignorance. Only liberative knowledge is capable of eradicating ignorance, because it is incommensurate with ignorance. In general, Śaṅkara dismisses the importance of action and rites in bringing about liberation. He often likens knowledge to light and ignorance to darkness: when there is light, darkness vanishes, when knowledge dawns, ignorance is not to be found.

According to Śaṅkara, there are two realms or levels of existence: there is the level of Brahman, which is the sole, true (real) existent; and, there is the level of worldly existence brought on by ignorance, where there is the illusion of multiplicity and individuality. We, as the supreme Self identical with Brahman, are never deluded nor are we engaged in the affairs of the world; as such we are always in a state of liberation and never stray from knowing our true nature as non-different from Brahman. Yet, unexplicably (anirvacanīya) this Self is linked with a psychophysical complex (jīva) based in ignorance which perceives itself as an individual, autonomous agency existing in a world of multiplicity. It is this latter agency that's in a state of ignorance and eventually reaches liberation. Thus our real Self, identical with Brahman, is
never in an ignorant state; rather, it is the "jīva" that is experiencing this phenomenal state of ignorance and who is inexplicably linked to our Self. Often there is an ambiguity in the literature between (universal) Self and (relative) self. For example, Śaṁkara frequently denotes the Self (ātman) and the ignorance-latent self (jīva) by the term ātman. Yet even a general understanding of Advaita philosophy will dictate an interpretation whereby the Self is seen as never bound, and the self is known to be only a "phenomenon" of ignorance-based appearance. (Śaṁkara and other Advaitins do make some effort to give at least a metaphorical explanation of how this unlikely coupling of Self with self is accomplished. I will discuss these accounts shortly.)

In the preceding discussion we were told that our "true Self" is always liberated and is never in a state of ignorance. However, one may ask, if we are already liberated then why should we concern ourselves with this state of ignorance? Śaṁkara answers this question by pointing out that though we are always liberated, we (as the Self individuated by a psychophysical complex) still experience the world and ourselves as individuals in that world; we continue in this "apparent" state until we are able to stop the erroneous perception of individual objects and selves. And to learn how to overcome this error, Advaita holds that we must first come to understand the nature of this error.
Samsāra is the basis of worldly existence

Samsāra is the Indian doctrine of metempsychosis, the process of rebirth that all animate beings undergo. Śaṅkara frequently compares transmigration to the psychological alteration that occurs when one slips from the waking state to the dream state. When one falls asleep and begins dreaming one leaves one's physical waking state body "behind" and takes up the new dream state "body" existing in the dream world. Just so, when one dies one leaves the current physical body behind and takes up another body in a future new incarnation. This shell or 'gross body' (sthūla-sarīra) Śaṅkara defines as mortal, limited, defined, and constituted by three of the 'gross elements' (mahābhutas): fire, water, and earth. It is the corporeal organism that lives and dies away. That which reincarnates is the phenomenal self or the jīva, which maintains itself after death in the subtle body (suksma-sarīra). The subtle body is constituted of the two remaining 'gross elements', ether and air. It is said to consist of "twelve elements including the intellect." These twelve elements consist of the five sense organs (sight, touch, smell, taste, and hearing), the five organs of action (speech, hand, foot, anus, and genital), the mind (manas), and the intellect (buddhi). One must realize that neither the sensory organs
nor organs of action are physical parts of the body; rather, they are animating entelechy that rise in their respective physical counterparts (e.g., sight organ=eyes, hearing organ=ears, speech organ=mouth). Śaṅkara goes into some detail as to how these elements leave the gross body upon death but this is not important for the present discussion.

A question which is incumbent upon such an account of transmigration centers on the cause or origin of this cycle. What is the cause of transmigration and how is it perpetuated? And given that it is a perpetual, continuous process, one might probe further into asking, how is one to stop this transmigration cycle once it is set in motion in order to attain liberation? Śaṅkara in different places in his writing attributes sorted causes for transmigration. At several points he professes that desire is the root of transmigration. Elsewhere, Śaṅkara states that ignorance, our failure to realize the nature of Self and Brahman, is the cause of transmigration or bondage. Still in other places, he attributes the limiting adjuncts "upadhis" as the cause of transmigration. Are we to interpret this variance in attributed causes to represent an uncertainty or change of mind on Śaṅkara's part regarding the cause of transmigration? Consider the following passage.

Transmigration, which was the thing that was sought to be the example of going into the waking and dream states, has been described; so, also
its cause--[mundane] knowledge, work and past experience. Those limiting adjuncts, the elements compromising the body and organs, surrounded by which the self experiences the transmigratory experience, have also been mentioned. After stating, as a prima facie view, that their immediate causes are good and bad deeds, the cause has finally been decided to be desire...though desire has been said to be the root of bondage, it is ignorance that, being the opposite of what leads to liberation [knowledge], has virtually been stated to be the cause of bondage.21

Here we see that though Śaṅkara appears to come to choose one final cause, desire—only a few lines later he wavers to attribute ignorance to be the paramount cause of transmigration or bondage. Are we to interpret this as instability on Śaṅkara's part? I do not think so. All these so-called causes of transmigration referred to, can be seen as aspects of his view regarding man's predicament and his means to salvation. Perhaps "desire" was singled out because of its central role in producing suffering and the actions/reactions (karma) that lead to future lives.

Man is seen to have desires, these desires bring about actions, and these actions incur stored karmic traces "karma
saya." These karmic traces effect future actions determining whether these future actions will bring joy or unhappiness (bhoga)—the outcome being determined by the nature of the original action that produced the karmic trace. These stored karmic traces also determine the type of birth a person will have in a future incarnation (jati) and the length of that life (ayus). These stored karmic traces provide the "momentum" for the next life as well as determining its nature. Ignorance can be seen as preceding desire in this scheme, as it is our ignorance of the true nature of ourselves and the world of objects that brings about desire. It is due to ignorance that we perceive ourselves as an individual self (jīva), as we are ignorant of our true nature, the omnipresent Self (atman).

As pointed out earlier, We, as a Self, are ultimately identical with Brahman, for everything is Brahman, the ultimate and sole reality. It is only our mundane transmigrating self or jīva that goes from birth to birth. The twelve organs of the subtle-body which constitutes this psycho-physical complex plus the gross body are the limiting adjuncts (upadhis) which "bind" the Self to the perpetual illusion of corporeal existence. Thus, one can see how all of the forementioned aspects of bondage are seen as "causes" of transmigration. The Self, though not part of this world, appears to be bound to the jīva or self due to the upadhis 'limiting adjuncts' of the psycho-physical complex. This ignorance-latent-process creates, sustains,
and perpetuates the transmigrating self which goes from life to life in its state of ignorance. This process can be seen as a cycle or wheel of causal factors, or what has been called the "wheel of samsāra." This cycle can be illustrated as follows:

BIRTH ...................... DESIRE
                .
                .
                .
                .
                .

IGNORANCE

Action

DEATH ...................... KARMIC TRACES

This cycle or chain is perpetual, it has no beginning, and will continue ad infinitum unless this chain is broken. Different systems of thought in Indian philosophy dispute on where this transmigratory chain should be (can be) broken; for Advaita Vedānta, the chain is to be broken at ignorance, as it is only through knowledge (vidyā, jñāna, pramā) that liberation comes about.
Liberation is knowledge which dispells ignorance

The Advaita notions of ignorance and knowledge, possess specialized meanings distinct from our usual notion of ignorance and knowledge. While Śaṅkara and other Advaitin philosophers do speak of the ignorance of the Self as a mere "forgetting" of its true nature or a "deluding" process, these are only analogous constructions as the ignorance of the Self is a cosmological force and not simply a mental error such as a common misconception or error of judgement. There are several reasons that support this interpretation.

First, this ignorance is not subject to corrections in the fashion that usual falsehoods stand to correction. Specifically, we speak now of this delusion of the Self and yet none of us undergo liberation. This state of ignorance as well as liberative knowledge are not operative on the cognitive level of human awareness. Simply to tell someone of their ignorance or to attempt to realize one's own ignorance (on a cognitive level) does not immediately bring about the removal of this 'ignorance'. It is only upon reflection and direct experiencing of truth that one gains liberation—a process that is non-cognitive in nature.

Secondly, as the genesis of our individual identity represents a manifestation of this "cosmic" ignorance, it is not possible that ignorance is only a misconception in
someone's mind. While Śaṅkara would wish to hold neither that ignorance precedes ontologically individual existence nor that ignorance must always co-exist with individual existence (which would rule out the possibility of liberation while in a bodily state), it is clear that our very existence is linked to this state of ignorance and the creative, manifesting power of its existence.

Thirdly, avidvā 'ignorance' is equated by Advaitins with māyā 'cosmic illusion', the creative force in the cosmos which projects the illusion of the appearance of objects in the world. Utilizing the metaphor of a magician and his magical illusion developed by some Mādhyamika thinkers, many Advaitins envision God or Īśvara as a master magician who created the world in the same illusory fashion as a magician conjures his illusions. The topic of māyā in Advaita Vedānta (and especially with reference to Śaṅkara's use of the term) has become controversial in recent scholarship though the issues involved do not concern us here. What is important to our immediate discussion is the fact that avidvā 'ignorance' is identified with māyā 'cosmic illusion' and as such is seen as the cause of the appearance of the world.

Advaita, however does not prescribe to solipscism or subjective idealism as they readily attack the Vijnānavāda school of Buddhism. The world is not a creation of our mind, but the product of a cosmological force, i.e., avidvā
or māvā. Advaitins frequently point to the fact that the world does not cease to exist when various aspirants attain liberation; if 'ignorance' was the product of a particular consciousness then when that individual reached liberation the world would cease to exist for everyone. 25

Advaita's use of the term, "knowledge," as it applies to liberation, cannot be identified with mundane knowledge, i.e., knowledge of mundane objects or ideas. The reason for this fact follows along the same lines as those given for ignorance.

First, liberative knowing does not give one knowledge of any specific object (prameya). This is due to the fact that in the liberative experience there is ostensibly no distinction between knower and known, subject and object; as (ultimately) there is only Brahman, there could be no such duality between subject and object. In contrast, with mundane or ordinary knowing occurrences, there is someone who possess knowledge, who knows something, and there is the content of his knowledge, or the object of his knowledge, i.e., that thing which he has knowledge about.

Secondly, as the phenomenal world of subject and object is illusory—it is based in ignorance—it follows that all mundane knowledge is based in error and must be usurped once liberation dawns. As liberative knowledge occurs when liberation arises it must be qualitatively distinct from mundane knowledge.
Thirdly, liberative knowledge is said to bring about a whole new way of being, a total psychological transformation in which one's sense of personal identity and one's perception of the world undergo a dramatic and radical alteration. While mundane knowledge can give one insights and create changes in our understanding of the world as well as ourselves as an entity in the world, it cannot be responsible for such a dramatic, fundamental change as witnessed in liberative knowledge.

Care must be taken to distinguish this final or consummate knowledge (jñāna) from the sorted jñānas or 'stages of realization' leading up to liberative knowledge. For each of these preliminary stages have an object or content (e.g., saguna 'qualified' Brahman, the great sayings such as "rāttvamasi," ignorance, etc.), while the final stage is void of all distinction between perceiver and perceived. Śaṅkara himself does not identify any distinct stages or steps leading in a gradual ascent to liberation—as do later Advaitins. Śaṅkara does specify in the Brahmansūtrabhāṣya (I.1.1.) four qualifications or prerequisites necessary to begin the task of realizing Brahman and for eventually accomplishing this goal: (i) one must be able to discriminate (viveka) between that which is eternal and real and that which is transitory and unreal; (ii) one must have a distaste (vairāgya) for the enjoyments of things here in this world as well as in the next world; (iii) one must acquire tranquility of mind (sama),
self-restraint (dama), dispassion (uparati), endurance (titiksa), focus of the mind (samādhāna), and faith (sraddhā) and (iv) one must possess the desire for final release (mumuksutva). This fourfold requirement (śāhana catustaya) is given as a basic guideline or code of behavior that one begins with on one's spiritual journey and attempts to perfect as one proceeds. But Śaṅkara does not specify any jñānas or states of knowing that lead one toward liberation. Rather, Śaṅkara goes on to a discussion of liberation itself, and what it constitutes in the aspirant.

Śaṅkara couches his discussion in Upaniṣadic mahāvākyas 'great sayings' rather than developing an elaborate theory describing the psychological/spiritual alterations that one undergoes. Examples of such 'great sayings' are tattvamasi 'thou art that', ātma-brahman 'the self is Brahman', aham-brahma-asmi 'I am Brahman', and so forth. The expressions are given not only to "describe" the liberated state, but to function as a catalyst, pithy statements that when heard by an aspirant close to reaching liberation, incites him/her into liberation. These statements give the basic metaphysical position of Advaita Vedānta, namely, that the Self, our true or real nature is identical with Brahman, and our sense of personal identity identified with the senses, mind, intellect, etc, is based in illusion. Liberative knowledge is a "spiritual appreciation" of these 'great sayings' in which we internalize these profound truths to the point whereby we resonate spiritually with their intent.
We view "ourselves" as not part of the world or as the jīva, but identical with Brahman, there is no distinction between ourselves as an individual and Brahman.

In the Brhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣadbhāṣya (IV.4.6) Śaṅkara speaks of the liberated individual (jīvanmukti) as "merging" into a total unity with Brahman.

This man of realization is Brahman in this very life, though he seems to have a body. Being but Brahman, he is merged in Brahman. Because he has no desires that cause the limitations of non-Brahmanhood, therefore, "being but Brahman he is merged in Brahman" in this very life, not after the body falls off. A man of realization after death, has no change of condition—something different from what he was in life, but he is only not connected with another body. This is what is meant by his becoming "merged in Brahman."

One, then, somehow sheds one's former psycho-physical complex and takes one's proper place as being non-different from Brahman. This "merging" into Brahman can be taken as a sort of personal annihilation in which one no longer is distinguishable from Brahman. In a more positive light, one can say that while liberation represents a loss of personal individuality, it is no real loss as our common notion of personal identity is illusory, a projection of ignorance;
upon reaching liberation, this illusion simply vanishes. As this transmigrating self is the basis of suffering and bondage, its demise should be greeted with anticipation and joy. The point is that we are not loosing anything that we actually posses.

Liberation "reveals" to the liberated Self that only Brahman is real, the world is illusory, the Self is non-different from Brahman, Itself.

Further clarification is needed regarding Advaitin epistemology and ontology. As we've seen, Śaṅkara and other Advaitins distinguish between liberative knowledge and the "knowledge of multiplicity" when we are inflicted with ignorance. For Śaṅkara this latter cogitation is founded in illusion. Śaṅkara in fact actually distinguishes between three corresponding ontological/epistemological levels. The highest level of knowledge (paramārthika) is realization of Brahman as the true reality (sat), void of any qualities. This is the level of liberative knowing in which our usual conceptual distinction of perceiver/object, knower/known is inapplicable as there is only the reality of Brahman. The second level (vyāvahārika) is knowing conditioned by ignorance and concerns itself with material objects and affairs of the mundane world. The third or lowest level,
(partibhäsika), is the level of illusion, and concerns itself with dreams, hallucinations, falsehoods, etc.

Here, the phenomenal world is distinguished ontologically from both true reality and non-reality; in fact, it is some called, sadasdvilaksana, which literally means, "other than the real or unreal." When we speak of "merging" into Brahman, or the demise of the egoistic self, we are referring to the ascent of the person to the highest level of existence. While still in the state of ignorance, however, Śaṅkara wishes to be able to distinguish between actual perceptual objects and mere hallucinations so he attributes phenomenal reality as possessing a "higher" degree of reality than hallucination and illusion. Like Plato and particularly Plotinus, there is a theory of 'degrees of reality' whereby at the "highest" level there is true or pure reality (i.e., the Good, One, Brahman) and then outside of this sphere there are varying degrees of reality/unreality/illusion as one removes oneself further from this ultimate reality through ignorance.

Going back to the passage from the Brhadāranyaka Upanisad on page 32, an obvious question arises, how can the body and individual personality persist after one reaches liberation? After all, if the world and the individual self are based in ignorance--i.e., they constitute an illusion--then why do they persist after liberation is gained--why doesn't a jīvanmukti vanish in a flash from this world? The
traditional explanation given hinges on a distinction between bondage and ignorance.

As we've seen previously, ignorance is the cause of the transmigratory cycle; the death of a person still in a state of ignorance provides "momentum" that leads to his/her next incarnation which is determined by his/her past karmic traces or karmāsaya. It is this element, our past karma, that offers an explanation for liberation while in the body (jīvanmukti). According to Advaitins there is a certain type of karma, prārabdha karma, that lingers on even after liberation and serves to maintain the body until one's natural time (ayus) for death occurs. This particular type of karma determines one's type of birth (jati), the duration of one's life (ayus), and the nature of one's experience (bhoga). We bring a certain amount of prārabdha karma into this life which must be "burned up" thru the course of our actions during the present life span.

Śaṅkara gives metaphors to help explain this phenomenon. Consider the case of the potter who stops spinning his wheel and yet the wheel continues to spin on its own momentum. Or consider the flight of an arrow after it has been released from the bow. In each case, the potter's wheel or the arrow continue their motion even after the force that set them in motion originally has ceased. Similarly, even after ignorance has ceased and one is in a liberated state, the "momentum" of this life, the karma that has been designated
to bear fruit in this life (i.e., bondage) continues to perpetuate the functioning of this psycho-physical complex till one's natural death occurs. 28

From the above discussions the following points about the liberated state can be summarized. First, through liberative knowledge one is no longer ignorant about the true nature of the world and of oneself. The world is not regarded as real just as the psycho-physical complex identified with one's Self is not the true self but an illusory phantasm one has falsely identified Oneself with. As such, the cycle of transmigration has been stopped due to liberation. Secondly, it is a kind of bondage, prārabdha karma, that perpetuates the psycho-physical complex and its interaction with the illusory world even after one has attained liberation. Yet the exact identity of the liberated self is still unclear.

The Question of "who's liberation is it?"

A traditional question or set of questions centers on the issue of, Who's liberation is it? 29 If the jīva or psycho-physical complex is based in ignorance, it is an illusion, and thus cannot be the true self that is liberated in liberation. Yet, as the Self is held to be one with Brahman, how can we speak of the Self reaching liberation as it is non-different, indistinguishable from Brahman? The
Advaitin answer to this query focuses on their notion of causality, identity, and Brahman.

Śaṅkara and other Advaita thinkers devised an interesting modification to the traditional satkāravyādha 'the effect pre-exists in its cause' theory of causation. Like the propounders of the Sāṃkhya system of philosophy, Śaṅkara accepts the satkāravyādha theory of causation. It holds that the effect pre-exists in its cause; that is, no new entity comes into existence as the effect of some process; rather, the effect is the product of some sort of alteration within the cause itself. The usual example given is milk and curds, the curds are the product or effect of some transformation within the milk itself. The curds did not arise independently of the milk, no new entity arose which did not already exist in the cause. This is an example of what is termed the parināma 'actual transformation' position, where there is an actual modification in the cause which brings about the effect. Sāṃkhya uses this theory of causation in their cosmogony, as their is a transformation in prakṛti 'primal matter' which results in the creation of the world.

In contrast, Śaṅkara rejects the parināma position in favor of his vivarta 'apparent modification' position. The world is not really manifested, but is only an 'apparent modification or manifestation' of Brahman. A stock example employed by Śaṅkara to elucidate this causal theory is the
case of the rope and snake. A weary traveler spots a rope on his path but takes it to be a snake. Though the rope never actually changes, it temporarily produces the appearance of a snake in the mind of the passer-by. Technically, the observer is said to superimpose (adhyāsa) the snake and its qualities upon the rope and its qualities, whereas in fact the rope never actually undergoes a transformation. Similarly, the world and self are only 'apparent manifestations' of Brahman, not real transformations. Consequently, when liberation is gained things "resort back" to the true reality, the illusion is overcome or discovered and as such there is no more individuality as one once believed. The question of "who's liberation," then, makes no sense. If individuality is a product of ignorance, then it must also be eradicated when liberative knowledge destroys ignorance.

Of course, there is the continuance of the psycho-physical complex after liberation occurs due to prārabdha karma as discussed earlier. While one might infer that this jīvanmukti state must constitute a zombie-like existence, the lives and behavior of alleged jīvanmuktas do not bear this out. Once ignorance is removed, the mundane self continues to function, the only difference being that there is no longer an identification with the mundane self as constituting one's selfhood. The question arises, then, as to where the identification rests and more importantly, Who is doing the identifying?
To answer these questions we need to probe a bit further into the nature of self in Advaita Vedānta. Śaṅkara provides two theories based on metaphors to explain the relation between Self (atman) and self (jīva): pratibimbavāda 'theory of reflection' and avacchedavāda 'theory of limitation'. According to the first theory, 'the theory of reflection', the Self or Brahman is seen as 'radiating' pure consciousness (cit) whose 'light' is reflected in the "mirror" of the jīva or self. In this fashion the relative self and the universal Self share the same essence and are intrinsically linked. We know that an object and its reflection are not different in their basic perceptual nature even though they still cannot be held to be the very same object. This pratibimba or reflection will continue to exist as long as the 'mirror' continues to reflect its bimba or original source object. To account for differences between self and Self, Advaitins make reference to dust on the mirror, etc. as hindering a perfect reflection of Self.

The second theory, the theory of limitation, takes a different approach, positing that an individual is a limitation on consciousness, limitations constituted of the upadhis of ignorance. Pure consciousness (cit) of Self or Brahman is somehow limited by the upadhis 'limiting adjuncts' brought about through ignorance. Here the individual is not a 'reflection of consciousness, but a 'limitation' on consciousness. This second theory gives
more of an empirical nature to the individual self, while the first theory allows the Self/Brahman to remain more removed and "uncontaminated" by the worldly sphere. If we combine the use of these two metaphors/theories perhaps we might piece together some sort of conceptual model representing this bicameral self.

The self--be it of the 'higher' or 'lower' status--is created or defined by the limiting (reflecting) effects of ignorance. To use a popular metaphor of the avacchedavāda theory, the self is like the air in a jar, it is given its individual, limited status by the boundaries of the jar surrounding it even though it still remains nondifferent in its nature from the air outside the jar. The ultimate Self is seen as an individual, unique entity only by its association with the finite self. Once it is free of this association, when a jīvanmukta's body transpires, it "merges" back into Brahman just as the air in a jar blends back with the surrounding air once the jar is shattered. However, as long as the psycho-physical complex (jīva) continues to function due to prārabdha karma, the individual self will continue to 'reflect' consciousness and define the Self. This mistaken identity or mutual superimposition of the relative self upon the universal Self and visversa will be dispelled when liberation occurs. For while the self (jīva) thought itself to be the true ultimate self and Self (ātman) associated itself with the activities of the mundane self, upon liberation each comes to appreciate its
true nature. The erroneous superimposition is halted.

Nevertheless, again because of prārabdha karma, the illusion or projection of individuality and multiplicity still persists. Such a world view is analogous to our perception of a rainbow or the bending of a stick under water, we still perceive these distorted or unreal phenomena but we know them to be just that, an illusion. So to answer our original questions regarding identification, we can say that both levels of self know and see the true nature of itself, the self comes to know its limited and erroneous nature, while the Self, free of previous distractions, "appreciates" its true identity with Brahman. This account is metaphorical in essence as the Self is operative on a non-cognitive level of consciousness and so cannot "appreciate" this ontological condition in the usual sense of this word. The point here is that the cosmic illusion of ignorance at least as it is perceived in this particular individual has been dispelled.

Returning back to our discussion about Advaita levels of reality and knowledge, one can observe that questions about the status of the "liberated person" can be answered via the doctrine of two truths. The doctrine of two truths acknowledges both a level of truth derived from mundane, sense-based experience of the world, and a higher or ultimate level of truth based on a 'liberative experience' of ultimate reality, i.e., Brahman. Advaitins argue that
talk of an individual mundane self who undergoes liberation is to be found on the lower level of truth. From the higher level of truth there is no \( j \text{\textit{iva}} \), no world of multiplicity, rather, all that exists is Brahman. Thus, from this higher level, talk of a liberated self, the cycle of transmigration, and one's release from it does not exist. It is only back on the lower, ignorance-latent level of truth that such discourses have meaning (i.e., existence).

In the next chapter, we will complete the preparatory groundwork of this study with an explication of our (Anglo-American) concept of knowledge. Only after we have clearly identified the criteria upon which we determine whether a mental state qualifies as "knowing" can we assess the epistemological status of liberative knowing.
NOTES

1. This argument can be attributed to Herbert Feigl based on his discussion of intuition in his article, "Critique of Intuition According to Scientific Empiricism," *Philosophy East and West*, 8, nos. 1 and 2 (January, April 1958):1-16.


5. Wainwright, pp.117-122. No specific author is identified with this argument.

6. Actually, in the school we are to discuss, the distinction between the experience and the time after the
experience has occurred is inappropriate, for according to Advaita Vedānta, once one has had a liberative experience, i.e., nirvikalpa samādhi, one cannot "come back" to one's previous ignorant (unenlightened) state of consciousness; one's psychological processes do continue to function, but they are "witnessed" (saksin) by the liberated Self, disvalued as merely part of the ephemeral world, founded in ignorance.

7. It must be warned that to recognize these different "aspects" of liberation is inaccurate and it can lead easily to misunderstandings. For example, to speak of 'liberative knowledge' in contrast to 'liberative experience' can give rise to the misunderstanding that there is some temporal or logical order between them; in fact, both arises simultaneously. It is not the case that one undergoes some experience and then later, reflecting upon this experience, gains some knowledge derived from it. When liberation occurs—according to Advaita Vedānta—one undergoes a transformation in which one perceives the world as something wholly distinct from what one perceived prior to the liberative experience. There is also a total shift in personal identity when one has reached liberation. There is no separate experience and knowledge process within the liberated person's mind as there is only a total awareness of Brahman 'the ultimate reality', an awareness of one's complete identity with Brahman, and the realization of the unreality of the world. The distinction between these
'aspects' of liberation will still offer us more accuracy than the traditional term "mysticism," though the reader should keep in mind that all such conceptual and linguistic constructions fail to denote accurately the state of liberation.

8. Though Advaita Vedānta can be considered a single school of Indian philosophy, through the centuries of its existence a number of variances in doctrine have evolved on several key issues. As such, it is to our advantage to choose one philosopher as the "spokesman" for this school. We shall chose the teachings of the central Advaita philosopher, of Śaṅkara (686-718) as the source of our conceptual reconstruction of the Advaita notion of liberation. It will be necessary, however, to call upon other Advaita philosophers when an important and relevant Advaita idea is not adequately developed in Śamkara or when such a concept is only found in later Advaita writers.


10. I will use the small case "s" in spelling self when referring to this phenomenal transmigration self, and I will use the capital "S" in spelling self when I am referring to the real, eternal Self. The distinction between the self 'jīva' and the Self 'ātman' will be explicated shortly.

11. Etymologically, *samsāra* comes from the root *sar* 'to go' with the prefix *sām* 'with, together', which together
literally mean "to go together, to pass through together, to wander through." Thus, the usual translation of "transmigration" is fairly close if one were to stick purely to an etymological meaning. Yet, the notion of samsāra is broader in meaning than merely reincarnation as we shall see. Nevertheless, I have chosen to use this traditional translation of "transmigration" in conjunction with a thorough discussion of samsāra covering all its sorted doctrinal aspects.

12. The Brhadāranyaka Upanisad with the commentary of Śaṅkaraśārvabhaṭṭa (B.U.S.) IV.3.8 and IV.3.36.

13. ibid. II.3.4

14. ibid. IV.4.2; II.3.3.

15. ibid. II.3.5.

16. ibid. IV.4.2.

17. ibid.

18. B.U.S. IV.4.5; IV.4.6.; I.1.1. Brahmasūtra Śaṅkarabhāṣya (B.S.B.) I.1.1; II.3.50


20. B.U.S. IV.3.36; IV.4.7.; B.S.B. I.1.1; II.1.4; I.4.4.

22. For several ontological and cosmological reasons which we will discuss later, Śaṅkara does not wish to acknowledge that the Self can be in a state of bondage or transmigration. It is only the jīva or phenomenal self which undergoes suffering and transmigration.

23. For a survey and summation of current research on this topic see the Introduction section (chapters I-III) in Sengaku Mayeda's translation of A Thousand Teachings: The Upadeśasāhasrī of Śaṅkara. (Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press, 1979).

24. B.S.B. II.1.28.

25. Actually, the topic of the locus (asrāya) of ignorance is a contested point in later Advaita Vedānta. According to the Vivarana school, ignorance abides in Brahman, whereas for the Bhamati school of Advaita Vedānta it is found in the individual self or jīva. Yet even for the Bhamati school, each individual self did not create its own world; rather the world of objects is an intersubjective, universal illusion.

26. Later Advaitins go into great detail covering these stages of knowledge. As usual there is disparity in accounts relating to this process. For an account of some of these explanations see A.G. Krisna Warrier's The Concept of Mukti in Advaita Vedānta. (Madras:University of Madras, 1961), pp.460ff.
27. There are three types of karma reported: (i) prārabdha karma, karma that has begun to bear fruit in this life; (ii) sañcita karma, the accumulated karma from all our past lives; (iii) āgāmi karma, karma to be incurred from future action. Sañcita karma, the second type, is said to be rendered impotent by liberative knowledge (indirectly), because, as we've seen earlier, desire is what causes an individual to be reborn and since knowledge removes desire there are no future lives in which this karma can come to bear fruit. (B.S.B.IV.1.15) As for karma which is yet to be incurred from future actions or āgāmi karma, it cannot even come into existence after liberation for desire is necessary for the generation of karma, and since the aspirant no longer has desires, he cannot accumulate karma. (B.S.B.IV.1.19; B.U.S.IV.4.6; IV.4.7) Only prārabdha karma survives liberative knowledge. The jīvanmukta maintains his/her physical form until s/he exhausts the prārabdha karma which already started to bear fruit in the present life, and then dies. (B.S.B.IV.3.14)

28. One might question why this prārabdha karma is immune to the annulling knowledge of liberation. Liberative knowledge has destroyed all other forms of bondage--i.e., desire, superimposition, etc--so why must it submit to prārabdha karma? Śaṅkara in his commentary on the Brhadāranyaka Upanisad (I.4.10) gives an explanation of why even knowledge cannot destroy this type of bondage. Śaṅkara holds that a particular phenomenon can only destroy its opposite and
conversely, a particular phenomenon can only destroy its opposite. For example, darkness can only be removed by light and light can only illuminate that which is darkness. In the case of liberative knowledge, it can only dispel its opposite, 'ignorance'. Karma is not opposed to 'ignorance', it is simply a mechanical system of retribution for actions performed. Thus, liberative knowledge destroys only its opposite 'ignorance', and does not effect prārabdha karma, which continues to bear fruit, causing the persistence of the body.

CHAPTER TWO

Liberative knowledge is characterized as release from transmigration, void of the distinction between subject and object, realization of Brahman, a nonreversible transformation within the knower. It has been spoken of as revealing "final truth" and providing a "higher level of knowledge" about reality. However, liberative knowledge has yet to be contrasted with our own epistemological schema.

Guidelines for explication of knowledge

What is required before one can adequately compare 'liberative knowledge' with our epistemological schema, is an explication of our concept of "knowledge." Note that this investigation should not be reduced to a mere determination of whether 'liberative knowledge' satisfies our conception of "knowledge." In the process of addressing this query, care must be taken not to bias our discussion by blindly presupposing the adequacy or supremacy of our own epistemological framework. The arguments presented in Chapter One attempt to demonstrate that liberation has no epistemic content (the NEC thesis) because it violates or fails to satisfy certain of the "recognized" conditions necessary for knowledge to occur. One avenue of analysis for determining the cogency of these arguments is to
ascertain whether the definiens that are use to explain the meaning of the definiendum, i.e., "knowledge" collectively equate the same meaning as knowledge. For if the definiens employed in the arguments are not equivalent to the concept of knowledge that the definiendum, "knowledge" denotes, then the arguments may be unsound. On the other hand, if the definiens do equate to the definiendum, "knowledge," then we are closer to substantiating that at least some of the arguments are sound. However, if there proves to be inaccuracies in the definition of knowledge utilized in these arguments, and given that the account of mystical experience selected for our study is Indian and thus is described in an epistemological framework (presumably) outside the purview of western epistemology, it will be useful to examine the Advaita epistemological schema and see if it contains elements that might be utilized in correcting the inaccuracies found in our account of "knowledge."

This chapter will begin with an evaluation or attempted classification of 'liberative knowledge' within the confines of our epistemological framework; but as liberation does not appear to conform to the criteria for knowledge generally given, I will endeavor—if warranted—to examine the accuracy of these criteria themselves. Further, I will continue on and consider where liberative knowledge fits within the Advaitin epistemological schema, and what differences, if any, exist between the Advaita and western epistemological mappings. It is upon this latter comparison
that the most satisfactory and fruitful answers to the concerns initially raised may be found.

In my effort to provide an account of our concept of "knowledge, supplying a lexical definition taken from a dictionary will not suffice. Though the definition or explication of "knowledge" should be consonant with common usage, it must formulate an adequate characterization of this epistemic state or mental process that will enable us to correctly identify all instances of knowledge while excluding its impostors. One must identify a theoretical definition which will provide a theoretically adequate description of the mental processes that "knowledge" denotes. Historically, there have been a number of theories of knowledge offered in our western tradition, but to make my task manageable, I must choose a particular theory of knowledge. The so-called justified-true-belief theory of knowledge clearly dominates western accounts of knowledge and is presupposed in nearly all Anglo-American philosophical discourse. It is quite sensible, then, that I utilize this theory of knowledge.

The JTB theory of knowledge

Knowledge is defined as "justified true belief" (hereafter JTB). A subject S, is said to know x, if his belief about x is true, and he has some justification, some
grounds for holding this belief. Inherent in this theory is the contention that knowledge is always true, that is, it would be a misstatement to speak of "false knowledge:" when on the occasions where subject $S$ is said to know $x$, but later $S$ finds out that $x$ is in fact false, it is said that $S$ did not know $x$, but that $S$ had a false belief about $x$. Further, it is held that knowledge cannot merely consist of true opinion because this would allow a "lucky guess" to be knowledge. As was brought out as early as in Plato's dialogue, Theaetetus, knowledge cannot be equated with true opinion, as one might achieve true opinion merely by guessing correctly; in addition, there must be proper grounds (logos) for holding this belief. When called upon, one must be able to state why one knows something to be true, to dispell the possiblity that one may only be guessing or randomly stating some position. Yet, it is unclear exactly what Plato meant by "logos" and in subsequent years, many philosophers have attempted to clarify and formulate this "ground" or "evidence" that serves to support true belief in a knowing state.

Belief is included as a condition for knowledge due to the fact that for one to know $x$, one must possess a disposition toward $x$. Obviously, one could not be said to know something if one did not have an awareness of it and assent to its veracity. It is often held that knowledge is a belief with an added degree of certainty. While belief may contain conviction on the part of the subject, it still
lacks the final certainty or element of justification or evidence that is needed for knowledge.

Truth, another condition for knowledge, has been variously defined by philosophers using the JTB theory. The most prevalent definition or theory, often simply being assumed, is the so-called correspondence theory of truth. Assuming an inherent dualism between knower and the known object, truth is seen as a correct "mirroring" or "accounting" of some state of affairs by the knower. There is an adequation between reality and an intellectual apprehension of that reality. This theory is often called the "commonsense" conception of truth as truth is perceived as occurring simply when our ideas of the world "correspond" to the world "out there."

In contrast, the coherence theory of truth establishes the truth of a judgement or belief not through its correspondence to some fact, but on the basis of its agreement with an accepted body of judgements. Each member of such a system of true judgements logically and/or factually implies each other member. A judgement or proposition is found to be true if it "coheres" (does not conflict or contradict) with every other accepted judgement within the system.

Thirdly, there is the pragmatic theory of truth which is a broad category that encompasses several diverse accounts of truth. The expression "pragmatic theory of truth" first
became associated with several American philosophers—most notably William James and Charles S. Peirce—of whom I will consider the account given by Charles S. Peirce. It is generally believed that Peirce never formulated an actual "pragmatic theory of truth" and he himself on occasions argues that pragmatism and truth theories are distinct considerations. Yet pragmatism for Peirce was a means to clarify and justify belief, and it is for this reason that later commentators and users of Peirce's pragmatism have referred to it as containing a theory of truth. In his article "How to Make Our Ideas Clear" Peirce defines "clarity of ideas" as knowing how an object will react in various experimental environments; and later in reference to truth he states "The opinion which is fated to be ultimately agreed to by all who investigate, is what we mean by the truth. Truth for Peirce is a regulative idea, one which stabilizes, orders, and clarifies inquiry. Truth is what is ultimately agreed upon by all investigating.

Categorization of liberative knowledge within JTB

The JTB theory of knowledge, then, describes knowledge as consisting of a true belief supported by justification. For someone to know something, he must believe that it is true and have specific, pertinent grounds to demonstrate that
what he believes is true. How then might we classify liberative knowledge within this JTB epistemological matrix? First, does liberative knowledge involve a belief on the part of the "knower?" Given that at the time of the experience there is no distinction between the experiencer and the object of experience, there could not be a cognitive state of belief. As liberation consists of a new awareness of nonduality, talk of dispositions, convictions, certainty, etc., has no application.

Secondly, is liberative knowledge true? There are two aspects to this question. If we are "speaking" from the level of Brahman, the nondual awareness cultured in liberation, then liberative knowledge does not appear to satisfy any of the forementioned theories and/or criteria for truth. Since there is no duality, there can be no correspondence between knowledge and object. Similarly, with no duality extant in liberative knowing, there is no agreement or coherence between facts or judgements; further, the pragmatic formulation of truth is not satisfied because there are no objects or actions found on the level of Brahman, there is no way to establish agreement, success, or order.

However, if we speak from the level of practical life (based in ignorance), we can ask whether propositions "approximating" the nature of Brahman are true. As it turns out, for Śaṅkara and other Advaitins this is a somewhat
complex issue. Scriptural statements pronouncing the "truths" of Advaita are considered true (prama). Advaita philosophical texts and commentaries, as far as they are either consonant with scripture or philosophically acceptable (e.g., well argued and supported and do not contradict accepted truths) are also considered true. Strikingly, statements about personal liberative experiences, taken without collateral support from scripture, inference, comparison, sensory perception, etc. (the Advaita means-to-knowledge or pramanas) are not recognized as yielding truth.

From our western epistemological perspective, we can observe that from either "level" we cannot accept liberative knowledge as true. From the level of Brahman experience itself, as was just pointed out, there can be no sense of truth without duality. From the level of practical reality, propositions about Brahman can also not be established as true because of the lack of cross-reference to other observable facts to substantiate knowledge claims derived from the liberated person's experience. And as we do not accept scripture (western or eastern) as undeniably true, scriptural propositions about Brahman cannot be designated as true or false—-they are rather statements of personal faith.

Thirdly, if we take "justification" as some sort of reasons or evidence for one's belief, then again liberative
knowledge fails as there are no given or conceived reasons that have lead the aspirant to reach his liberative knowledge, nor could he provide reasons to support liberative knowledge on the level of Brahman (again because there is no duality).

Given what has just been said, one might ask if we are justified in speaking of \textit{moksha} as some sort of knowledge. That is, as liberative knowledge does not satisfy even one of the three necessary conditions of knowledge (i.e., JTB) how can one legitimately speak of it as some mode of "knowing?" Perhaps we are unjustified in using the term "knowledge" in reference to liberation.

\textbf{Reaction to JTB declassification}

If one attempts to categorize liberation from the perspective of the JTB theory, there is no doubt that liberation does not yield anything that one could call knowledge. One then is faced with at least two philosophical options in dealing with this result. Either one can accept that liberation has no epistemic content, contending that the liberated person gains nothing in the way of knowledge, or one can dig deeper in one's analysis, unpacking further our concept of "knowledge" and examine the Advaita conceptions of liberation and knowledge. Due to the exploratory nature of this study, it is incumbent upon me to
adopt the latter option. Thus, I shall tentatively take the position that from the fact that liberative knowledge does not satisfy the JTB condition for knowledge, it does not necessarily follow that the NEC thesis is true. The question that now needs to be addressed is, is the declassification of liberation as knowledge due to the nature of the experience itself or to the limited scope of JTB's criteria for knowledge?

The criteria or conditions that one chooses to employ to define a particular type, obviously determines the tokens that extend it. Ideally one chooses a set of criteria broad enough to encompass all genuine instances, yet narrow enough to exclude bogus elements. The task that lays before this study is to determine whether the JTB theory has approximated this ideal; if it has then liberative experience/knowledge can be excluded from the domain of knowledge; if JTB possess too narrow a set of criteria, then the JTB epistemological categorization of liberative knowledge should be discarded.

Epistemology as linguistic analysis

Before proceeding, a word is warranted regarding the scope of our discussion. Contemporary epistemological discussions are couched in linguistic analysis. Talk about what one may know or believe generally takes the form of
knowing or believing a proposition or set of propositions. Counter to the initial British empiricist thrust where subjective sense impressions were the starting point of all analysis, current empiricists (which I take most epistemologists to be) have externalized empiricism, abandoning the method of introspection. The role of language in knowledge is held to be obvious as learning is best understood as conditioning of response to external stimulation principally through the vehicle of verbal communication (orally or written). Knowledge of a language, for example, must be seen as a social event. Any time we undergo the learning process, we are responding to selective information directed to us by some external, responsible agency.

A fundamental assumption in this line of thought—one which I shall question—is that all knowing is propositional in character. All cases of knowing occur in propositional form. Entailed here is the position that language of thought is propositional in character. Yet, it will be urged in my ensuing discussion in Chapter Four, that there are several types of nonpropositional knowledge. These types of knowing involve an immediate awareness, a knowing of something that involves no form of cognitive appreciation. With regard to the language of thought, little can be said with any decisiveness in this chapter. While some have argued that there exists a "language of thought" (e.g., Jerry Fodor, Gilbert Ryle, Noam Chomsky),
its existence is suggested only circumstantially, as no one has directly encountered this "language." Others, as for example Charles S. Peirce have argued that thought is not linguistic. While our thoughts are indicated by signs, these signs are not manipulated or structured in the manner in which words are used in language.

Whether Peirce, Fodor, or neither is correct is not for us to determine. As we can never have direct access to the thinking process, it is unlikely we shall ever know conclusively if there is a language of thought. For though we can work through a problem in step by step linguistic mental images, this exercise has no overt resemblance to the normal thinking process or the signs or tokens used in that process.

Even if there is a deep structure to thought, a sort of primitive or fundamental language, it is still uncertain whether it is of a propositional form that corresponds to our verbal language and whether our experience of knowing is reduced or equal to an interaction and utilization of this deeper order proposition. That is, when someone knows for example that a tree is growing in his backyard, can this knowing state be equated with knowing a "mental proposition" of the form "I know a tree grows in my backyard?" In seeing and appreciating the tree, did one formulate such a "proposition?" There appears to be no reason to suppose that such a formulation occurs. While a "fact" that one
ostensibly knows may be expressed in verbal expression, there is no reason to suppose that what we know (consciously) is of a similar propositional form. Whether we observe someone perceiving a tree directly or we ourselves personally see it, we (or they) visualize the tree flourishing and can later recall visually the tree; in either case, perceiving or remembering, no words or propositions appear to cross one's scope of attention.

A question that arises then is: Where does knowledge occur? While some who speak of "eternal truths" and the "accumulative wisdom of mankind" may want to speak of an external, eternal knowledge, to which we as individuals have access, I think most would want to view knowledge as an event within one's consciousness. Even the forementioned externalists would have to admit that the psychological, internal event of knowing occurs and that it is our only way to experience knowing. Whether one links a metaphysical superstructure to the personal act of knowing is irrelevant to our discussion. The focus should be upon what it means to know something.

One again must question the wisdom of speaking about knowledge exclusively in terms of propositions given its highly subjective nature. We can know certain moods, feelings, sensations, for example, that never get expressed in words. When I know that I love Heather, I am not directly aware of a proposition "I know that I love
Heather;" rather, I am aware or I recognize that I have this vastly complex and engrossing relationship with this person. It is unlikely that one would ever experience this event in the form of a proposition or mental construction whereby one would mentally state or think "I love $x$." Instead one, more likely, realizes one's infatuation or devotion to this other person. One might not even realize this state as a specific event, but when asked if you love $x$, respond, "Yes, I guess I do love her," having simply known and appreciated this fact without ever pinning it down to a specific category or set of descriptive words. Here I am not simply pointing out the inadequacy of words to express our ideas or feelings, but the nonoccurrence of verbal or propositional constructions in many of our knowing states.

Finally, another case involves knowing a person. When I know, say Smith, I possess the ability (in the least) to point him out in a crowd if he were to walk by. Here I do not know a proposition, but an object. In my discussion to follow, emphasis will be placed on the knowing condition rather than its verbal expression. However analyzing these verbal expressions is extremely useful in understanding the actual knowing experience. Certain linguistic expressions indicate a particular mode of knowing. Let's now turn to the JTB theory of knowledge, beginning with its first specified condition, justification.
Critique of JTB theory

Justification

The criteria for determining justification of a true belief has been a parennial problem for JTB theorists since the inception of the JTB account. Historically, "justification" as an adjunct to true belief was considered first by Plato, though the holder of this position was never identified. Plato (at least in the Theaetetus) never really finds a satisfactory account of what this "justification" amounts to. Nevertheless JTB became an accepted account of knowledge. In most recent times, this element of justification has come under scrutiny in response to Edmund L. Gettier's provocative article "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?" In his paper, Gettier provides two examples which ostensibly are cases in which justified true belief is not sufficient for knowledge. They involve a person who is able to make a warranted inference to a belief that happens to be true even though its truth is not derived from the premises in which it was inferred. Attempts to resolve the Gettier problem have taken the form of modifications to the JTB, usually giving extra necessary condition(s) in addition to justification, truth, and belief for knowledge to occur. Unfortunately, these ad hoc formulations--while perhaps satisfying Gettier type cases--are too awkward and specialized in application to give any
improvement in a generalized, working definition of knowledge.

A more generalized (and interesting) shift regarding "justification" is found in the writings of a number of recent philosophers who have substituted other conditions and corresponding terms for the traditional knowledge condition of "justification." A.J. Ayers speaks of a knower's "right to be sure," while others such as C.I. Lewis, H.H. Price, A. Meinong, and Roderich Chisholm give varying accounts of "evidence" as a condition for knowledge. For the sake of simplicity, we will briefly look at one of the modifications, offered by Roderick Chisholm, to improve upon the condition of "justification."

Realizing the rendering of "justification" as "reasons or rational explanation" is too vague for the broad range of occurrences of acts of knowing, Chisholm has opted for the word "evidence" as an account of this justification condition for knowledge. "Evidence" is defined as:

\[ h \text{ [proposition] is evident for } S \text{ [subject]} = \text{df} (i) \text{ h is beyond reasonable doubt for } S \text{ and (ii) for every i, [another proposition] if accepting } i \text{ is more reasonable for } S \text{ than accepting } h, \text{ then } i \text{ is certain for } S. \]

For Chisholm "evidence" is (generally) just short of absolute certainty, yet it is more than "beyond reasonable doubt"—i.e., where it is more reasonable for us to believe
it than to withhold it. Propositions that carry absolute certainty (i.e., All bachelors are unmarried males) according to Chisholm can also be classified as evident; however, propositions about ordinary things—which constitute most of what we know—would be classified as evident and below absolute certainty as we cannot rule out hallucinations, sensory disorders, etc.

Chisholm's alteration to the JTB seems to be a marked improvement to the tradition account, rendering a more accurate generalized definition of knowledge. Chisholm remarks:

"$h$ is evident for $s$," is sometimes expressed by saying "$h$ is justified for $s$" or "$s$ is justified in accepting $h$." (But we will use "evident" in place of "justified." For "justified" may also be taken to mean the same as "reasonable" or even "acceptable," and when it is taken in either of these ways it is not restrictive enough to be adequate to the traditional conception of knowledge). ¹⁰

Chisholm's decision to use "evidence" in the place of "justification" was done so as to identify more carefully the mental attitude or assent that is unique to knowledge. The word "evident" itself, at least in its everyday usage, carries a broader connotation than "justification," encompassing many occurrences of knowing that are not
derived through a process of ratiocination—which "justification" seems solely limited to.

My only grievance with Chisholm's discussion is that he continues to presuppose that all knowledge is propositional in nature. As was remarked earlier, it is problematic to assume that all known things are of a propositional character, that everything we know can be translated into a sentence.

Generally, then, it can be remarked that the criteria of "justification" need not be limited to a process of ratiocination. Certainly in cases where one must distinguish knowledge from a random assertion that happens to be correct, a detailed account of how one reaches an answer (i.e., justification) is useful if not necessary. Yet our general knowledge about the world could hardly be linked with such a rational justification. We encounter "the given" and know it as that, we do not need a "reasoned justification" of such knowledge in addition to our experience of it. This is not to say that we can equate appearance or mere awareness with knowledge; but once we have accepted and established an approach to the world which allows for recognized aberrances such as bending sticks in water or pools of water on a hot desert road, we not only perceive things but we simultaneously commit ourselves to knowing that they are so.
Often knowledge is described as being "derived" from sensory experience. Knowledge is seen as a later development or vindication of some initial sense experience. But if we were to accept this model, grave difficulties arise concerning knowledge of objects. That is, to interact effectively with our environment, we need to act and react instantly to situations presented to us; but if knowledge of objects and its accompanying (relative) certainty are gained only at a later time how can we interact appropriately at the time when we initially encounter an object or situation? We not only need a general and consistent knowledge of ourselves and the world, but also an ability to form new knowledge instantaneously with the perception of novel phenomena.

I shall, thus, tentatively adopt the position that knowledge or the act of knowing occurs at the same time as the sensory experience and is part of the gestalt constituting the awareness itself. While we can later intellectually distinguish between the sensory data and our knowledge of it, these two occurrences are inseperable in the original awareness or experience of the object or feeling. Our sense of confidence with our sensory perception, the complete acceptance of the perception of the object represents a unity between knowledge and experience. It can be later analyzed into separate elements, but at the time of the experience, the apprehension occurred as a total unity.
In summation then, knowledge functions as a pragmatic skill. We need to operate from a base of certainty or near certainty (as Chisholm would suggest). Our perceptions of the world, our apperceptions of inner mental states and emotions, are all taken in and are assumed as evident with no feelings of doubt regarding their accuracy. Justification is formulated only when doubt arises after the experience occurs. Additionally, justification may occur (formally or informally) when rationally deriving an answer (knowledge).

**Truth**

Turning to the second condition, truth, it is asserted that what is known is true. It would appear to be contradictory to remark that what one knows is false. Is it possible, then, to have false knowledge? As stated, the answer must be "no." To put it another way, we cannot know \( x \), if we are aware that \( x \) is false. We can know that \( x \) (belief, proposition, theory, observation, etc.) is erroneous, but that is different from accepting \( x \) as true while we are aware it is in error. The former is a case of knowledge, the latter is not. But what about a person who thinks he knows \( x \) (i.e., what he knows about \( x \) is true), yet in fact he is in error. At issue is whether truth is a purely subjective observation or an intersubjective phenomenon.
phenomenon. That is, is the truth condition of knowledge satisfied if we as the knowing agency think the object of our knowledge is true? Or, must such a state be substantiated by the "pool of knowledge" extant in our environment? An example might be helpful here.

Consider the case of Brown who thinks the earth is flat. Being a conscientious "flat-earther" who employs the "zetetic attitude," he has devised several arguments in support of his position even "explaining away" satellite pictures showing the curvature of the earth. Brown is sincere in his position and flatly states that he knows the earth is flat. The question, then, is: Does Brown know the earth is flat?

Three possible interpretations or answers present themselves. First, we can say that Brown is wrong, and knows nothing about the shape of the earth. There is no knowledge involved in his observations. The fact that he thinks he knows has no bearing on whether he in fact knows. Secondly, we can remark that though to us Brown is probably wrong, he does know (within the context of his own mind) that the world is flat. Knowledge occurs within his mental horizon and if the conscious event occurs as a knowing process then we must consider it as knowledge, regardless of whether it conflicts with what is commonly held to be true. Finally it can be said that Brown is clearly wrong, but thinks he knows the earth is flat. Within the scope of
information immediately available and associated psychological tendencies present to Brown, holding that the earth is flat appears to him to be correct. He sincerely thinks he knows the earth is flat. Knowledge occurs at that time to Brown, though it probably will be usurped when later data demonstrates to him that the earth is not flat.

These three interpretations represent a spectrum stretching from epistemological realism to epistemological subjectivism. In the first case truth and consequently knowledge are determined by an external criterion, knowledge corresponds only to what is true (real). There exists a body of facts, true propositions about the world, and knowledge consists of an awareness of a particular true proposition. An awareness of a false proposition can never be knowledge, only an erroneous belief. To the other extreme, position two states that knowledge is a psychological event, it consists of an attitude of total certainty and commitment toward an object by the knower at a specific time. It is only necessary that the knower think his awareness is true for it to be an instance of knowledge. Interpretation three attempts to link these two positions by recognizing (i) a psychological state of "knowing;" and (ii) an objective or communal criteria for truth and knowledge, which usually are coextensive, but can in extreme cases (as with Brown) divide.
While many philosophers hold position one, it is untenable. The difficulty lies in its reliance on a mythical "body of true propositions," the collection of true observations about the world upon which our knowledge must correspond. Consider the case at hand. At one time, up to approximately 500 years ago, the mass of mankind also held the position now propounded by Brown. Is it feasible to argue that prior to the present time no one knew a position regarding the shape of the world? It is not unreasonable to suspect that a number of scientific facts we "know" (i.e., think to be true) today may be proved false in the future and be replaced by new truisms. Does this mean that at this time we do not know these spurious facts or theories? We accept a certain body of facts generated out of our own experiences, the collective ideas of humanity we presently have an appreciation of, and the assorted prejudices, biases, emotions, dispositions, etc. that influence our thinking process. Out of this reservoir of data, we engage in knowing objects as they are encountered. But there is no independent body of facts that all knowing events must correspond to.

Is knowledge, then, a totally subjective event? Can we say that $S$ knows $x$, regardless of the absurdity of $x$ as long as $S$ thinks $x$ is true? Obviously there is something wrong with this position. Truth is governed in part by argument or acceptance amongst people. We must distinguish between knowing $x$ and thinking one knows $x$. If what $S$ knows is
generally accepted as true at the time he knows it, then we can say S knows x. Conversely, if S knows x but most people hold x to be erroneous then we can say S is wrong in his awareness of x, and only thinks he knows x. To put it a different way, though S may undergo a knowing experience in which he has certainty as regards to the truth of x, all outside data known to others doesn't support his position and in fact conflicts with x. It is likely that in the natural course of events S will reject x when confronted with relevant, conflicting and persuasive data. 13

The key point here is that we cannot properly say that someone undergoing an experience of knowing (i.e., feelings of certainty, confidence, etc.), which yet does not accurately represent the facts, does not "know." Rather we must say collectively that though he thinks he knows, in actuality he is in error and is not aware of the truth, even though that person still thinks at that time that he knows. While this analysis may seem awkward, it is more accurate than adopting the traditional shift from knowledge to false belief. If S knows x and yet later x turns out to be false, we are supposed to say S didn't really know x, he only had a "false belief" regarding x. But the high degree of certainty and dedication on the part of S at that time cannot properly be described as S "believing" x.

It may be objected that the dispute discussed here over "false belief" vs "think one knows" is verbal in nature. In
common usage, people use the expressions "he thinks he knows" and "he is false in his belief" interchangeably. In either case, we are observing that a person is mistaken in his viewpoint and has some erroneous pretense that what he holds is true.

In response, it can remarked that though this appears to be a mere verbal dispute, in actuality there is a real dispute. While the two expressions may be used interchangeably in the loose and common use of language, philosophically, there is a distinct difference in what each expression denotes. When we use the expression, "S thinks he knows" in a statement about subject S, we are acknowledging that (i) S is mistaken, (ii) S is not aware of his misinformation, and (iii) S is undergoing a psychological state of feeling of certainty, confidence, and commitment that what S "knows" is true. In the case of stating, "S has a false belief," we are acknowledging that (i) S is mistaken, (ii) S is not aware of his misinformation, and (iii) S has a disposition toward something whereby he maintains some degree of doubt regarding the truth of that disposition. Though S may think it is the case, there remains some doubt, some uncertainty in S's mind. The difference between these two expressions is that in the first case, the subject possess a conscious state of certainty about his thoughts, whereas in the second case, the subject is thought to not have complete certainty regarding his thoughts, as he harbors some doubt.
I am, then, opting for the third position brought out in our example earlier. The upshot here is that one can identify and preserve the existence of an awareness in the consciousness of the subject that satisfies the psychological characteristics of knowing even if that which is claimed to be known is false. This situation is expressed linguistically as, "S thinks that he knows x, even though S is false in his thoughts about x."14

Another difficulty with accepting truth as a necessary condition for knowledge deals with "moral" knowing. We can know "what should be the case" or "what ought to be done." Such constructions denote a mental awareness involving preferential or prescriptive attitudes. One adopts a set of moral guidelines thereby gaining a knowledge of what is proper, what one ought to do. But can we say that these moral directives are true? While morality can be held on the basis of moral belief or articles of faith, it is generally accepted that the moral principles utilized in normative ethics are neither true nor false. There are no universally true moral precepts. Here subject S knows x, a moral precept, but x is neither true nor false.

Actually, one can unpack this example of moral knowledge further by drawing a distinction between two sorts of knowing, one in which the truth condition is determined in relation to the object of knowledge, the other in which the truth condition is linked to the knowing process itself.
Reconsider the example $S$ knows $x$, where $x$ is a moral directive. In the former case, (a) the focus is on whether $x$ is true or false; in the latter case, (b) the concern is whether $S$ truly knows $x$ or not. Consider the statement, "I know man should not kill his fellow man except in self-defence." On interpretation $a$, we are concerned with whether the precept "thou shall not kill one's fellow man except in self-defence" is true or false. (Most philosophers hold that this is an ill-founded question, as moral precepts are not true or false--it is rather an article of faith or something one subscribes to as a matter of conscience.) On interpretation $b$ the concern centers on whether I really know the precept. (Here, one can generate a truth condition.) This ambiguity is usually clarified from the context in which the statement is given. Providing a more directed statement of one's intent is also satisfactory: (i) I know that the precept "thou shall not kill one's fellow man except in self-defence" is true; or (ii) I truly know (I am aware of and accept) the precept "thou shall not kill one's fellow man except in self-defense." In the discussion above I was concerned with the former case in which we cannot say whether the moral precept itself is true (or false).
Belief

I now turn to the last condition of the JTB in our discussion. As was initially stated, belief is included as a condition of knowledge due to the fact that one must possess a disposition toward something in order to know it. One could not know $x$ if one was not aware of $x$. However, it is my contention that knowledge and belief are two distinct phenomena and should be treated as such. Knowledge is not a subset of belief. Each state has its own object and involves different mental attitudes and accompanying emotions. If $S$ states $x$, we could believe that $S$ asserted $x$, or we could know that $S$ asserted $x$. Each mental activity is distinct from the other. When believing, we are admitting the real possibility that we may be in error. We have a strong feeling or opinion that $S$ stated $x$, but we are not certain; whereas, if we know $S$ stated $x$, we are certain that it is so, we have no doubts on the matter. Yet, how can we say that if we know $S$ asserted $x$, that we also believe $S$ asserted $x$, as knowledge supersedes belief. To put it another way, if we believe $y$, we also admit doubt regarding $y$; yet if we know $y$, we rule out doubt about $y$; thus, if we know $y$, we can no longer harbor doubts about $y$, so we cannot believe $y$ while we know $y$.

Further, if we consider another common usage of "belief" as a commitment or consent towards something, the
differences between these two terms become more apparent. Consider an example again. If I say "I believe in the inherent goodness of man," I am acknowledging that I do not possess knowledge on this topic. Conversely, if I say "I know that man is by nature good," I am saying something different; if I know this then I do not believe it. For if someone responded to my second statement by saying, "Oh, you believe that all men are good," I would answer, "No, I know they are good." Conveyed here is a position that I have stronger grounds, I possess certainty rather than a moral or social commitment.

Amongst everyday users of our language there is often a blurring of the distinctions between "belief" and "knowledge." Consider such expressions as, "belief about the way things are" and "knowledge about the way things are." Do they express the same thought? I think they do. Yet I also think the second expression is a more accurate (and less ambiguous) rendering of the mental facility portrayed. For example, if I see a tree and am asked about what I saw, I would reply that I know a tree stands at that specific location, not that I believe a tree stands in that place. Or if I witness a hit-and-run incident, I should testify that I know about the accident—not that I believe (sic) about it, unless of course I had some doubts about my observation.
An important distinction between "knowledge" and "belief" does exist related to empirical undertakings. Here belief is best identified with "opinion," as it is seen as inferior or a preliminary state leading to knowledge. This brings us back to the principle contention of this section, namely, knowledge is not a belief, but a distinct mental event.

Summary

At the outset of this chapter I sought to explicate the JTB theory of knowledge. It was discovered upon an initial adumbration of JTB that liberative knowledge did not satisfy any of the JTB theory's conditions. Due to the nondual nature of liberative knowledge, it became impossible to derive any sense of truth, justification, or belief as specified in the theory. In spite of the fact that Advaita Vedānta philosophers herald liberation as "Supreme Truth" or "Ultimate Knowledge," the JTB analysis could find no conventional sense of truth or knowledge in the liberation account. It was then queried whether this failure to meet even one of the criteria of the JTB account could lie with the JTB account itself.

Critical examination of the JTB theory yielded several interesting observations. Upon looking at the justification condition, it was brought out that recently several philosophers argued (convincingly) that replacement of
"justification" with the term "evident" avoids the vagueness of the original term. For a subject $S$, proposition $h$ is evident for $S$ if $h$ is beyond reasonable doubt and for any other proposition $i$, if accepting $i$ is more reasonable for $S$, than $h$, then $i$ is certain. Here, a proposition $h$ about a perception that $S$ experienced is considered true if $S$ is evident for $S$. This modification becomes particularly important if we view the experience of Brahman as some sort of perception. Knowers of Brahman describe the experience of Brahman-knowledge as "self-validating" or "self-illuminating," meaning that Brahman-knowledge validates itself as being beyond doubt and requires no reference to another fact or being to realize its existence and nature. Categorized as a self-presenting or praeternatural inner perception or awareness, one perhaps could make some sense of the "nondual" aspect of liberative knowledge.

Similar changes can also be observed in the JTB conditions of truth and belief. A bifurcation was made between the conscious state of knowing and the communal truth dependent classification of knowledge. The fact that no doubt remains on the part of the liberated person regarding the significance and content of liberative knowledge, might be grounds to suggest (at least) that liberative knowledge qualifies as a knowing experience. Difficulties persist, however, on public verification or epistemic classification of the experience—which was a principle concern of the arguments initially stated. The
resolution or final verdict regarding this problem may rest with the condition of truth. Our sense of truth, as was demonstrated by our example of the "flat-earther" seems to be dependent on our collective understanding of (i.e., acceptance by) a particular phenomenon. Knowledge of a particular fact (e.g., the shape of the earth or the existence of Brahman) is granted or denied, seemingly, on the collective understanding of a group of people. Consider the fact that at an Advaita monastery--where presumably most inhabitants have experienced Brahman--talk of someone knowing or not knowing Brahman would be commonplace. Whether we could speak of such knowledge as being true or false or whether such classification would be inappropriate as with moral knowledge is uncertain.

This "opening up" of the JTB theory is terms of reevaluating its conditions and range of application has generated further questions. A further means to help answer these questions would be to examine Advaita epistemology so as to further explore the nature of liberative knowledge and observe how they integrate or laminate liberative knowledge into their theory of knowledge.

2. So far I have used such terms as "psychological," "mental," "conscious" without taking care to carefully define them. Generally, most philosophers--perhaps unknowingly--presuppose some sort of mind-body dualism when speaking of mind states or conscious activity in contrast to body states. Even the materialists will speak of activities of the brain or nervous system in contrast to body functions. However, Can't we speak of somatic knowing? For example, when we know how to ride a bicycle, isn't it, our body, our developed coordination and rhythm, that knows this skill more than our mental awareness or conscious participation involved. In such performance directed knowledge as well as some reflective or abstract knowing it is impossible to divorce the somatic aspect of ourselves.

In the present context, I am contrasting models of knowledge seen either as a propositional contract or as a psychological/somatic event. The above concern can be mitigated if we assign this sense of somatic involvement as included in our use of the forementioned terms.

3. It may be objected here that when I "know Smith," I, in
fact, know a set of propositions about Smith. In response, it can be observed that our knowledge of Smith includes some aspects of Smith that could not be formulated into propositions, e.g., feelings I get when I'm around Smith, a certain expressive gleam in Smith's eyes I sense when he's happy, etc. Further, the process of recognition or knowledge involved here does not seem to be of a propositional nature.

4. In several dialogues, i.e., *Meno, Phaedo, Theaetetus*, Plato takes up the task of defining knowledge and in such dialogues as *Parmenides, Republic, Sophists* he contrasts knowledge with belief.

5. Edmund L. Gettier, "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?" *Analysis* 23 (1963): 121-123. For the convenience of the reader I will reproduce Gettier's second example which most articles focus upon.

Case II:

Let us suppose that Smith has strong evidence for the following proposition:

(f) Jones owns a Ford.

Smith's evidence might be that Jones has at all times in the past within Smith's memory owned a car, and always a Ford, and that Jones has just offered Smith a ride while driving a
Ford. Let us imagine, now, that Smith has another friend, Brown, of whose whereabouts he is totally ignorant. Smith selects three place-names quite at random, and constructs the following three propositions:

(g) Either Jones owns a Ford, or Brown is in Boston;
(h) Either Jones owns a Ford, or Brown is in Barcelona;
(i) Either Jones owns a Ford, or Brown is in Brest-Litovsk.

Each of these propositions is entailed by (f). Imagine that Smith realizes the entailment of each of these propositions he has constructed by (f), and proceeds to accept (g), (h), and (i) on the basis of (f). Smith has correctly inferred (g), (h), and (i) from a proposition for which he has strong evidence. Smith is therefore completely justified in believing each of these three propositions. Smith, of course, has no idea where Brown is.

But imagine now that two further conditions hold. First, Jones does not own a Ford, but is at present driving a rented car. And secondly, by the sheerest coincidence, and entirely unknown to Smith, the place mentioned in proposition (h) happens really to be the place where Brown is. If these two conditions hold then Smith does not know that (h) is true, even though (i)(h) is true, (ii) Smith does believe that (h) is true, and (iii) Smith is justified in believing that (h) is true.

6. Vid Graham Dawson "Justified True Belief is Knowledge"


10. Ibid., p. 12. Ibid., p. 12.

10. Ibid., pp.102-103.

11. Chisholm in fact states specifically this fact when he states, "we may say that the things in question [what is believed or known] are propositions."(p.5)
12. The position taken here obviously can be linked to the "intrinsic validity" doctrine of Advaita Vedanta and others. It is amazing that such a strong point of controversy as the "extrinsic" vs. "intrinsic" validity debate in Indian philosophy went relatively unnotice in western philosophical discussions. One can only point out that in like fashion, the a priori/a posteriori and synthetic/analytic distinctions in the west were not directly identified or debated in India.

13. The obvious exception to this assumption is the case of an original thinker. Consider Christopher Columbus, Albert Einstein, or Galileo where they resist accepted dogma and eventually the world adopted their position. Truth is swayed from one position to another because it becomes clear that the later position is correct and the earlier position is false. One might object that it appears odd to say that the proposition, "the earth is round in shape" was not true until it became conventional. But this is not exactly the point I am making. Rather, I am saying that one cannot know the earth is round until either it is socially accepted or one has grounds for knowing it to be the case. As in the cases of original thinkers above, the latter requirement sets the way for the former.

14. It should be noted that the position adopted here is in opposition to that adopted by A.J. Ayer (pp.14-26) where he states that "knowing does not consist in being in a special
state of mind." Ayer's adopting (presumably) the first position in our example, argues that if one were to say of someone that he is in a state of knowledge and merely describe his condition of mind, it does not entail that there is anything which he knows. From the fact that someone is convinced that something is true, it does not follow logically that it is true.

Ayer, here, fails to appreciate that there are two elements operative in the knowing process. There is the internal, conscious state of knowing, and there is the communal truth dependent classification of knowledge. Generally these two elements are in agreement, but occasionally, they are in opposition to each other: (i) in the case of "new" truth (e.g., Christopher Columbus, Albert Einstein) where an individual's knowledge is right, and is set against the error of public knowledge, or (ii) in the case of "thinking to know" where an individual is certain of the truth of his "knowledge" (though wrong) while all others know the falsehood of his thinking.
CHAPTER THREE

In the first two chapters, an effort was made to determine the epistemological status of liberative knowledge as viewed within the context of the JTB theory of knowledge. As a result, liberative knowledge failed to satisfy the JTB conditions for knowledge. It was decided to investigate further and assess the adequacy of the JTB theory itself. Unfortunately, the adopted JTB theory of knowledge proved problematic in several areas. Consequently, this chapter must deal with the question: On the basis of what criteria shall one determine the epistemic content (or lack of it) of liberative knowledge?

The intent of my critique of the JTB theory last chapter was first to uncover its shortcomings, but then to suggest possible modifications to overcome these weaknesses. As an aid to the construction process, it has been suggested that a careful examination of Advaita epistemology might prove fruitful. This suggestion is based on two assumptions: (i) a foreign or independent philosophical tradition often treats philosophical issues in ways quite distinct from one's own tradition, thus, bringing fresh approaches to old problems; and (ii) as the Advaita tradition grans paramount spiritual/epistemological significance to liberative experience, one can assume they have attempted to place liberative knowledge within their epistemological schema.
It is unlikely that such an endeavor should result in a total abandonment of our familiar JTB theory and a complete embrace of Advaita epistemology; however, such a healthy exposure to foreign ideas could prove useful, particularly given that the formulation of liberative knowledge utilized in this study is taken from that tradition.

Identification of the Sanskrit term(s) for knowledge

Thus far in this discussion, the Sanskrit word "jñāna" has been used principally as the Sanskrit correlate to the English word "knowledge." While this simple formulation was suitable for our introductory remarks, a more detailed (accurate) explication is now warranted.

Actually there are a number of Sanskrit terms translated as "knowledge," though the two most prevalent are "jñāna" and "pramā," with "pramāṇya," a related term, usually being translated as "truth." A jñāna is most accurately rendered as an "awareness."1 Jñāna denotes a variety of conscious occurrences ranging from precognitive raw sense data, to doubt, inference, false cognition, true awareness or understanding of something, to pure nondual consciousness as found in liberation. Obviously, a number of these awarenesses--particularly the false or doubting sort--could
not be accurately translated as "knowledge." Consequently, "awareness" is a more accurate rendering with its broader epistemic connotations.

Prama is far closer to our western notion of "knowledge" than jñāna. It is also an awareness, but an awareness qualified by the properties of pramāṇya 'truth' and niścaya 'certainty and/or ascertaining'. Prama is intentional in form, having a content (visaya) and (unlike some jñānas), prama is not accompanied by a feeling of doubt or confusion, one is certain regarding the truth of the content of one's prama. There is a group of terms that accompany the Sanskrit term prama. In the Brahmāsūtrabhāṣya (I.i.iv.), Śaṅkara remarks that knowledge (pramaṇa) is attained through the means to knowledge (pramāṇajanya) which have existing things as their objects (yathābhūtavisaya), knowledge thus depends on existing thing (vastutantra) for its content.

As is usually put forward in Indian epistemological discussions, there is a knower (pramāṇaṭṛ) who through some means to knowledge (pramāṇa) gains knowledge (prama) about an object of knowledge (prameya). A key point of controversy amongst the schools of Indian thought centers on the number and nature of pramāṇas, though Śaṅkara himself is not concerned directly with this controversy and in his writings simply assumes they exist—at least the basic pramāṇas of perception (pratyakṣa), inference (anumāna), and scripture or testimony (śabda).^2
It is interesting to note that Śaṃkara and other Advaitins prefer to use jñāna over pramāṇa. This can be explained by the added width of meaning that jñāna provides. It denotes both mundane and liberative knowledge, whereas pramāṇa denotes only facts about the world. It must be emphasized that for Śaṃkara "worldly knowledge" plays an important function in the quest for liberation.

Śaṃkara felt it necessary to distinguish between erroneous jñāna and correct jñāna within the pragmatic sphere in order to establish the rightness of the Advaita position. For if Śaṃkara were to bluntly state that all human understanding (before liberation) was indistinguishable from error, then he would have no intellectual basis (i.e., pramāṇas 'means to knowledge' and tarka 'reasoning') upon which to argue for his nondual doctrine of Brahman. Śaṃkara's focus throughout his writings was to show, nay convince his audience of the folly of their understanding regarding the nature of the world and their own selves, and to provide a way to attain liberation. In carrying out this task, Śaṃkara refers both to the "jñāna" of true (worldly) judgement about the world and one's self and the "jñāna" that consists in liberation. The former usage is a cognitive, discursive viewpoint while the latter usage is a noncognitive, nondual state of being. It is sometimes confusing which "jñāna" Śaṃkara is speaking about in his writings, but from the context this equivocation in usage is generally resolved.
Explication of prāmāṇya 'truth'

A final term which we must look at is what we usually translate as "truth." While prāmāṇya most closely translates to the English word "truth," there are some differences which should become apparent as we proceed. Indian philosophers have split in regards to the nature of prāmāṇya, but the principals divide into two camps, the adherents to svataḥ 'intrinsic' prāmāṇya and the adherents to parataḥ 'extrinsic' prāmāṇya. Basically, the supporters of intrinsic validity argue that the truth of awareness is concurrent with the origin of the awareness itself; the supporters of extrinsic validity argue that the truth of the awareness is ascertained only at a later time after the awareness has arisen. Advaita Vedānta opts for intrinsic validity, though there is some variance on the definition of prāmāṇya, itself.

The set or most common definition of prāmāṇya offered, states that prāmāṇya possess (i) an uncontradictory character (abādhitatvam) and originality (anadhistvatvam). Some later Advaita philosophers abandoned these conditions on the grounds that originality requires reflection and comparison which could not be ascertained at the initial instant, ab initio, that the awareness arises. Uncontradictoriness, similarly, presents problems in that while we may be able to determine uncontradictedness" at the
time of the original awareness, we have no assurance that there will be no contradictions in the future. Thus, "uncontradicted character" is not a sufficient condition for pramāṇya.3

Generally speaking, a principal concern for an Advaitin type of philosopher, who holds that knowledge is grasped ab initio, is to not reduce his account of pramāṇya to a purely psychological account in which truth has no reference to reality. As falsity for Advaita is said to be gained extrinsically (paratahāpramāṇya)—where an awareness is rendered false when a later awareness demonstrates its falsehood—truth (being gained intrinsically) takes on an extremely tentative character. That is, truth becomes at best a hypothesis, an initial personal opinion or impression. There is no collective or objective element in the determination of truth.

As a result of this dissatisfaction with the traditional definition of pramāṇya, several later Advaita philosophers have offered new definitions of pramāṇya. Gaudabrahmānandi suggests as a replacement to the uncontradictory character criterion, that a pramāṇya possesses the "property of possessing knowledge of anything which has not been known to be false."4 Here an apprehension is known to be certain ab initio, not merely by the fact that it doesn't appear to be "contradicted" by something else, but because "it does not appear to be false." Every instance of knowledge then
carries an auxiliary awareness of its own truth. Yet, in evaluating this suggested definition, one must observe that this definition is plagued by the same difficulties raised against the criterion of uncontradictory character, namely, that this sense of knowledge does not prohibit the possibility that later extrinsic information might demonstrate that one's "knowledge" is in fact false, thus it was not knowledge at all, but a mere awareness.

Vivarana, another Advaita philosopher, formulates prāmaṇya as "the capacity of manifesting (its) object as being intrinsic to knowledge." This definition appears to resemble the western correspondence theory of truth in the sense that the object of knowledge is somehow "manifested" or "mirrored" by the knowledge state. Yet this definition does not have the element of "correct correspondence" that the western account utilizes. That is, both knowledge and false apprehension "manifest their object," so this definition provides neither a solution to the problem of extrinsic devaluation nor an adequate means to distinguish truth from falsehood ab initio.

Thus, neither definition appears effective. Gaudabrahmanandi's definition of "not known to be false" is simply a verbal equivalence to "uncontradicted character," and does little to arrest this fundamental problem. Vivarana's definition is unsuccessful in distinguishing
falsehood from truth either *ab initio* or through extrinsic assessment.

A further definition offered by a later Advaitin is given by Madhusūdan Sarasvati. He defines truth as *ajñanatārthanāścayātmakatvameva* 'the property of being a certain apprehension of an object which was previously unknown'. Prima facie, this definition may seem also to apply to false apprehensions as well true ones. That is, an erroneous apprehension also involves an apprehension (though imagined) of an object that was previously unknown. Madhusūdan is aware of this objection and responds that an erroneous apprehension exists only when it is being perceived and thus it has no unknown existence (*ajñatasattā*) prior to its apprehension. The point here is that for there to be a *prāmāṇya*, one must discover a previously unknown object and as there is no previously unknown object in an erroneous apprehension, it can't be a *prāmāṇya*.

In reply to Madhusūdan's response it can be argued further that nevertheless, the object of an erroneous apprehension still exists during that period of misinformation, and thus is still a new or previously unknown object to the observer: it is only after the error is realized that it ceases to be a "previously unknown object." Madhusūdan's way of warding off such a reply is to point out that the "object" of an erroneous apprehension possess only a *pratibhāsika* "apparent" being, it "exists"
only while it is being experienced; consequently, by denying it the ontological status of an "object of apprehension," it cannot be a "previously unknown object." Madhusūdan holds that in the case involving someone who first thinks he knows something to be true and later discovers he was in error, the agent didn't really know, but had only a jñānabhāsa 'pseudo knowledge' that he mistook for true knowledge. 7

So as to accommodate his distinction between knowledge and pseudo knowledge, Madhusūdan must further modify the definition of jñānatva 'quality of being a jñāna' to pramatva 'quality of being a prama'; consequently, erroneous apprehension is said to lack the quality of jñānatva. 8 Thus, a false apprehension, contrary to the traditional definition of jñānatva, is not a species of knowledge according to Madhusūdan. By so defining knowledge, it follows analytically that truth is intrinsic to knowledge; for if falsehood is by definition not knowledge, then only a true apprehension is knowledge. This is not simply a semantic convention but a basic epistemological principle whereby one must give "pseudo knowledge" a separate and devalued status below true knowledge.

By way of a general appraisal of Madhusūdan's definition of truth, several points can be raised. Against his definition of ajñanatārthaniścayātmakatvameva it must be remarked that it appears to be ad hoc in origin, that it was produced to answer or overcome the sort of objection that
has been raised. While this in itself is not problematic, one often finds that ad hoc definitions, while they may answer or resolve specific objections, seldom do an adequate job in their principal function, i.e., providing a working definition/description of the definiendum. While truth/knowledge no doubt involves a "certain apprehension," the condition of "an object which was previously unknown" appears to be spurious. This part of the definition rules out the possibility of knowing something twice. For example, I can take a geometry class in high school and memorize a set of axioms which I come to know in order to pass my final exam. Five years later—having subsequently forgotten them—I could learn them again in a college geometry class; yet, according to Madhusūdan I wouldn't know these axioms the second time because they weren't "previously unknown."

Secondly, this definition is vacuous in the sense that it gives no indication of how one obtains a certain apprehension about the object of knowledge. The correspondence, coherence, and pragmatic theories of truth in contrast all imply specific criteria in their definitions that serve to determine truth from falsehood.

Finally, Madhusūdan's choice to define jñānatva in terms of pramātva and visversa also suffers from vacuity as well as an obvious circularity. If what I know is what is true and what is true is what is known, how am I to establish
either truth or knowledge. This circularity makes the 
forementioned definitions of jñānatva and pramātva vacuous, 
as we are not provided any explicit criteria to use inorder 
to identify instances of knowledge.

By focusing upon these later Advaitins the reader may get 
the impression that the Advaita school was uncertain about 
the nature of truth or pramānya. In fact, the opposite 
holds true as most Advaitins were content with the two 
conditions of abādhitatva 'uncontradictory character' and 
anadhigatatvam 'originality'. Given their commitment to 
"intrinsic validity," some later Advaitins did become 
concerned with the "instability" of knowledge that the 
"uncontradictory character" criterion provided. While all 
Advaitins accepted that all worldly knowledge is to be 
sublated (bādha) by liberative knowledge, when it arises, 
nevertheless, worldly knowledge, and particularly the 
philosophical tenets of the Advaita school, must be 
established as true and certain, and not some mere momentary hypothesis.

Even though eventually there must be a categorical 
sublation of all worldly (conceptual) knowledge by 
liberative knowledge, worldly knowledge still possesses a 
high degree of autonomy and stability—otherwise the 
correctness of Advaita philosophy could not be established. 
In reference to the worldly domain, Advaitins were moderate 
realists who recognized the importance and necessity of
accurate facts about the world. There was nothing arbitrary or capricious about knowledge and truth; it is for this reason that Advaitins were particularly anxious to establish that truth gained ab initio, concurrent with the knowing awareness, was genuinely veracious, and not a momentary hypothesis or opinion that would usually later be discarded as erroneous. The purpose of the preceding discussion of the later Advaita definitions of prāmāṇya, was to emphasize this concern and consider some of the attempts to ease this concern. Of particular importance to our discussion is Madhusūdan's distinctions between "knowledge-pseudo-knowledge" and "object-apparent object" which parallels and embellishes upon our distinction between "knowing" and "thinking one knows."

**Doctrine of two truths**

Thus far we have been considering Advaitin epistemology which is concerned with worldly or mundane knowledge. But what of liberative knowledge? Advaita philosophers attempt to construct a conceptual relation between worldly and liberative knowledge through the use of the doctrine of two truths. Utilizing a distinction first discussed in the Upanisads (i.e., Mundaka Upanisad), later adopted and developed by Mahāyāna Buddhists, and then by Gaudapada, Śaṅkara distinguishes between an "ultimate" or "final" point
of view (paramārthika) and a "worldly" or "pragmatic" point of view (vyāvahārika). Accordingly there is a corresponding kind of truth on each level, liberative truth (para or tattvika prāmāṇya) on the ultimate level and empirical truth (apara or vyāvahārika prāmāṇya) on the worldly level. The strategy adopted here is to segregate liberative knowledge apart from worldly knowledge.

Advaita epistemology and metaphysics attempts to establish a bifurcation between the apparent reality found in the world and that which is revealed to those who have gained liberation. From the level of Brahman or liberation, all linguistic and conceptual constructs are nonexistent. Thus, any conceptualization or verbal expression given to explain or describe Brahman is not taken from or attained on the ultimate level. In contrast, the worldly level of existence is populated by a multiplicity of material objects and conceptual and verbal constructs all of which are based in ignorance, a cosmic ignorance or illusion that all beings existing in this worldly realm experience. Truth, then, found on the level of Brahman is nonlinguistic, nonconceptual, nondual, and impersonal. The only sense that may link our worldly truth with such ultimate truth, is that liberation contains pure consciousness (cit), consciousness that is not tainted by ignorance, illusion, diversity, or confusion; it experiences existence "purely" as it is truly. While there is no knower and known, we can project that such an existence is aware, not in the sense of a perceiving,
thinking, suffering being, but a being aware of its own existence.

Throughout the Advaita literature, the world of ignorance is frequently portrayed as a source of entertainment for this pure consciousness. This in fact becomes one of the "explanations" of why this world of illusion exists. Śaṅkara holds that, "the activity of Īśvara (God) can be supposed to be mere sport (līlā) issuing from his own nature, without pertaining to a purpose." Another account, linked back to Vedic discussion, portrays God as a master magician who creates the illusion of the world as his trick. Though the magician (God) himself is not fooled, there exists the illusion caused by the magical power (māyā) of the magician.

One must keep in mind when hearing these accounts, that Īśvara, Himself, is a part of the illusion of the manifest existence. Ultimately, there is only the undifferentiated Brahman. Perhaps one could say that though the magician is not fooled by His illusion of the appearance of the world, He remains ignorant of (or at least powerless to) the fact that He too is only the first stage of manifestation of a larger illusion.

The relationship between Brahman and the world of illusion continued to be a topic of concern for Advaita philosophers. Eventually, many later philosophers gave up attempting to explain it and conceded to its mystery, holding that it was anirvacanīya 'indescribable'. Concerns
over related topics of where illusion (māyā) or ignorance (avidyā) resides, in Brahman or the world, whether there is one Self (ātman) or multiple Selves, one worldly self (jīva) or many, eventually lead to a fundamental split in the Advaita tradition over doctrine resulting in the Bhamati and Vivarana schools of Advaita. However, of central importance to our discussion, is the fact that Advaita attempted to incorporate liberative knowledge into their general doctrines of metaphysics and epistemology, by creating a doctrine of two truths which acknowledges two realms of reality and types of knowledge.

Analysis of western and Advaita epistemology

It is incumbent upon us now to attempt to work through the problems raised earlier with the hope that this analysis may lead us closer to the goals set up in the beginning of this work. Let us begin by jointly surveying the various points of strength and weakness in the JTB and Advaita epistemological accounts.

Levels of truth and liberative knowledge

The fundamental question of this dissertation is, how
does one determine the epistemological status of liberation? For the Advaitin, this question might better be stated, can one determine the epistemological status of liberative knowledge? That is, as our concept for truth and knowledge are derived from our awareness of worldly objects, it is questionable whether their criteria have application to objects outside the domain of worldly existence. If someone alleges the existence of a phenomenon that is beyond worldly conception, perception, and existence, how can someone possibly hope to determine its existence and/or nature using the worldly based conceptions and perceptions?

It is important to note that this restricted condition applies to all aspects of worldly reference to such an entity. While we are ostensibly barred from making judgements about the actual existence and experience of Brahman, we also cannot make any judgements about worldly knowledge based on the knowledge conditions associated with Brahman. So what status, then, are we to ascribe to statements about Brahman, liberative experience, and liberative knowledge? Are such propositions to have no epistemic significance, carrying the same value as nonsense or fiction?

Obviously, there is much to be lost by the Advaita philosopher if his statements about Brahman and the "true nature of existence" are to be denied to him because this realm cannot be discussed coherently conceptually. While
the Advaitin will agree that ultimately all concepts, words, and arguments are illusory, he still wishes to grant some worldly epistemic worth to talk about Brahman, as he chooses to still identify two levels of truth. As stated in Chapter One, Śaṅkara wishes to hold that though from an ultimate point of view worldly discourse and truth is illusory, on the mundane, practical level, Advaita philosophical doctrine is true and other conflicting philosophical positions are mistaken. For Śaṅkara, this position can be established through the use of the Advaita doctrine of bāḍha 'sublation or contradiction.10

The doctrine of bāḍha 'sublation'

Sublation (or abāḍha 'unsublation' as it is also identified) functions as the Advaita criteria of truth, i.e., we can know something to be true if it is not sublated or shown to be erroneous by other things known. For most Advaitins (other than the later Advaita philosophers mentioned earlier), what is true (real) is that which is not sublated. We maintain an awareness of something as true unless it is sublated (shown to be erroneous) by a subsequent awareness. Here we hold a to be the case and if later it is contradicted by other facts, b, c, d then eventually on the basis of these latter facts which contradicted a, we replace a with new knowledge, e, which is
not contradicted by $b$, $c$, or $d$. The world is viewed as a contained set of truths or facts ($prama$) and falsehoods ($aprama$), and it is through the agency of sublation that we eventually distinguish falsehood from truth.

If after examining the philosophy of Advaita and other philosophies, one finds that the other philosophies are sublated or proved erroneous by known facts about the world whereas Advaita philosophy remains unshaken, then, Advaita is shown to be superior to other philosophical accounts. This is seen to be accomplished by the fact that this knowledge of Brahman is immune to sublation because it has sublated all other knowledge and as such there is no other knowledge left to sublate it. After a careful analysis of the workings of the world (and for the Indians, the accepted Vedic literature as well) one should be lead to the conclusion that as Brahman is the only thing which is real and only knowledge of Brahman is true, all worldly knowledge about states of affairs in the world are false (from the standpoint of Brahman); as such, there is literally no other knowledge left to sublate liberative knowledge. This can be seen as established quite independent of its connection with the experience of liberation, though this final inference could bring on a liberative experience or at least a strong incentive to quest after liberation.

On another interpretation or level of perspective, one can also say that Brahman-knowledge (i.e., the actual
experience of Brahman) will sublate all other theories as erroneous due to the fact that one now "sees" them as based on illusory concepts. Technically this is spoken of as trikālābādhyatva 'absolute unsublateability' and yields the tattvikaprāmāṇya 'ultimate truth' of Brahman, which cannot be apprehended by normal means. One unfortunate side-effect of this perspective is that the tenets of Advaita philosophy also must be discarded as ignorance-latent doctrine even though they may resemble (approximate) most closely of all verbal expression, the true nature of Brahman. But this consequence is quite consistent with Advaita doctrine, for if Brahman, ultimately, is the sole reality, then all words (including Advaita texts) must be discarded as illusory.

Whether the initially mentioned philosophical "proof" of the veracity of Advaita philosophy actually exists will have to be determined by each individual through the examination of the arguments found in Advaita texts and commentaries to see if de facto the illusory nature of the world has been established and the existence of such an ultimate entity as Brahman has been established. In regards to the criteria of abādha 'unsublation', this will prove effective in establishing the supremacy of Brahman-knowledge if all other doctrines have been demonstrated to be erroneous (sublated) through Advaita argumentation.

As for the latter sense of "unsublateability," Śaṅkara and other Advaitins have never made an argument based on
liberative experience--i.e., because he, Śamkara, has attained liberation, it follows that worldly knowledge is sublated. While it may be the case for one having such an experience, that mundane knowledge is sublated, one cannot convince others of this fact simply on the grounds that one ostensibly has had such an experience.

Observations toward a revised theory of knowledge

To put aside for a moment our investigation of liberative knowledge, some effort is necessary to resolve some of the concerns raised against the JTB theory and the pramāṇya account of truth. In the preceding discussion, we have seen how the doctrine of sublation can be quite effective as a criterion for truth. The reason why some of the later Advaitin philosophers chose to disregard abādhitatvam 'uncontradictory or unsublated character' as a definition of pramāṇa is because it could not provide us with any assurance that what we presently regard as true would not be sublated in the future.

A recurring objection raised against Advaita by holders of the paratah pramāṇa 'extrinsic validity' theory of truth is that the intrinsic validity theory renders truth too tentative and that it fails to distinguish properly between truth and falsehood. Many of the things we hold to be true and think that we know are actually false, which we will
come to realize later through "extrinsic" information added to our original impression. A distinction made by Madhusudan between "pseudo-knowledge" and "knowledge" would do much to resolve this concern when applied in conjunction with a prevalent theme in western thought regarding the relative nature of truth and knowledge (e.g., W.V.O. Quine, Karl R. Popper, C.S. Peirce).

Consider for example the formulation of truth found in C.S. Peirce and C.I. Lewis' theory of induction, i.e., induction is a self-correcting process. By this they mean that any conclusion is subject to correction by another conclusion in the process of empirical sampling. One inductive conclusion corrects another as one typically rejects a previous conclusion in favor of a new and better conclusion. Eventually Peirce believed that scientists would reach a plateau of general agreement on most disputed issue through this evolving process.

In contrast, Popper's view of falsifiability denies Peirce's latter optimistic tendency, as he contends that we as a reasoning body can ever hope to attain knowledge (epistēmē) nor for that matter truth, we can only make educated guesses. One begins with a formulation of a hypothesis, a creative exercise of the imagination, and then look for falsifying instances that might refute it. Obviously, the more detailed and specific a hypothesis, the
more falsifiable it is, subject to a greater chance of being refuted. 13

Such "realistic" or "relativistic" accounts of truth and knowledge (which was reflected earlier in Chisholm's definition of "evidence" as "less that absolute certainty") give more credibility to the criteria of unsublation. Perhaps the Indian philosophers (like our own at the same period of time) were seeking certainty (i.e., certainty amongst relative knowledge not withstanding the rise of liberative knowledge) when none really existed in the mundane realm. One cannot hope to find that current scientific theories, observations about the world, or personal perceptions are free from possible sublation with the influx of new data. Madhusūdan's position, that we often entertain "pseudo-knowledge" until it is later corrected reflects this fact. We hold one thing to be true and continue to do so until it is sublated, discarded, and replaced by a new knowledge.

One might loosely link this Advaita notion of sublation with the JTB criteria of justification in the sense that we feel that a certain state of affairs is true because we know it is not contradicted or sublated by any other fact (i.e., we possess evidence of its veracity). Further, this criteria appears to be consonant with the coherence theory of truth, as one is aware that what one knows does not violate and is not violated by other known facts. However,
there does not appear to be any correlation to the JTB condition of belief.

Initially, one can observe that there is no close Sanskrit word for "belief" used in Indian epistemological discussions. The two words most commonly translated as "belief" in Sanskrit literature, mati and pratyaya, differ from our usage of "belief in that they lack the dispositional nature of belief, in addition they connote a higher degree of certainty than found in our concept of "belief". These words are closer to our notion of "thought" or "idea. "Yet one need not construe this absence of an Indian correlate to "belief" as problematic, as "belief" was shown to be inappropriate to a formulation of knowledge in our earlier critique of JTB.

A further concern in JTB can be raised regarding the absence of the condition of truth in "moral knowing." While we have a feeling of certainty or conviction regarding the correctness of the moral principles we adopt, these principles (according to most philosophers) do not possess a truth function. As such, given the JTB conditions for knowledge, one cannot know a moral principle. In the next chapter, I will systematically adumbrate eleven commonly, recognized modes of knowing which exhibit distinct knowledge conditions and criteria—including many modalities (such as "moral knowing") which cannot be accounted for by the JTB theory of knowledge.
NOTES

1. We are here following the convention suggested first by Karl H. Potter. His most recent discussion of this preferred translation is found in his article, "Does Indian Epistemology Concern Justified True Belief?" Journal of Indian Philosophy vol.12, no.4 (Dordrechi: D. Reidel Co.,1984) pp.307-327.

2. Later Advaita philosophers following Dharmarājādhvarīndra (16th Century) accepted six pramanās which in addition to the three just given also include comparison (upamana), non-cognition (anupalabdhī), and postulation (arthāpatti).


4. Ibid. as quoted in Mohanty, p.16.


7. Ibid. p.19.

8. Ibid.
9. B.S.B. II.1.33.

10. Bādha, which comes from the Sanskrit root bādh, literally means to cancel, to disturb, to dispell, and is usually translated as contradict or sublate.

11. The reader should note that this Advaita distinction mirrors closely our earlier distinction between the internal, conscious state of knowing, and the communal dependent classification of knowledge. We will discuss these distinctions in greater detail in Chapter Five.


13. Vid. Karl R. Popper, The Logic of Scientific Discovery (New York: Harper & Row, 1959). It should be noted that Śaṃkara would disagree with Popper and Peirce's position regarding the nature of the acquisition of knowledge on several points. To use Indian terminology, Advaita advocates svatah prāmaṇya 'intrinsic validity' whereas Peirce, Lewis, and Popper appear to accept pratah prāmaṇya 'extrinsic validity'. Remember that for Śaṃkara the causal conditions which give rise to an awareness, also give rise to the truth of that awareness. When a subject \( S \) becomes aware of \( x \), \( S \) simultaneously is aware that \( x \) is true, that \( x \) is in fact the case. It is not the case that \( S \) experiences
and only later—through additional data \( y \)—holds \( x \) to be true.

In contrast the extrinsic validity view holds that truth is attained only after \( \beta \) has experienced \( x \) and in conjunction with \( y \) and perhaps other factor(s) \( z \), concludes that \( x \) is true. Whereas intrinsic validity is a spontaneous, immediate means to truth, extrinsic validity is a reflective, mediate, deliberative process. The point of agreement between Śāṃkara and Peirce/Popper is found in their mutual acceptance of what Indians call paratah apramāṇya 'extrinsic invalidity': falsity is to be known from causal conditions distinct from those which gave rise to awareness. Put in terms of the criterion of unsublatedness, we can say that any awareness is true unless sublated (i.e., corrected) by a subsequent awareness. Logically, this entails that an awareness should be subject to further sublation should another experience prove the original awareness wrong or illusory. Śāṃkara and Popper/Peirce would part company further in the acceptance of a final or ultimate truth or reality (i.e., Brahman) in that neither western philosopher would accept such an entity. Though Peirce and Lewis accept a final "resting place" where some sort of universally accepted knowledge about nature will be reached, this agreement amongst scientists would still be on the relative or practical level of knowledge for Śāṃkara.
Secondly, Śaṅkara and other Advaita exponents, as pointed out earlier, would not accept the conventional or hypothetical nature of worldly knowledge as portrayed by these two positions. While all worldly knowledge is ultimately to be usurped by liberative knowledge, within its own sphere worldly knowledge can attain a relative unshakeable status. Again the realists tendencies of Śaṅkara would not allow all worldly knowledge to be reduced to such a purely pragmatic, conventional status.
In the previous chapters, I have supported the thesis that there are a number of distinct ways in which we know; further, it has been contented that several of these modes of knowing extend beyond the domain of knowing delimited by the JTB theory of knowledge. In this chapter I shall attempt to articulate in greater detail some of these manners in which we know and argue that though several of these modes of knowing do not satisfy the JTB conditions for knowing, they are widely accepted as modes of knowing and should be recognized as constituting a knowing state. Concurrently, I shall argue that not only is there no comprehensive definition of knowledge, but there are no set criteria for knowing. Discussing knowledge in general we can observe only that all modes of knowing involve (a) sincerity on the part of the knower and (b) certainty or a state of doubtlessness regarding some state of affairs.\textsuperscript{1} These two attitudes, of course, are not sufficient conditions for knowing as a broad range of mental states would satisfy these conditions as well. In addition an instance of knowing must possess additional condition(s) pertinent to one of of the sorted modalities of knowing. For each mode of knowing exhibits distinct criteria that each instance of that particular mode of knowing must satisfy--this is the principal means whereby one can distinguish one mode of knowing from another. To illustrate
how these various conditions come into play when using these different modes of knowing, the following two examples are given.

Consider the case of observing a painting. We commonly speak of studying a painting, critiquing a painting, being taken with a painting, being moved by a painting, and so forth, all of which allude to distinct ways in which we interact with a painting. One can observe that these linguistic expressions correlate to the many ways that we may experience (know) it. We may come to know the painting factually, discovering who painted the painting, when it was painted, where it was painted, who has owned the painting, the painting's physical dimensions, what object or situation the painting is attempting to portray, etc. Or, we can know the painting in a theoretical sense whereby we determine the style of the painting (e.g., impressionist, realist, etc.), how the paints were mixed to achieve certain color hues, we can list chemicals found in the paint, and so forth. Further, we can glean certain practical insights from the painting such as noting the effects of brush stroke usages employed in the painting, or how the painting might be employed therapeutically to lesson various psychological pathologies. We can also know a painting aesthetically whereby we are able to assimilate the power and truth embodied in the painting. In the latter, we are engaged in a qualitative appreciation of the painting as a whole.
Each of these manners of knowing demands from the knower distinct intellectual, sensual, emotional, and/or spiritual sensitivities and faculties. To know (theoretically) the chemical composition of the paints used in the painting requires a certain intellectual background in chemistry on the part of the knower as well as certain experimental skills in determining the identity of these chemicals, whereas to perceive the painting aesthetically involves the knower emotionally and spiritually in an assimilation of the aesthetic truth exhibited to the observer from the painting. Obviously, the conditions necessary for the theoretical knowing of the painting differ radically from those conditions found in the knowing of the painting through aesthetic sensitivities. Consider now a quite different example involving the perception of an event.

Jones observes Adams dart out in front of an approaching bus and tackle Smith's son, Fred, moving him out of the way of a bus's path. One obvious way that Jones may perceive this action is to come to know it as an action of extremely high moral significance as one individual risked his life for another. Yet, Jones may merely perceive Adam's act factually, an event in which one moves another out of the way of an approaching bus. On a theoretical or scientific level, Jones may wish to perceive the event in terms of its temporal probabilities of success vs. failure, or speculate on the stress put on Adam's leg and arm muscles in completing his action. Jones, further, may look at Adam's
leap practically, determining if Adam's movements were the most efficient means in which he could have tackled and moved a person from one location to another.

In this case, as in the first, we can distinguish several different manners in which we can come to know something. Jones may have observed the events coldly, noting in a factual manner all the specific details that transpired in Adam's action. To determine whether Jones (factually) knows what happened we might check with other eyewitnesses of the event. We could also determine, given Jones's location during the event, whether Jones was physically capable of observing the event.

In contrast, Jones can know of Adam's action in terms of its moral content, as he might hold Adam's act to be of great moral significance. Here the conditions or criteria relevant for Jones's factually knowing the event are not central to his morally knowing Adam's act. Instead, the existence and plausibility of Jones's moral sensitivities come into question. Further, we can ask questions about Adam's motivation and the results of his action. It could be the case that Adams knew that Smith was extremely wealthy and did his action purely with the hope for earning a handsome reward from Smith. Or maybe Adams severely crimped Fred Smith when he tackled him and in all probability the bus would have swerved away to miss the child anyway. In either case, the moral significance of
Adam's act could be dismissed and Jones's moral knowledge of Adam's act would undergo modification if not complete denial. However, neither of the latter considerations would have relevance in determining Jones's factual knowledge of Adam's act. In addition, it maybe the case that Jones is incapable of moral sentiments (a fact often alleged about certain hardened criminals) and if we consider only criteria applicable to factual knowing, we could never determine whether Jones knows Adam's act in a moral manner.

From these two examples several points can be noted. First, there are a number of ways in which we come to know an object or event. Yet, we at any one time may know an event or object in several manners of knowing concurrently. Take the case of the lifesaving action, we can imagine that one may be aware of the moral aspects of the act at the same time that one is knowledgeable of the practical efficacy of the action. Obviously, without factual knowledge of the event, Jones could not morally know the act. Further, one mode of knowing may enhance or influence another manner of knowing as for example a theoretical understanding of an action (in our second case, just how close Adams came to death), may cause a modification in Jones's moral perception of the act by increasing the moral significance of Adam's act within his perspective.

Secondly, it can be observed that the different manners in which we know elicit different qualities in the knower.
Obviously when we know something in a factual or theoretical fashion, we do not call upon the kind of sensitivities and/or emotions that are elicited when we know the moral significance of an act.

Thirdly, the criteria or conditions required for one mode of knowing differs from other modes of knowing. While factual or theoretical knowing may lend themselves to verification or intersubjective checking by other known facts, instances of moral or aesthetic knowing may not. Yet this fact in no way lessons the significance or reliability of these latter modes of knowing. Consider also that the conditions to be satisfied in order to be an instance of aesthetic knowing in terms of sensitivities and perceptions are quite different from the conditions required for an instance of factual knowing.

It can be added that with the occurrence of liberative knowing, a rather distinct situation occurs. Due to the radical transformation that occurs in the agent, all the modes of knowing that he may experience about some phenomenon are accompanied or overshadowed by the "perspective" of liberative knowing. That is, liberation dispells the ignorance-based conceptual scheme of a manifold world to be known; consequently, all later knowing occurrences by the jīvanmukta 'embodied liberated person' are qualified as being illusory in constitution. Liberative knowing, once it has arisen, coexists with all other
conscious occurrences such as knowing, until the body drops off (i.e., death).

So as to map out in a more detailed fashion exactly what is the nature and conditional requirements found in some of these modes of knowing, it is incumbent upon this study to examine systematically a selected sampling of some of the familiar manners of knowing. It has been suggested that each mode of knowing connotes distinct conditions, consequently requiring distinct criteria for membership. A useful discussion of each modality should include the following: (i) a general discription of its identifying features; (ii) how each mode of knowing is gained; (iii) the specific linguistic expressions (if any) that are used to denote it; (iv) whether it occurs in either subjective or objective forms. (This will usually be specified within section iii.); and, (v) the criteria which each occurrence must satisfy.

I. Factual knowing

Factual knowing is structured in our perception of the phenomenal world. We have a complex, interrelated, evolving web of knowledge that is fundamental to our interreaction and survival in the world. But it is more than just an "awareness" as for example doubt would also be considered an awareness of some state of affairs; knowing exhibits a
feeling of certainty and confidence that what is known is correct or true.

Under the classification of factual knowing, one can include all observations of the world, our conceptual awareness of the objects and events that make it up, as well as the apperceptions of all inner states or events that make up our feelings, emotions, and pains. In contrast to what I shall call theoretical knowing, factual knowing is a less rational and reflective state; factual knowing is a process of perceiving the basic data of experience.

Factual knowing is gained in two ways. First, it can be arrived at from what is directly perceived (corporal or incorporeal, mental or physical), it is taken from "the given" of experience. This immediate knowing is a knowing of things, we are directly acquainted with the objects of perception (and apperception). Secondly, factual knowing can be gained indirectly, through testimony or a reliable source. In regards to events that occur when we are not personally present, we must accept the word of a reliable witness or news agency that was present to observe the event.

Factual knowing is expressed in many linguistic forms though the expression "know that" is the most common. In what follows I will specify the linguistic form and then give an example. I will provide both subjective and objective examples under each form when applicable.
Subjective knowing is distinguished from objective knowing in that the former is purely an internal phenomenon with no direct perceptual access by other agents.

(a) know that

He knows that this apple is red.
I know that I see a paper before me.

(b) wh-forms

(i) She knows how beavers build their dens.
   (No subjective occurrences with "how.")
(ii) I know why Mary is mad at Sue.
    I know why I'm scared of heights.
(iii) They know where the money is buried.
     Do you know where the pain is hurting?
(iv) Jack knows when she will arrive.
    I know when I've eaten too much.
(v) He knows what his duties are.
    I know what it feels like to be cold.

(c) know + noun construction

I know Ronald Reagan personally.
I know my intentions were honorable.

(d) know about

He was the first person to know about the pope's death.

(No subjective occurrences in this formulation.)
A person can be said to know factually if: (i) he possesses certainty regarding the truth or correctness of what he knows; (ii) his knowing is derived from a direct encounter with some phenomenon; and (iii) there is a general agreement that what he knows is true. This third condition is subject to exception in a number of instances. Subjective knowing by definition cannot be checked or supported by intersubjective confirmation. There are some cases where a pain can be supported though processes such as x-ray, thermophotography, deformation, etc. This physiological corollary to some alleged pain does not give us a referent to what the pain "feels like," but it does offer support to a person's claim that he is experiencing pain—we have some grounds, some evidence registered that directly correlates with what the person is suggesting he is experiencing. Additionally, instances occur where epistemic convention is in the wrong and an individual is in the right (e.g., Christopher Columbus, Albert Einstein) and it is only later when vindicated, that he is recognized as possessing knowledge.

II. Theoretical knowing

Theoretical knowing is a derived form of knowing as it is knowing built upon previously known facts gained through
either direct or indirect acquaintance with objects. Knowing theoretically is a process of constructing a hypothesis and then challenging this hypothesis to see if it holds up to all applicable cases. The subject matter of theoretical knowing consists of generalizations, theories, and rules or principles that describe the nature of objects in an abstract fashion. The applied and social sciences, mathematics, and logic are disciplines utilizing theoretical knowing. In addition to the forementioned process of scientific discovery, theoretical knowing can be gained indirectly through testimony or a reliable source. Here, as no one person is an expert in every field, we must accept the truth of statements by a generally recognized authority when they pertain to the area of his specialization.

One can observe a "symbiotic" relationship between factual and theoretical knowing. Theoretical knowing is dependent on factual knowing for its basic data to analyze, but the discoveries of theoretical knowing are fed back into the general outlook and interpretive or corrective perspective utilized in factual knowing. There is, further, a hierarchy existing between factual and theoretical knowing, ranging from those facts most central to our conceptual understanding of the world, to those facts that have the least to do with the basic structure of our knowing. At the top of this pyramid of knowing lies the prevailing scientific and mathematical laws; the next strata of knowledge consists of the rest of our particular and
general applications of these laws as well as specific factual observations about the world are to be found. Quine makes this sort of distinction, distinguishing between statements closer to or further from the "periphery of the field of experience." When we encounter a recalcitrant experience we generally come to accept it through a process of reevaluation of the periphery facts within the system, causing a minimum of distress to our total system or network.²

Consider the case of a man who appears to lose some of his money. In the morning he checks his wallet and sees five one dollar bills in it. Later that day he spends three dollars on train fares getting back and forth to work. Yet that evening when he checks his wallet he finds only one dollar left. To explain this inconsistency, our traveler is not likely to doubt the truth of 2+3=5; rather, he will try to find fault with either his money handling skills or even whether he actually had five dollars to start with, e.g., perhaps he counted one bill twice in the morning.

Theoretical knowing such as found in science and mathematics is more immune to the daily alterations in our network of knowing than the empirical facts gained through factual knowing; yet, as in cases such as Einstein superseding Newtonian physics, or Kepler over Ptoleman astronomy, or Darwianism replacing Aristotelian natural science, science is subject to change too, though of a more
radical and less frequent sort. Like factual knowing, theoretical knowing is also expressed in many linguistic forms though the expression "know that" is the most common. Due to its "objective" or "theoretical" nature, there are no subjective theoretical knowing forms. Consider the following.

(a) know that
   He knows that 2+2=4.

(b) wh-forms
   (i) She knows how earthquakes occur.
   (ii) I know why birds fly south in the fall.
   (iii) They know where blackholes are formed.
   (iv) Mr. Jones knows when Newtonian physics ceases to be accurate.
   (v) He knows what is the mass of a helium atom.

(c) know + noun construction
   I know Rawl's theory of justice.

(d) know about
   He knows about Plato's theory of forms.

A person can be said to have theoretical knowing if:
(i) he possess certainty regarding the truth or correctness of what he knows; (ii) his knowing is derived from an account
of factual or other mode of knowing; and (iii) there is a general agreement that what he knows is true.

III. Analytic knowing

This mode of knowing arises out of conceptual or linguistic definitions. Analytic knowing is about tautologies that merely express what is already specified in a concept's definition. As such, they exhibit complete certainty, the proposition it expresses is incorrigible.

Analytic knowing is gained through the adoption of sorted conceptual conventions prevalent in one's society or amongst a scientific community. When one learns a word, one has adopted its usage and characteristics. In recent times Quine and others have attacked the plausibility of analytic knowing on the grounds that one cannot provide adequate definitions of what it means to be analytic and also working criteria for determining what is analytically true. The usual use of "synonymity" is problematic because it too defies accurate description. While the usual example of "a bachelor is an unmarried man" intuitively appears to grant absolute certainty, other cases are not as clear. For this reason I have limited analytic knowing to a rather barren and philosophically uninteresting set of propositions. These are sometimes called "logical truths." Consider the examples given below. There are no subjective formulations.
(a) know that
I know that an unmarried male is unmarried.

(b) wh-forms
It is possible to construct propositions using "how," "why," "where," "when," and "what" but their actual usage is even more unlikely than the proposition given above.

(c) know + noun construction
I know an apple is an apple.

(d) There is no cases of know about.

The criteria for analytic knowing is the same as that of theoretical knowing with the addition that there is the stronger feeling of certainty, i.e., absolute certainty, due to the tautological structure of the proposition known. It can be argued that this sort of mental construct is no knowing at all as nothing new is acknowledged. In response, one can justifiably point out that this is not true, as there is an identity statement being recognized. Nevertheless, as admitted at the outset, analytic knowing—at least as I've defined it—is extremely barren of interesting content.
IV. Situational knowing

Situational knowing is concerned with a complex, interrelated cluster of data. It is knowing of a complex situation, condition, or multiplex phenomenon. One might wish to view situational knowing as a special subset of factual knowing because like factual knowing it is directed toward facts about objects, situations, and mental/somatic states. However, like several of the other modes of knowing to follow, it is due to their special or unique nature that we must treat each separately. The criteria and definitions differ enough to warrant individualized treatment when analyzing each mode of knowing.

One gains situational knowing through a synthesis of facts originating from other modes of knowing as well as other instances of situational knowing. To better understand how it differs from other modes of knowing, let us consider a couple of examples.

(1) I know there is a need for improvement.

In this proposition, the object of knowing is not a specific object or fact; instead, there is a complex union of facts that constitute a situation known to the agent. One has an appreciation of a deficiency here but one might not have a clear understanding of what is causings the problem much less any solutions. What is known manifests in
the form of a general feeling about some state of affairs. While factual or theoretical knowing can also be about a complex theory or fact, they are always about a tangible, distinct, immediate phenomenon.

(2) I know Beethoven's 5th symphony.

This proposition contains a pregnant sense of "know" whereby one knows more than the introductory passage, or the length of time it usually takes to perform it, or the year it was composed by Beethoven (all of which would be factual knowing); rather, one knows an interconnected cluster of things about this music, its amounts to knowing it in a very full and enriched fashion that cannot be linked to various individual facts. Besides commanding assorted facts about the piece, one knows the emotional impression it instills within one, the feelings that the composer ostensibly was attempting to convey to the listener. This sense of knowing cannot be reduced to a simple list of facts about this piece of music.

This mode of knowing occurs almost exclusively in (c) "know + noun construction" formulations as witnessed in the two examples given. I cannot think of any cases involving (a) or (b) formulations. Only in (d) "know about" may a few cases exist, as: He knows about the nature of these back hills like no other man alive. Though subjective situational knowing is certainly possible (e.g., I know my
feelings toward this country will never change.) it is considerably more rare than in factual knowing.

The criteria for situational knowing are not as easily specified as in the previous three modes. Again the initial two criteria for factual knowing still hold but with something additional added. The third criteria involves this unique accomplishment of maintaining a complex—even at times contradictory—appreciation of assorted facts, feelings, and/or intuitions about some phenomenon.

V. Practical Knowing

Practical knowing is knowing which is directly related to some activity, principle, or procedure that enables one to perform a potential or real task. It is gained through any of the forementioned means—direct, indirect, or derived. There are no subjective formulations in its linguistic expression. Its most common expression is "how + infinitive."

(a) Know that does not occur in practical knowing.

(b) wh-forms + infinitive

(i) I know how to change a flat tire.
(ii) I know where to go to purchase tickets.
(iii) He knows what to say to get past the guard.
(iv) They know when to pick up the guests.
(v) I know why your car has stalled.

(c) know + noun construction does not occur.
(d) know about

I know about completing tax forms.

In the past most philosophers have identified practical knowing syntactically, namely, with the "know how + infinitive" construct. But as the above statements clearly demonstrate, practical knowing is expressed in more than one synatical form and thus, we must look for propositions denoting practical knowing on semantical grounds as well. This involves an intuitive distinction whereby one gleans certain fundamental elements inherent in practical knowing--knowing of principles, skills, procedures necessary to be able potentially or actually to accomplish some activity directly or through someone else--within the statement itself. Propositions that convey the subject's knowledge of some such ability are about practical knowing.

The criteria for practical knowing are (a) certainty about the utility or effectiveness of some practical-based procedure; (b) a feeling of confidence that one understands adequately a practical-based procedure for some activity and could apply it if necessary either personally or by directing someone else. Finally, there must be some common acceptance or potential acceptance of this procedure. This may amount to nothing more than a successful enactment of one's knowledge on some activity.
VI. Somatic Knowing

In contrast to other modes of knowing thus far discussed, somatic knowing could most accurately be described as a noncognitive knowing. Here, we are not engaged in cogitation of a particular object or event, but rather we are utilizing a bodily capacity or skill to perform a specific task. The most obvious sorts of cases are riding a bicycle or swimming. With somatic knowing, mastery and employment of the skill (knowledge) necessitates the release of any cognitive participation in the action. It most resembles practical knowledge in these cases, though it differs from it in that it is not a cognitive knowledge of how to do something, but is a noncognitive capacity of the body to perform a particular task. There is no intention in this account to adopt some mind-body dualism: my reference to "body" and "somatic" as the principal agency connotes only that there is a psycho-physical complex responsible for the mastery and execution of some learned capacity and this action is completed without any cognitive orchestration.

Somatic knowing should not be delimited merely to sports activities. There is one sense of somatic knowing in which the agent masters a particular skill or mechanical activity. Besides developing certain athletic abilities, e.g., bike riding, ice skating, tumbling, one can also witness this
capacity in every day activities, such as driving an automobile with a standard transmission or using a typewriter. Rhythmic activities such as dancing, playing a piano, or manual factory work can also be included. Unique to these cases of knowing is the way in which the knowledge is exhibited. Though one is first taught such an activity by consciously proceeding through a connected series of actions, actual performance of the task is done automatically, without cognitive participation, as cogitation at this stage would interfere with the activity.

A second type of somatic knowing involves a process of recognition. For example, when I place my hand on a hot stove, I immediately jerk my arm back before I consciously react with a cry of pain. Here I had a non-cognitive awareness or knowing of my misfortune before I became consciously aware of this state of distress. I reacted to the burn situation prior to my actual conscious awareness of it. In a less dramatic case, recognition of a person can be accomplished through a simple touch or brush against them. Consider the case where Brown is in a crowded pitch-dark room and he bumps into his wife. Brown recognizes (knows) her identity without consciously surveying her anatomy by touch. A grasping of her arm, and Brown somatically knows it is her.

In cases of this sort, we instantly know someone's identity by their unique "feel" which we have grown
accustomed to and without reference to other sensory input. It is not simply the substitution of tactical sensory data in the place of visual data as one's recognition is instantaneous and noncognitive. The fact that one does not jump away from the other person as one would with a stranger devulges one's somatic awareness of their identity.

A third way of knowing somatically deals with a special or refined sense of touch that provides the knower with a specific knowledge that is gained through tactual clues. As an example, Ayurveda doctors in India claim to be able to diagnosis a patient's ailment by simply feeling a patient's wrist. This is not only feeling the person's pulse, but identifying certain alleged sensual clues that the Ayurveda doctor is trained to perceive that would go unnoticed by the novice. The diagnosis is known or discovered by the doctor not by listing and analyzing these specific clues, but it "comes" to him in an intuitive or "finalized version" in which after touching the wrist he knows the ailment without a cognitive appreciation of the specific clues that lead to this awareness.

While the efficacy or legitimacy of this type of analysis may be questioned, the epistemic process still remains unique. Other more obvious examples include a banker's ability to count bill by flipping through stacks of money or a farmer's sensitivity to the feel of soil. While these latter somatic encounters may be more cognitive than the
earlier examples, still the initial tactual impressions cannot be reduced to a set of cognitive observations.

This somatic mode of knowing arises or is engaged by a direct tactual encounter with a physical situation. While this skill or capacity can be taught to one by another, the actual knowing state or process must be encountered personally. We frequently report our somatic knowing experiences to others, though it, in itself, is non-cognitive in nature. One can infer or verify another's somatic knowing by witnessing his successful use of it, though personal knowledge reports take the subjective form. As somatic knowing is noncognitive, verbal accounts are approximations of the knowing experience. Consider the following verbal constructs.

(a) know that
He knows that Sue is a diabetic.
I know that this person is my daughter even though I can't see her.

(b) wh-forms
(i) Do you know how to type?
   I know how to pole vault.
(ii) I know why Jim is sick after having held his wrist.
   I know why this soil is not good for growing
potatoes.

(iii) He knows where your pain is located without having to ask you.
I discovered where Eve is standing in this dark room after I bumped into her.

(iv) Mr. Brown knows when there is a shortage in a stack of dollar bills.
I know when to downshift without having to think about it.

(v) He knows what is the cause of Mr. Jones's dizziness.
I know what silk feels like, and can identify it without looking.

(c) know + noun construction
He knows this man suffers from cancer by feeling his wrist.
I know the art of proper archery.

(d) know about
He was the first person to know about the pope's ailment.
I know about bobsleding.
Obviously, many of the instances of somatic knowing denoted by these propositions can only be recognized within the context of which they are stated. A person can be said to know somatically if (i) he possesses confidence in the performance of an action or certainty regarding some state of affairs; (ii) there is a general acceptance regarding what is known or agreement that one has mastered the skill; and (iii) one knows or can perform this sort of action in the forementioned noncognitive fashion.

VII. Moral Knowing

This mode of knowing involves the knower in employing concomitant sentiments and values in the knowing process which determine the moral appropriateness or inappropriateness of actions. This includes not only a knowledge of what one "should" or "ought" to do, but an appreciation of the moral significance of a particular event or set of actions. While we do speak of a "moral person" or "morally conscious person," we morally know such a person in reference to his actions, intentions, and moral sentiments. The moral sense that is acknowledged here has often been spoken of as a faculty of our consciousness which allows us to distinguish between what is morally right or wrong. As specified within the contemporary framework of morals, one finds concepts of duty, freedom, rights, privacy, choice,
self, and legality summoned in shaping the feelings, beliefs, and sentiments that deliver our moral knowing.

Not all actions lend themselves to moral knowing, as there must be elements inherent in an action that associate with human values, principles, freedoms, or liberties. Obviously, it is unlikely that a simple act such as brushing one's teeth or signing one's name can be known in a moral sense. Yet, as discussed earlier, many actions can be known morally in addition to factual, theoretical, practical knowing, etc. Moral knowing can be distinguished from these other modes of knowing due to its orientation toward the event, the evoking of certain moral sensibilities that enable the knower to perceive the event in the forementioned moral sense.

As to where one gains moral knowing, it is argued both that it is learned socially or that it is instinctually based; in our discussion I will adopt neither explanation as correct over the other. It shall suffice to merely mention that most people appear to possess a certain set of values, beliefs, attitudes, biases that influence our action and that we claim knowledge of. This mode of knowing occurs in only a few of the linguistic forms and then usually with the addition of a modal operator. There are no subjective formulations.

(a) know that

I know that I should be kind to others.
(b) **wh-forms**

(i) I know how I ought to behave around the clergy.
(ii) He knows why one should not lie to one's elders.
(iii) I know where to draw the line on euthanasia.
(figurative use only)
(iv) She knows when destroying a fetus becomes murder.
(v) Do you know what a good Christian should do?

(c) **know + noun construction**

They know man should treat the land with more care.

(d) There are no instances of "know about."

Moral knowledge occurs when (a) an individual has certainty—often a total conviction—that what he knows is right; (b) there is agreement or an established convention—be it social, religious, professional, etc.—that the individual is committed to in some fashion and (c) an individual observes and interprets or conceives some event in the light of his moral sensitivities.

**VIII. Intuitional Knowing**

The word "intuition" like "mysticism" suffers from gross variance in usage. One can trace one use of "intuition" from the medieval philosophers who used the term principally to denote sensory input through Descartes, Spinoza, Locke, and Kant. Eventually, the term referred to a kind of
primitive "raw" sense data perceived prior to the process of conceptualization, whereby the "categories of judgement" are added to these intuitions. Out of this use of the term developed the original thinking of Henri Bergson, who contrasted "intuition" with "intellect" as two distinct capacities that exist in man. In his, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, Bergson characterizes intellect as that faculty which approaches the thing to be known externally from a point of view distant from the thing itself using symbols to express what it finds, yielding a knowing that is relative; the process of intuition, by contrast, is described as "entering into" the thing, i.e., we identify ourselves with the object by what is described as an "intellectual sympathy"—much in the same way in which we might vicariously identify ourselves with a character in a novel. Intuition uses no symbols, and the knowledge attained is absolute and perfect. Bergson states, "All analysis is...a translation, a development into symbols....[B]ut intuition...is a simple act...[in which one attempts] to coincide with what is unique in it [the object] and consequently inexpressible."  

This intuition, which I shall call "intuitional knowing," then, is an act, or series of acts, of direct participation in the immediacy of experience. Intuitive knowing is an immediate cognition of a dynamic reality (unknown to intellectual understanding), which is always straining toward the future, it is a living reality in a continuous
process of change. For Bergson, intuitive knowing is the source of metaphysics.

Intuitive knowing can be accomplished only by making an effort to detach oneself from the demands of action, it is a process of immersing oneself in a direct awareness of an object, leaving the conceptions of the intellect behind. As this "inverting" process is a "deprogramming" activity in which one frees oneself of the constraints of concepts and words, intuitive knowing does not lend itself well to verbal expression. Though Bergson at times employs metaphors to express "fluid concepts" inherent in intuitive knowing, these are at best approximations. His discussions are principally of a negative character stressing the stiff, distorted nature of scientific discourse. While one can presumably express these "approximations" subjectively or objectively, that which is to be expressed (i.e., reality), can only be known intuitively, not discursively. The concepts of the intellect are unable to communicate it.

Presumably intuitive knowing can be "approximated" through various linguistic constructions (objective or subjective form), but this again is not a true rendering of it. As such, there is no point in formulating statements demonstrating the various "inaccurate" verbal renderings of intuitive knowing. From the statements provided above, one should get an adequate feeling for the kind of verbal expression intuitive knowledge is formulated in.6
IX. Aesthetic Knowing

This mode of knowing denotes the "aesthetic experience," it is the human capacity to realize the "truth" manifest in a piece of artwork. While some have argued that there is no special "aesthetic attitude" or "aesthetic experience," I will assume within this section that such an unique conscious activity occurs. This mode of knowing is distinct from other modes in its use of particular aesthetic sensitivities in beholding the art work. Principally these sensitivities are responsible for one's ability to appreciate the truth of being or spirit summoned in artwork. It is an assimilation of the power and truth embodied in art. It most closely resembles intuitive knowing, though it differs in its exclusive focus upon expressed art rather than natural phenomenon, and thus on the expressed truth unique to an aesthetic encounter. In his book, On Truth: An Ontological Theory, Eliot Deutsch states that "a work of art is an object for consciousness and is experienced by assimilation (of its aesthetic force), recognition (of its inherent significance), and discernment (of its beauty); the three together form a single process of experience which culminates in a self-appropriation or realization of the self's own spirituality." Let's expand on his meaning here.

When we see or appropriate an object aesthetically--i.e., utilizing the aesthetic attitude--we are not merely
perceiving (i.e., visually, audibly, etc.) the object, shifting from one quality of the object to the next seeking what catches our interest; instead, we are engaged in a qualitative appreciation of the object as a whole. Each authentic piece of art projects or communicates to the viewer a force or power (spiritual or aesthetic energy) that moves him/her emotionally, intellectually, or spiritually. The inherent force or significance in a piece of art is to be recognized rather than known conceptually. This recognition is a mode of knowing characterized by "immediacy and qualitative discrimination," quite distinct from discursive or rational thinking. As Deutsch defines recognition, it is "...to see mentally that a work has realized possibilities that it itself has given rise to, that the work has been brought to an appropriate conclusion and is exhibiting the process by which that conclusion was achieved." In this aesthetic appropriation we discern the "play of colors, lines, shapes, and rhythms as they at once have their own integrity and contribute to the work as a formal gestalt."9

When someone knows a piece of artwork, he recognizes the truth that inheres in the creation. Like its inherent significance or meaning, a work's "truth" is its completeness or consumation of all its potentialities. Each work of art possess its own essential character, what is right for it to be, given its facticity; it is "true" when it completes this essential character. To know any work of
art is to recognize aesthetically its inherent force or truth.

Aesthetic knowing is intrinsically an internal subjective experience that does not lend to easy intersubjective appreciation and verification as with factual knowledge. (This is not to say that two or more people can't have the same aesthetic knowledge, which actually is the case.) It is an immediate encounter that cannot be fully related to another.

It can be reported in propositional formulations, though its reporting does not fully report the nature of this knowledge. Clues in the form of content or explicit identification should distinguish reports of aesthetic knowing from other modes of knowing as was the case also with intuitive and somatic knowing. Further, it does not occur in subjective form. Aesthetic knowing resembles situational knowing in that both involve a remote or sophisticated observation about a phenomenon. The difference between them centers on the fact that aesthetic knowledge focuses exclusively on the aesthetic authenticity of a piece of art whereas situational knowledge (as related also to a piece of art) is more diffused and encompassing in content. Situational knowing can contain aesthetic knowledge as part of its complex content as was the case in the example of some one knowing Beethoven's 5th symphony given in the discussion of situational knowing. Like
situational knowing, aesthetic knowing occurs only in the (c) and (d) linguistic formulations. Here are examples of each, though examples of aesthetic knowing (as defined above) generally do not use the verb "know" as the expression "to know a piece of art" connotes a factual knowing of it rather than an aesthetic appreciation of it; consequently, other verbs must denote its occurrence.

(c) know + noun construction

I have an aesthetic appreciation of Henry Fuseli's painting "The Nightmare."

(d) know about

I know about this statue in regards to the artistic truth it embodies.

The criteria for aesthetic knowing consists of (a) certainty regarding the truth immanent within the art work; (b) the art is indeed artistically authentic and one has recognized this artistic force and truth; and (c) the art work is at least potentially capable of being aesthetically appreciated as true by others. This last criteria is not necessary but usually is involved. The exception to its participation would be the case where the artist creates the work and it is destroyed before others can observe it.
X. Theocentric Knowing

Nearly all basic studies of mysticism choose to distinguish between theistic and monistic forms of mysticism. Advaita Vedānta, itself, distinguishes two types of Brahman experience corresponding to two conceptions of modes of Brahman. Brahman without qualities or nirguna Brahman is the "object" of nirvikalpa 'conceptionless' samādhi--what we have called liberative knowing. Brahman with qualities or saguna Brahman is the object of savikalpa 'conceptual' samādhi. It is the latter knowing experience of qualified Brahman which I shall call "theocentric knowing."

While it may appear odd to use the teachings of a principally monistic school of philosophy as one's paradigm upon which to define one's account of theistic mysticism, in actuality, the Advaita account proves quite satisfactory. Though some theistic traditions may wish to modify the ontological and soteriological presuppositions inherent in the descriptions provided by Śaṅkara and others Advaitins, the basic Advaita account of theocentric knowing appears to embody the principal tenets central in the various theistic accounts. In addition, since Advaita is utilized in describing both "mystical experiences" (i.e., liberative and theocentric knowing), it will be relatively easy to contrast their differences and similarities.
The most obvious way to contrast theocentric and liberative knowing is to note that in theocentric knowing mental, modifications (vṛttis) are still present, whereas in liberative knowing, they are not. Since theocentric knowing possesses a content (i.e., qualified Brahman) in the knower's consciousness, he must engage in some activity, namely, a mental modification.

According to Advaita, Brahman invested with qualities is Īśvara (God). He is "lower Brahman" limited by māyā 'cosmic illusion'. Brahman, in this form, then, becomes the object of worship and bestower of grace. Worship of Him insures the devotee of the attainment of Brahma 'the abode or heaven of Brahma'; but also, worship eventually leads to direct experience of Īśvara or theocentric experience. And finally, according to Advaita, Īśvara, through His grace, bestows upon the devotee liberative knowledge of unqualified Brahman. The path of devotion leading to theocentric knowledge is regarded as gradual release (kramamukti), whereas liberative knowledge brings about immediate release (sadyomukti). Obviously for the Advaitins, then, liberative knowledge is superior to theocentric knowledge--though the theistic schools would vehemently disagree.

The distinctive feature of theocentric knowing is that it consists of knowledge generated concurrently with the intimate experience of God in which the knower remains separate or distinct from the object. Yet this mode of
knowing remains (multiply) distinct from the other modes of knowledge previously discussed in that it is nonperceptual, transcendent, and not open to cross-reference with other modes of knowing and experience.

One gains theocentric knowing through a theocentric experience of God which was brought on by a combined effort of worship, devote lifestyle, meditation, and other spiritual practices. Theocentric knowing is an introverted, extremely personal communion with God. Words fail to adequately portray the divine nature of God which is discovered in the theocentric experience. Nevertheless, verbal accounts are given which "approximate" the knowledge gained. But as such an experience is quite humbling, aspirants often choose to phrase their observations in an abstract, third person form rather than in a first person narrative. As God is conceived as a cosmic being existing independent of ourselves, statements are in the objective form only. Below are possible verbal constructs which attempt to "approximate" the content of theocentric knowledge.

(a) **know that**
   One knows that God exists when one "sees" Him.

(b) **wh-forms**
   (i) Our guru knows how it feels to be in the Presence of God.
   (ii) For a person who has experienced God directly,
he knows why God is held to be pure love itself.

(iii) She knows where God resides, for she resides there also.

(iv) We know when God is ready to receive us, i.e., at all times.

(v) I know what God desires, He desires us to meet Him as I have done.

(c) know + noun construction

One knows Ṣvāra, when one has "seen" Him directly.

(d) know about

They know about the ways of God by the same way that they have come to know about the ways of their guru.

In reviewing these statements, it should be stressed again that it is often the case that a person who undergoes this sort of experience does not speak in the first person form. Thus, a proper understanding of these generalized statements must be determined from the context in which it is given. The criteria one must rely upon for determining whether a person has had a theocentric experience are given in scripture and testimony alone. One must read sorted passages in scripture and listen to accepted authorities (i.e., spiritual teachers) to learn the (verbalized) characteristics of theocentric knowing. If someone gives an account of his experiences, one must check his account against accepted descriptions of theocentric knowing. However, as there is no sure way to determine whether
someone really had such an experience or is merely lying to deceive one.

If one has such an experience oneself, then the textual accounts can serve as an external check to verify to oneself that one's experience was a genuine theocentric experience. But given the majestic and powerful nature of the experience itself, the concern is (generally) not whether one has experienced a supreme being, but how one's knowing experience fits within a list or hierarchy of stages of mystic states.

XI. Liberative Knowing

As much of the first and third chapters were devoted to describing what liberative knowledge is, little can be added here, so I will just summarize key points made earlier. Liberative knowing is a spiritual awakening, a coming to truth about the nature of existence. It is noncognitive, as the distinction between knower and known is removed. Liberative knowing differs from the other ten modes of knowing in that there is a radical transformation within the knower himself. The other ten modes of knowing are involved in transitory, temporal observations about assorted phenomena. Liberative knowing is not directed toward any thing, it is rather a shift in the whole of existence. Soteriologically, it is the release from transmigration and the "merging" with Brahman (ultimate, non-dual reality). It
is due to these qualities that Advaita philosophers have drawn a qualitative distinction between liberative knowing and worldly knowing. Here I wish to consider liberative knowing as the eleventh mode of knowing, though it should be viewed as qualitatively distinct from the other modes adumbrated previously. It is qualitatively distinct due to the fact that it is not one mode coexisting as an alternative knowing modality, but a single modality which when experienced sublates all other modes of knowing. As a result, liberative knowing is continually present, as it "accompanies" all further occurrences of the other modes of knowing, disvaluing their significance.

Liberative knowing is classified as a form of knowing because it possesses the fundamental character of knowledge, namely, awareness containing certainty. Actually, liberation is best described in terms of "doubtlessness" as the positive connotations of "certainty" entail some sort of cognitive activity. Liberative knowing is not gained, nor is it based on any sensory means to knowledge, rather it occurs perpetually. Through rigorous preparations of study, modification of activity, and meditation, liberative knowing occurs within the aspirant. Further, the distinction between subjective/objective modes have no application because there is no subject/object distinction. Brahman is the sole "content" of liberative knowing, thus there can be no words or sentences to express it. However, because of the leśavidya 'trace of ignorance' that allows one
who possess liberative knowing to continue to function in
the world, he can make (inaccurate) references to the nature
of this knowledge. Consider the following examples keeping
in mind that a liberated man never speaks of his own
liberation in a first person manner.

(a) know that
From liberation, one knows that Brahman is the sole
reality.

(b) wh-forms
(i) She knows how the world of particulars appears
to those in ignorance.
(ii) A liberated man knows why there is suffering
in the world.
(iii) He knows where Brahman abides.
(iv) He knows when transmigratory existence ceases,
i.e., when liberative knowledge is attained.
(v) They know what is the cause of transmigratory
existence.

(c) know + noun construction
She knows Brahman directly.

(d) know about
A liberated man knows about the true nature of
existence.

We must emphasize again that there is no linguistic content
in liberative knowing. The propositions above are evocative
statements or suggestive approximations about liberative
knowing as constructed within the conceptual framework of an ignorance-formed mind.

So what then are the criteria for liberative knowing? Solely, one must undergo the liberative experience as specified in Advaita Vedānta texts. The usual criteria of certainty, epistemic acceptance, and obligation/commitment are satisfied (or nullified depending on how one views the condition) by the very nature of the liberative experience/knowing itself. As liberative knowing is a totally personal, "internal" occurrence (transformation), it is difficult to accurately determine who possesses it.

Traditionally, one is said to be able to judge whether a person is liberated by observing his actions and what he says. It is said that the surest way to know of another's liberated state is through a prolonged stay with such a person. Such a person's mannerisms, personal stability, thoughtfulness, kindness, and general radiance of character and charisma manifest his liberated state. However this sort of factual knowing about a person's state of consciousness can in some cases be mistaken due to clever actors or con men and great care in such appraisals has been urged. (This factor or condition of authority will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five.) To the person himself who has undergone the liberative experience, knowledge of its occurrence and character are of course not
subject to doubt as by its very nature, it has no possibility of future dismissal.

Discussion of taxonomy

Thus ends the adumbration of the eleven modes of knowing, a listing of eleven often recognized ways in which we know. This taxonomy was undertaken to demonstrate two things: (a) that there are a number of distinct ways in which we know and each must be evaluated autonomously; and (b) liberative knowing like other modes of knowing should be recognized as a unique mode of knowing and be treated under its own criteria. The overarching point of this analysis is that though there are certain common qualities inherent in all modes of knowing, each mode of knowing is distinct and we cannot apply one set of criteria applicable to a particular mode of knowing to an entirely different mode of knowing for which it was not intended. In the past philosophers and theologians have attempted to apply the criteria of knowledge applicable to factual and theoretical knowing (within the context of the JTB theory) to all modes of knowing including liberative knowing. The end result as witnessed in Chapter Two is an easy dismissal of liberative knowing (as well as presumably all forms of mystical knowing) as either nonsense or religious belief.
One philosopher who was aware of this sort of "categorical mistake" was Ludwig Wittenstein. Wittenstein held that we often employ different "language games" depending on what we are speaking about. He points out that, for example, when we are expressing religious belief we are operating within a different language game than when we are conducting philosophical analysis. Therefore, it is useless to attempt to philosophically or scientifically support or attack statement of religious doctrine based on belief.

This sort of categorical mistake is analogous to attempting to use one definition of a word where one should use a different definition. Consider the word "product." In one instance a "product" is the number obtained by multiplying two or more numbers together; in another instance, a product can be something produced by industry, nature, or art. Imagine the confusion if one spoke of the multiplication product in the context of a business meeting or the absurdity of conducting a mathematical discussion and using "product" as an object of commercial manufacture.

Similarly, the selection of vocabulary and its specific connotations differ from one language game to another. For example, a religious person's use of the word "death" may signify the event in which spirit is disembodied; however, to the scientist, "death" means only the termination of an organic mass and the beginning of a rapid process of decay.
Here each is operating with a different "picture" of what the proposition "He is dead" portrays. Consequently, when a nonreligious person is asked, "Do you think you survive after death? or "Are you skeptical of the notion of a disembodied spirit after death?" all he can say is "I can't say, I don't know." The religious statements given by the religious aspirant are based in a specific linguistic game and as such have no meaning to someone adopting a different linguistic game.

Each user of a language game uses language to express his picture of the world, as the philosopher/scientist and the person of religious belief are expressing different orientations, it is only natural that their language usage, their linguistic game, will contain some elements which are unintelligible to each other. As such, the distinct elements found in each game of language cannot conflict or be contradictory to one another. Scientific propositions are based on empirical evidence whereas religious propositions are based in faith and dogma (and not on evidence)--each are true within their own linguistic game.

Within the context of my discussion, I am speaking of knowledge not belief, and my focus is on modes of knowing and conscious states not on uses of language exclusively. Each mode has its own criteria, its own character that help distinguish it from other modes of knowing. We can know an object in a number of ways. Recall the painting example
discussed at the beginning of this chapter. We can know a painting through aesthetic knowing, through factual knowing, or through situational knowing. Each way of knowing this painting requires of the knower that he accomplish/utilize certain mental operations. When Jones knows the painting factually, he possesses certain facts/theories regarding this painting with a high degree of certainty. To determine whether Jones indeed knows the painting we must see if he possesses certainty regarding certain facts about the painting and if intersubjectively others hold these facts about the painting to be true. If these two conditions are met then we can conclude that Jones knows this fact about the painting.

Yet, this analysis has no bearing on whether Jones appreciates the painting aesthetically. To determine the latter point, we would have to bring a new set of criteria into our analysis. To put it another way, the criteria and analysis for determining factual knowing cannot ascertain the occurrence of aesthetic knowing. The same can be said regarding the analysis for situational, practical, or any other type of knowing about the painting through the employment of the criteria for factual knowing.

We must look at each mode of knowing as distinct from each other mode of knowing and recognize that the criteria that verify and identify each mode can do so only on the particular mode it was formulated to identify and not any
other mode. For though there are overlapping criteria, i.e., sincerity and certainty, amongst all modes of knowing, there is no single set of criteria applicable to one mode that serves as sufficient conditions for another mode of knowing. If this were the case between any two or more modes of knowing, then those modes of knowing would prove to be of the same type and could no longer be distinguished as different modes of knowing.

Sets of identifying criteria are employed in a similar fashion in the use of other conscious states such as beliefs, doubts, disbeliefs, etc. This process is done usually on a precognitive level, in which we recognize the type of conscious state and then the specific mode of the state, identifying its appropriate criteria, ascertaining whether an instance satisfies each criteria in some process of verification. Amazingly, this act of verification is arrived at concurrently with our initial awareness and identification of the conscious type. It is only when confronted with peculiar or borderline cases that we may switch into some careful, step-by-step analysis of that occurrence. This applies both to our awareness of our own conscious state as well as to that state which other people possess.

In the case of knowing, when we see a tree, aesthetically appreciate a statue, comprehend an analytic truth, we do not pause and think "do I know this or not, and if so, in what
sense do I know it,' or think "I know this statue aesthetically;" instead, we merely know something is the case as part of our appreciation, with the confidence and certainty that go along with knowledge. Similarly, when we cognize that someone knows something, we just infer that he knows something by the confidence he exhibits in his actions or speech as well as the content of his actions and words. Usually there is no need to question him personally or others around him on the subject of his knowledge. It is usually the case that we know someone knows something without them stating that they know it. It is only when doubt arises about their knowledge that they choose to confirm verbally their knowing of it.

If I am walking with Brown and we are heading toward Jone's house, I will assume or infer that Brown knows where Jones lives as long as Brown continues in a course appropriate for reaching that destination. (Particularly if the course is complex and we have walked for some time.) However, if suddenly Brown deviates from the course we are following, I might ask, "Don't you know where Jone's lives?" He might respond "yes, but I want to watch the sunset over the ocean first and so am headed to the beach first." Or he might respond, "not really, but I thought it might be reached if we walk in this direction." In the first case I received additional information to continue my (assumed) knowledge of Brown's knowledge regarding the location of Jone's house. In the second case, my inference (knowledge)
regarding Brown's "knowledge" (which never occurred) of John's house was erroneous and is dismissed with the inclusion of the information supplied to me from Jones.

Knowledge is a convenience, a practical tool that is necessary in our dealings with the world. Our account makes knowing a malleable condition that shifts as our education, environment, and needs change. This account, then, takes us full circle back to Plato who held that our perceptions and observations about the world are as unstable as the changing world they reflect. Yet while Plato chose to postulate eternal, unchanging forms to be the object of his (perfect) knowing (episté), and delegated opinion (doxa) to report about worldly objects, I have opted to demote knowing to an imperfect, tainted, shifting awareness of the world that possess some certainty however fleeting. The one exception the Advaitins would argue for, however, is liberative knowing which remains above this world of flux, standing apart by definition from knowing about worldly objects. Its "object" is not changing over time, but remaining constant eternally.
NOTES

1. These two conditions can be explained as follows. It makes no sense to speak of an insincere or joking instance of knowing in which the "knower" knows only in a fraudulent or simulated fashion. The knower must sincerely think that what he knows is the case. This knowing process must also possess certainty on the part of the knower, as certainty is a key quality that separates knowing from believing. Again it is absurd to speak of a knower who is uncertain of whether what he "knows" is the case.


4. In this account we are representing Bergson's thought as expressed in his Introduction to Metaphysics, trans. T.E. Hulme, 2nd rev. ed. (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1955). Bergson, sometime later, modified his doctrine in certain respects. Intuition shifted away from immediacy and came to be seen as possessing more of a cogitative character, a mode of thinking.


6. By way of a generalized note on this account of intuitive knowledge, it can be pointed out that while most people who
speak of knowing intuitively do not have as elaborate an account of intuition as Bergson has developed here, nevertheless, they mean something much like this. Here we are not referring to such phenomena as a "gambler's intuition" (hunch) or a "woman's intuition" (feeling), both of which would not be construed as knowledge. Rather, it is the intuitive or full knowledge one may experience during, say, an extended camping trip or viewing a sunset or scenic view of nature.


10. There is some disagreement amongst later Advaitins over whether there are some mental modifications still existent in liberative knowledge. Sadānanda, for example, holds that there are mental modifications in both theocentric and liberative knowledge. The difference is that in liberative knowledge, there is no consciousness of them. Here there is only the pure consciousness of identity with Brahman with consciousness of subject and object. In contrast, Nṛsimba Sarasvatī and Mahādeva Sarasvatī hold that with liberative knowledge all mental modifications as well as their subconscious impressions (sāṃskāras) are totally destroyed and the mind is transformed into Brahman, i.e., pure
consciousness and bliss. Overall, most Advaita philosophers assume the position that there are no mental modifications in liberative knowledge.

11. B.S.B. III.ii.12.

12. Śaṅkara explains that the appearance of the world and individual identity can be understood in terms of vivartavāda 'the effect's mere appearance'. Though we appear to be in bondage or a state of ignorance and later we attain liberation, actually we are always liberated and we just have the "apparent" perception that we are in an ignorant state. One might compare this shift in perspective to wearing glasses: we often forget or cease to be aware that we are wearing glasses until someone reminds us that we are wearing them.

CHAPTER FIVE

This final chapter will serve not only as a summation and conjunction of the sorted trains of thought developed in previous chapters, but as an expansion upon and consummation of these ideas. Though the relation of liberative knowing to other worldly modes of knowing has been discussed, the epistemological status of liberative knowledge has yet to be fully explicated. Given that liberation constitutes a mode of knowing radically distinct from the other ten worldly modes of knowing, what epistemological status should it be given in relation to the worldly modes of knowing? Does there exist a hierarchy amongst liberative knowing and the other modes of knowing? Chapter Five will be divided into three sections: (i) epistemological discussions about the nature and range of knowledge; (ii) the epistemological status of liberative knowledge; and (iii) future directions of study in mysticism.

I

Summary of epistemological analysis

At the outset of this dissertation I set out to determine the epistemological status of a specific sort of
mystical-based knowledge, which I called "liberative knowledge." Appropriating the JTB theory of knowledge, the theoretical definition of knowledge most Western philosophers adhere to, it was queried whether liberative knowledge satisfied the conditions of the JTB account. Upon examination, liberative knowledge did not satisfy these criteria as specified in the JTB theory. The question was then raised as to whether this failure of liberative knowing to qualified as knowledge is due to the actual nonepistemic character of liberation itself, or is it due to an overly stringent, inaccurate set of criteria given in the JTB theory.

If one were to uncritically chose the latter position and reformulate a definition of knowledge sufficiently broad to accommodate liberative knowing, it could be rightly argued that this formulation is an ad hoc measure devised merely to overcome the nonepistemic classification of liberative knowing by JTB. Thus, if such an investigation is to have merit, it is necessary that one critique the JTB theory in a generalized, objective fashion that would raise questions about its adequacy in relation to all forms of knowledge.

One way to judge the adequacy of a theory is to ascertain whether it adequately describes the phenomenon it is formulated to give an account of. In a theory such as the JTB theory of knowledge, JTB functions as a theoretical definition of knowledge; as such, for it to be an adequate
definition it must be consonant with common usage and recognition of "knowledge." A critique of the JTB, then, must determine if its adequate in accounting for the conscious state of knowing.

The JTB theory was found to be lacking in a number of respects. There are a number of types of conscious occurrences which people generally regard as knowing states, which do not satisfy the criteria for knowledge specified in the JTB theory. These included cases of moral knowing as well as a variety of cases of nonpropositional knowledge involving intuitive apprehensions of nature or oneself, complex emotions, dispositions, or awarenesses, or direct experience of God. Further, the basic conditions of justification, belief, and truth themselves required modification or even possible removal (as in the case of belief) if the JTB theory is to remain plausible. To facilitate this "remodeling process," consideration was given to certain elements of Advaita epistemology.

At least two interesting innovations emerged from this study. First, it was shown to be advantageous to segregate or divide our analysis and characterization of knowledge into two incommensurate levels, knowledge of worldly facts and knowledge of Brahman. Secondly, the doctrine of badha or sublation provides a universal criteria for distinguishing truth from falsehood. Truth, as determined by the sublation criterion, is a tentative, pragmatic
hypothesis, subject to future correction, which complements the current views on truth and knowledge held by Quine, Popper, Peirce, and Lewis.

Knowledge, then, can be seen as a generalized type or genus of consciousness characterized by a feeling of certainty and sincerity. To give a more specific and detailed definition, one must look at the specific criteria applicable to each particular species of knowing. In my analysis I identified eleven modes of knowing.

The World view arising out of the preceding discussions

These observations were generated out of an exploration of the problem of determining the epistemological status of liberative knowledge; they do not, in themselves, constitute a comprehensive epistemological system. One can, however, attempt to construct a world view based on these ideas.

Man possesses an ability to ingest information, absorb and classify it, and then utilize this data as pertinent situations arise. Throughout we perceive a "factual continuum" interlinking all of this information for our subsequent utilization. We perceive ourselves as utilizing a consistent and uniform collection of perceptions. Once constructed and accepted, this world view is conceived as free of contradiction and to be based on uniform standards
and criteria. However, a closer examination of this process reveals a more complex and fragmented conscious state.

Man is perhaps the most adaptive of all creatures, possessing a high level of intelligence which allows him to perceive his environment in great detail and to formulate optional courses of action in response to this sensual input. Our knowledge of the world, our comprehension of its subtleties and the interworkings of its elements, is central to our survival and success in life. The ability to understand cultural concepts, the use of language, reading and writing, arithmetic, basic communication skills—things which most of us take for granted—are crucial for our becoming a functionally literate adult. For anyone who has not mastered any one of these skills, for one reason or another, will be severely handicapped. Consider, for example, the problems we have witnessed in the plight of aliens immigrating into this country in the post-Vietnam era.

In addition, there is much more to human life than mere survival, for man also has spiritual, aesthetic, and intellectual pursuits that elevate him beyond mere subsistence. Given this multifaceted, multilayered existence, any attempt to understand man as a thinking, feeling, responsive and creative creature should respect and at the least acknowledge the existence of these diversified elements in human consciousness. A concerted effort should
be made to identify these different categories of human activity and appraise each uniquely, taking into account its distinctive qualities.

The fundamental concerns of epistemology

A fundamental problem addressed in epistemology is "How do I know x?" To answer this question one must make reference to (a) the means to gaining knowledge and (b) the criteria for judging potential instances of knowledge, a working concept or definition of what knowledge is. Contemporary western philosophical analysis limits the "means" to sensory inputs, i.e., sight, touch, taste, smell, hearing, our interoceptive sense, as well as memory and inference. In reference to the criteria and definition of knowledge, the JTB theory of knowledge is proposed.

When answering the question, "How do I know x?, one must first make reference to the means, e.g., "I see x in front of me." But philosophers, keeping in mind a host of skeptical arguments about the unreliability of sensory data, proceed further with some sort of reductive analyses. These analyses generally have led to stating the truth conditions and/or justification conditions of the concepts and/or propositions involved.

Consider the statement, "I know this is a blossom from a
plumeria tree." According to this account we must identify the truth conditions of "a plumeria blossom," e.g., a specific fragrance, five petals, yellow streaks in the center of each petal with a white or pink background, a poisonous sap of a certain chemical makeup, etc; if the specimen before me satisfies these truth conditions and it can be established that the blossom is indeed in front of me (e.g., persons \( a, b, c \) witness the blossom in my proximity and see me observing it) and I am certain that it satisfies the plumeria truth conditions—then we presumably can conclude that I know there is a plumeria blossom in front of me.¹

A second aspect of western analysis comes under the guise of fundamentalism. The basic tenet of fundamentalism is that there is a pyramiding of knowledge whereby there are "fundamental" basic truths that we use to justify or verify more complicated or peripheral truths. There are elementary facts, a basic knowledge that underlies all other known facts. Each fact or proposition in the lower tiers of the pyramid is justified on the basis of propositions higher on the pyramid. Those propositions highest on the pyramid are considered to be fundamental epistemological data. In the apex region one finds logical truths or principles, mathematical and geometrical axioms, and the laws of physics. There is a high degree of variance amongst philosophers on what status to give these basic facts. Some claim they are incorrigible while others such as Quine hold that while they form the nucleus of our conceptual system
they are still susceptible to replacement with the introduction of the right recalcitrant experience.

To summarize, according to western epistemologists to answer the question "How do I know x?" we must look for the means that lead to knowing x and the criteria that establish that one knows x. This entails that we identify the truth conditions relevant to the statement and its inherent concepts. Ultimately this reduction should lead us to epistemologically basic facts upon which we can build more complex and peripheral facts utilized in these criteria.

My objection against this mode of analysis lies not in the accuracy of its account, but in its scope of relevance. That is, while this schema may be appropriate to several modes of knowledge occurrence, e.g., factual, theoretical, analytic knowing, it is not appropriate for a still wider range of occurrences. One need only consider situational, somatic, intuitive, or aesthetic knowing where many "intangible" factors or conditions are involved, to recognize that it is often not possible to isolate all of the relevant truth conditions. Further, in the knowing process we generally do not find it necessary to specify all the possible truth conditions. If I see a white flower in a tree, I recognize and know it to be a plumeria blossom without the need to go through the kind of reductive analysis outlined above. It is only when a doubt arises or when we are uncertain of the nature and identity of an
entity—as found in scientific inquiry—that such a reductive analysis is enacted. Generally, we function in the world in a much more fluid, spontaneous fashion.

We, as conscious creatures, undergo a myriad of conscious wakeful states including belief, doubt, anguish, knowledge, suspicion, love, hate, pity, etc.; when we undergo an experience, we can, if necessary identify/appreciate it as fitting within the parameters of one of these categories of states of consciousness. For example, when I react to someone's statement with uncertainty, I instantly recognize my feelings as doubt. It is not as if I open a notebook that lists the characteristics of "doubtfulness" and then compare the characteristics of my conscious state with a "master identification list" to see what sort of state I am undergoing. Rather there is an automatic, spontaneous identification process that happens in my consciousness.

Actually, to even refer to this occurrence as a process of identification is to somehow freeze the fluid nature of this process. All that can be observe reflectively, is that one perceives a situation or event and spontaneously react in a way that can later be categorized as "possessing doubt, hate, belief, knowledge, etc." For, it is usually the case that we don't witness some sort of running commentary on our conscious activity. That is, while we are happy or depressed, angry or pleased, certain or doubtful, we don't think "oh yes, now I am happy" or "now I am sad," etc.
Only when we are confronted with a question like, "Are you angry?" do we respond, "Hell yes, I am mad."

Further, within these broad categories such as belief, love, anger there are sorted modalities. Belief in the Existence and Inherent Goodness of God is a different sort of belief than the belief that the Chicago Cubs will win the pennant this year in baseball. Or love for a brother or sister is quite different from that felt for a lover or mate. For among other considerations, we can observe that the latter sort of love urges us toward passion and intercourse for procreation whereas the love for a brother or sister does not.

In the same way, we come to know things in different ways. We are able to apperceive a variety of occasions of knowing and yet because they share certain broad characteristics in addition to a shared "family resemblance" (to employ Wittgenstein's distinction), we act upon them as knowledge. There is a complicated network of criteria which overlap and crisscross over the range of knowing modalities. Our consciousness is able to shift from one set of criteria to the next concurrent with its recognition as to which mode of knowing is operative in each specific situation. Formally, then, we cannot provide one definition or set of necessary conditions which we can expect all instances of knowing to satisfy.
Consider the fact that in the Random House Dictionary of the English Language, there are ten definitions of "knowledge" provided and ten uses of "know" listed. Obviously, there are distinguishing characteristics which enable us to identify which sense of "knowledge" or "know" is meant. These distinguishing characteristics often entail the use of unique criteria in identifying and verifying the occurrence of a particular use of the word "knowledge." Unfortunately, these different uses of the word "know" or "knowledge" do not individually linked up with the different modes of knowing outlined previously, but they are indicative of different meanings of the words and denote distinct conscious occurrences and/or mental-somatic events. This reference to word meaning variance is given as an analogy to modes of knowing. The point is that within the use of the word "knowledge" itself there are a host of distinct meanings or usages that require variations of the word meaning in order to designate these distinct usages of the word "knowledge." It could be argued that no one comprehensive definition of "knowledge" could encompass all these usages.

Actually there is a working appreciation or recognition of the conscious phenomena we denote by the word "knowledge," but this cannot be confined to a set definition. The best we can do is outline the ways in which we know things. We can attempt to catalogue the manners of knowing and provide a collective rendering of knowledge.
This piecemeal approach to epistemology lacks the conciseness and simplicity of the JTB theory, but this account attempts to be more accurate and encompass more of the varied ways people are said to know.

As pointed out earlier one could do a similar type of taxonomy for other central epistemological concepts such as belief, judgement, understanding, and so forth. Such analyses, however, do not determine the ways in which these conscious processes occur or are used, but only document the ways they are already experienced. Human consciousness is indeed a remarkable facility which is able to perceive a situation, analyze/interpret it applying the appropriate matrixes of criteria, and (if warranted) produce an appropriate response all within a fraction of a second. The apparent ease, spontaneity, and ultra speed of this operation is responsible for the impression that there is a simplicity and a uniformity to the criteria of knowledge utilized within consciousness.

This illusion of continuity and uniformity is dispelled only when we pause and engage in critical analysis. It is the contention of this work that any careful unpacking of such a fundamental epistemological term as "knowledge" will reveal a complex net of interrelated yet distinct modes of knowing. To pick but one of these accounts, regardless of how predominant or important its use, results in a lopsided definition of the term at the expense of its other usages.
In past efforts to define "knowledge," by formulating JTB principally as a description of factual and theoretical knowing, one has excluded numerous other modes of knowing.

As an alternative, by recognizing its assorted usages, the collective conventions or myths (to use Quine's terminology) that give the term meaning and existence, one is enabled to reflect a more accurate, "living" account of a term. And if the term changes or takes on additional meanings, such a multiplex definition can be much more easily adapted. Similarly, this flexibility and tentativeness is incorporated into the doctrine of sublation.

The doctrine of sublation contends that we know something to be true until it is sublated by a later awareness. When we perceive an object, we concurrently generate an awareness regarding the truth of this perception. This condition of truth remains fixed to this awareness of the object indefinitely, to be dislodged only in the actuality of a conflicting report at a later time. But even when we experience a state of knowing which is later proved false, we still cannot dismiss the fact that a psychological state of knowing occurred. Knowledge, then, has both a psychological (subjective) and a communal (objective) aspect. When someone, then, "knows" something which is commonly held to be false, we say that that person "thinks he knows something." But if what he knows is commonly or
authoritatively held to be the case, then we acknowledge that he knows it. In this way we both recognize the nature of the psychological "knowing" state and yet acknowledge the actual reality or truth of the situation.

Analysis of the arguments presented in Chapter One

We are now in a position (finally!) to consider the arguments which were presented at the outset of Chapter One. Though we have touched upon them and responded to their concerns in the previous chapters, it is useful to address them directly now.

Intersubjectivity arguments

The first three arguments base their rejection of liberation as constituting knowledge on the fact that it cannot be checked or verified by other facts; thus, other people have no means to confirm or verify the epistemological content of a liberated person's experience. Consequently, we cannot consider liberative experience to have any epistemic content (because such verification is necessary for the acceptance of knowledge claims). This sort of argument presupposes that all knowledge must conform to the epistemic model found in factual/theoretical knowing.
It is often the case that what we know does not lend itself to public verification. Consider the case of the knowledge of internal emotional feelings, pain, thoughts, etc. as well as complex or highly subjective conscious process operative in situational, aesthetic, intuitive, or theocentric knowing. Are we to hold that we cannot know the nature of our internal states?

In analyzing such states, one can begin by acknowledging that (in the minimum) a person undergoing such states thinks he knows something. If a person thinks he knows something, then it follows that he is undergoing a psychological state of knowing (ruling out the possibility of self-deception as being highly improbable if not logically impossible). But one need not stop at this stage simply because we cannot verify that such an experience is occurring as a psychological state. It is not unreasonable to infer that others also experience such states: by observing external signs of such states, e.g., facial expression, body language, verbal statements, sounds of pain or joy, etc., one can further assume that others have such states. Often there is a direct correlation between a psychological state and particular gestures and expressions. Yet it would be absurd to compare these "external signs" as verification of a psychological state in the same way that we verify a statement of fact by reference to the object itself. We generally accept a knowledge claim given in a psychological report to be true unless there is external
evidence to discredit it (i.e., the person is a pathological liar or a hypochondriac, etc.). Imagine the absurdity, if a doctor doubted every patient's reports about his internal experiences.

Similarly, unless there is a reason to doubt someone's integrity, claims of liberative experience should be considered; when one reports having underwent an experience that approximates other's accounts of liberative knowing, then we have good reason to think such a person has had a liberative awakening. Generally, a personal report (usually given to one's spiritual teacher) is checked with scriptural or authoritative accounts of liberation (including the teacher's own experience); and additionally, one's activities are scrutinized in regards to whether they are life-supporting moral actions; finally, observations of any outward signs of such a person undergoing a trance brought on by the liberative experience can be noted. In most cases, liberation is preceded by the adoption of a particular lifestyle that is conducive to bringing about liberation. Thus, a person who has lived a life of inflicting pain and suffering on others prior to his claim of liberation could not be taken serious without extenuating circumstances.

While the "verification" process here may not be as thorough or certain as in perceptual (factual) knowing, nevertheless, it is the best that can be expected given the
nature of this mode of knowing. As brought out earlier, in a situation where liberative knowledge is common place (such as in a monastery) there is a communal agreement on the occurrence and nature of liberative knowledge; thus, while liberative knowing does not possess the kind of cross reference or verification applicable to some types of factual knowing, there are some avenues of "verification" available to check for the occurrence of liberative knowledge. The line of argumentation presented in the first three arguments fail for several reasons: (1) they engage in cross-modal judgements; (2) they falsely assume that all knowledge is open to public verification; and (3) they do not take into consideration that liberative knowing has some means of "verification."

**Disparity argument**

Another sort of argument was raised concerning the variant and often conflicting nature of mystical accounts. It is generally held that there should be general agreement over the nature of an object if we are to assume one has knowledge of it, but mystics often disagree over the nature of their mystical object (or lack of one). There are several ways one can respond to this argument.

First, the author of this argument assumes that all mystics share in the same object. This is simply not the case. Consider the fact that one can distinguish between
different knowing states, i.e., theocentric and liberative knowing, which involve quite different knowing events and knowing "objects"--i.e., theocentric knowing has one and liberative knowing does not. Secondly, this argument fails to acknowledge the whole issue of interpretation. Two mystics may have the same sort of mystical experience, share the same nonpropositional knowledge gained in that mystical experience, but later when they attempt to verbalize what they have come to know, their accounts may vary radically due to the different cultural and conceptual frameworks they think in. Thirdly, just because there is disagreement amongst parties about the nature of an object does not necessarily entail that they do not have knowledge of it. Often due to perspective or orientation, two or more people can have knowledge of an object yet describe it differently.

No intention argument

Finally, it has been argued that the kind of nondual experience/knowledge characterized in liberative knowledge is untenable. All knowing states are intentional in nature, consequently how could one have an experience in which the subject-object dichotomy ceases to occur.

In response, it can be observed that this argument, like the first three, assumes there is but one way in which knowing occurs. While admittedly the kind of knowledge described in liberative knowing is dramatically different
from that found in say, factual, practical, theoretical, or moral knowing, this, in itself, is not grounds for rejecting the occurrence of liberative knowing. Each of the modes of knowing differ from each other in some respect, but this does not mean that none or only one of these modes of knowing is really knowledge (which the author of this argument would surely not wish to admit).

Actually, there are a number of knowing states that at least approximate this sort of nondual state. Consider the intuitive knowing that Bergson describes in which one manages to "enter into" the object. A less exotic sort of knowing occurs in our simple experience of a body sensation. In the case of very powerful experiences of severe pain or joy, we often describe ourselves as being "overcome" or "overwhelmed" by the sensation to the point of losing awareness of oneself experiencing it. This kind of "oneness with sensation" may be interpreted as still preserving some sense of duality between knower and object, but the difference is conflated enough to allow us to conceptualize the possibility of complete absorption into an object, i.e., Brahman. This concept of nonduality in liberative knowing becomes more plausible once one understands the basic tenets of Advaita metaphysics.
Consideration of further arguments

Having dealt with the original arguments given in the first chapter, let's consider possible objections that can be raised against the epistemological position that developed in subsequent chapters.

Pandora's box argument

It is argued in Chapter Four that there exist eleven modes of knowing. Yet, by acknowledging such diversity and freedom in what we choose to call knowledge, won't we in fact open Pandora's box so to speak, allowing for all sorts of spurious "modes of knowing" such as drunk knowing, schizophrenic knowing, LSD knowing, etc? Therefore, we are likely to lose any meaningful sense of the word "knowledge," as it can denote all sorts of deluded conscious states.

At the outset of the discussion on theoretical definition, it was noted that such a formulation is required to be consonant with common usage. The reason the standard JTB theory of knowledge was abandoned is because it failed to satisfy this requirement. The eleven modes of knowing outlined in Chapter Four were presumed to reflect actual usage. None of these modes of knowing are based on the testimony of a mentally disturbed person, a drunk, drug user, and so forth. In our study, entry into our list of
common "modes of knowing" required that a large number of individuals recognize a specific sort of experience as "knowledge" and refer to those undergoing such an experience as "knowing".\(^3\)

While most individuals in America and India have not undergone the experience of liberative knowing or even known personally a liberated person, nevertheless, most know what a mystical experience is and grant that such a state brings knowledge of a certain sort to the mystic. This does not mean that we are to determine the usage of a word by taking a word usage poll weekly; rather word usage and meaning is dependent on the pragmatic needs and activities of a people. Changes in word connotation generally occur slowly over a number of years and usually are brought on by some shift in cultural values or social activity. While a theoretical definition is not totally bound to the task of mapping popular word usage, and can be generated to fulfill some specific purpose, it still must reflect common usage of the term. This is particularly the case in the defining of such fundamental epistemological terms as "knowledge" and "truth."

**Incontinuity argument**

A second argument may be raised concerning the continuity of usage of the word "knowledge" given this wide variety of modes of knowing. Isn't it the case that given such variety
of modes of knowing, there will cease to be a coherent, consistent sense of what it means to know something? And as knowledge is the apex of our understanding process, aren't we likely to destroy or render incoherent our epistemological schema? Therefore, we should recognize a single theory of knowledge, one definition of knowledge, and make it standard.

A direct answer to this objection is that you cannot report what is not there. Just as in the real world there is no absolute certainty or a single usage for most words, there is not a homogenous usage of knowledge. People know different sorts of things and the manner in which they come to know these things varies greatly. Further, there are a number of different ways in which we can know the same object. It is unreasonable to assume therefore that all senses of "know" will be identical. Yet, there remains a distinctive set of features that identifies "knowledge" as a unique conscious state different from other conscious states such as belief, doubt, feel, etc. The problem is that the distinguishing features of knowledge do not translate into one definition. Recourse can be made to Ludwig Wittgenstein's idea of "family resemblance." It was noticed by Wittgenstein that words like "game" could not be defined in such a way as to include a trait that all instances shared in common; yet we all seem to sense accurately all instances as a "game." In the same way there does not seem to be a set of common traits that all instances of knowing
share that serves as a criterion to distinguish knowledge from other conscious states.

Given this fact, my strategy is to identify some common characteristics (i.e., certainty and sincerity) and then identify species of knowing that share in the same genus (i.e., knowledge) but differ from one another by certain conditions which serve as criteria for determining specific instances of each mode of knowing.

A topic which has yet to be determined, however, is whether it is possible to distinguish qualitatively between all of these modes of knowing. Is it possible to employ a hierarchy amongst these epistemological modalities?

II

Epistemological hierarchies

One can observe initially that there is an epistemological hierarchy amongst different mental modalities, e.g., knowledge has a higher status than belief, belief is higher than doubt. Generally knowledge has the paramount epistemological status because it is held to be the most accurate in its account of reality, activity that is based upon it is more successful than other modalities, and it is less likely to be changed or sublated by other facts. But is there a hierarchy amongst the various modes of knowing themselves?
There are two ways in which I will address this topic: 

(i) de facto: Do we in our daily lives and within the rigors of philosophical analysis employ such a hierarchy? and 
(ii) de jure: Is it logically possible--given the prohibition against cross modal usage of criteria given in Chapter Four--for there to be hierarchy amongst these modes of knowing?

Earlier in my discussions when I attempted to distinguish between factual and theoretical knowing, I borrowed a distinction from Quine, namely, peripheral facts and centrally held facts. It was observed that certain known facts, e.g., 2+2=4, E=mc^2, all bachelors are unmarried males, are less susceptible to revision than other more peripheral facts, e.g., baseballs have 123 stitches sewn on them, there are more women than men living in Petaluma, California. Here we witness a limited hierarchy between closely related modes of knowing. The valuational criteria employed is "susceptibility to replacement." Knowledge or known facts that have less susceptibility to devaluation are given a higher or more dominant role in our thinking process. If a recalcitrant situation presents itself, we are most likely to turn to our nucleus of theoretical truths for guidance and we are most likely to dismiss our peripherally known facts. But what can be observed about an overall epistemological hierarchy? Is there a metaepistemological structure set up to evaluate and classify these eleven modes of knowing?
Consider the relationship between theoretical and practical knowing. We employ each mode of knowing according to the situation at hand. But do we hold one mode superior over the other? Generally speaking, most people would probably hold scientific theories such as Newton's second law of motion as superior (i.e., more significant, advanced, important) over our knowledge of say how to change a flat tire on an automobile. However, each has its own importance and utility in its own domain.

Yet between different modalities, we might hold a particular instance of one mode of knowing as superior over a particular instance of another mode of knowing; while in another two cases, we might reverse this rating holding the later mode as superior over the former. For example, my knowledge of Jung's psychological system (theoretical knowing) has more importance to me than my knowledge of what time it is right now (factual knowing). However, for a convicted murder, the date and time of his scheduled execution (factual knowing) is significantly more important than his knowledge of the mechanical workings of the ball point pen that the judge used to write down his sentence (theoretical knowing).

In comparisons between such modalities as factual and practical or situational and somatic knowing, one modality does not appear universally superior over another, the value judgement lies in the actual comparison between specific
instances of each type of knowing. But comparisons between such modalities as intuitional and factual or practical and analytic knowing elicit a categorical valuation of one type over another, as intuitional knowing by definition is held to be of greater significance that either factual or theoretical knowing.

Consider now mysticism such as found in Advaita Vedānta. Advaitins claim that liberative knowing is the supreme (paras) knowledge because it usurps by sublation (bāda) all other worldly modes of knowing. Liberative knowing disvalues or renders false all previously held worldly knowledge. Here they are not referring to making a value judgement whereby one mode (or instance of that mode) of knowing is superior to another; rather it is a cosmological cum soteriological change both in terms of personal identity/existence/salvation and one's perception/conception of the world. Other modes of knowing are not disvalued as of less worth, but rather cease to exist, except in a phantom like fashion. Liberative knowing is viewed not merely as being more important, but as qualitatively distinct.

Radical shifts of a smaller order may occur in one's general epistemic hierarchy between worldly modes of knowledge. Think of hypothetical cases, e.g., things to know on a desert island, or in the year 2500 or the year 1500, where because of radical shifts in our priorities,
there may also come about monumental changes in our knowledge hierarchy, especially given that we are limited to knowing only a certain amount of things; but, generally our priorities and knowledge hierarchies are relatively stable.

There exists, then, a complex valuation system linking these modes of knowing together. Obviously, the exact epistemic hierarchy would vary from person to person depending on his or her personal priorities and each hierarchy is subject to change from time to time. Yet to attempt to delineate a specific metaepistemological structure and the modus operandi for determining this epistemic hierarchy would be as difficult to provide as a universal definition of knowledge itself. This is due to the variance in occurrence and the rules governing the determination of these variants. But one can make reference to how one should not go about structuring one's hierarchy.

A hierarchy cannot be based on cross-modal valuation

From our discussion of the eleven modes of knowing, it was concluded that one could not apply the criteria of one mode of knowing to pass judgement on another mode of knowing. In this chapter it has been argued that discredit of liberative knowing on the basis of a verification principle or a lack of intersubjectivity must be ruled out as meaningful critiques. We cannot use the criteria applicable to factual knowing (as was intended in these two
arguments) on liberative knowing. But this distinction cuts both ways, for while we cannot make judgements about liberative knowing on the basis of factual knowing criteria, we also cannot make any judgements about factual knowing based on the criteria of liberative knowing. Consequently, even though a person may undergo liberation, it is (philosophically) purposeless for him to try to convince others of the folly of factual knowing based solely on his personal account of liberative knowing. K.S. Murty, in his book, Revelation and Reason in Advaita Vedānta brings out this point:

The Veda is (for Śaṅkara) the only source of knowledge in this matter [i.e., his philosophy]... [P]ersonal experience does not confirm and much less can it refute scripture.4

An arguments based simply on a personal experience of Brahman is not acceptable as a means to establish the existence of Brahman. Just because liberative knowing requires certain conditions, i.e., nonduality, presence of Brahman, removal of ignorance, etc., it does not follow that other modes of knowing are required to satisfy such conditions. Further, as few have had such knowledge, it is unlikely that they would be convinced by such argumentation
based on liberation—even if they acknowledge the occurrence of liberative knowing. For Śaṅkara, only reference to scriptural passages (śabda) can support such claims. In the Brahmasūtrabāṣya, for example, Śaṅkara appears to be presupposing such a doctrine when he defends his doctrine of jīvanmukti (liberation while in an embodied state). He states:

Besides, it should not be discussed here (i.e., it is not debatable here) as to whether a man who has realized Brahman does continue to possess a body for some time after such realization, or whether he does not, because how can one man ever dispute another man's experience of both the realization of Brahman and his yet continuing to possess a body, as such experience of the other man, can belong to such other man alone? The Scriptures and the Smrtis by way of indicating the characteristics of a man firmly ensconced in the knowledge of Brahman, here explained the same thing.\(^5\)

Stated succinctly, liberative experience (anubhava) is not a means to (worldly) knowledge (pramāṇa) for Advaita. But there are ways for Advaita to argue for the epistemic worth of liberative knowledge.
There is nothing improper with a philosophical discussion about the existence or nonexistence of Brahman or the accuracy or inaccuracy of sense-based knowing so long as parties on either side of the debate do not give arguments which attempt to apply one set of criteria given for one mode of knowing, to another distinct mode of knowing. In fact, Śaṅkara and other Advaita philosophers do engage in rigorous philosophical discussions in an attempt to establish the correctness of their philosophical position (which, itself, was developed partially from liberative knowing). The form of these arguments consists principally of reference to support from scriptural authority and negative dialectics against opposing viewpoints. The basic strategy operative here is that if one can demonstrate the erroneous nature of all opposing philosophical viewpoints as well as answer satisfactorily all objections raised against one's position, then one will have vindicated one's philosophical position.

Such a vindication of Advaita philosophy, of course, cannot be equated with the gaining of liberative knowledge; rather, it is the establishment (intellectually) of Advaita thought as the most plausible and consistent of existing philosophical viewpoints. One must recall that Advaita philosophy, fundamentally, has a therapeudic purpose. By arguing for the supremacy of Advaita philosophy, Śaṅkara has established the credibility of his account of reality, the plausibility of liberative knowing as a state which brings
about an end to rebirth and removal of ignorance. It is liberative knowledge (not his philosophy), that Śaṅkara holds to be ultimately true as when liberative knowing is attained, all conceptual, ignorance-based knowing is viewed as illusory—including Advaita philosophy itself. To borrow a metaphor from Ludwig Wittgenstein, the words, concepts, and arguments of Advaita philosophy are like a ladder which serves a certain purpose (i.e., to take us to liberative knowledge) and after this purpose is served, the ladder (i.e., Advaita philosophy) is discarded. The philosophy of Advaita is not an end in itself, but a means to encourage others to take up the Advaita path to liberation.

It must be recognized that whether Advaita philosophers win or lose their debate with opposing schools does not provide conclusive grounds for establishing or dismissing the actual occurrence and/or nature of liberative knowing. Additionally, whether one is capable of establishing the plausibility of liberation within the confines of the concepts and symbols of factual or theoretical knowing has no bearing on the acceptance of the occurrence and nature of liberative knowing for those who undergo the experience. The epistemological status granted to liberative knowledge is (conceptually) determined by a number of factors. Briefly, the epistemological status of a conscious state is determined through reference to philosophical plausibility, common usage, integrity and authority of the knower(s), and coherence with other accepted modes of knowing. (I will
expand on these factors contributing to epistemological status shortly).

Let us return, now, to the two aspects of this topic of a hierarchy of knowledge outlined at the beginning of this section. *De facto*, we can observe that people generally employ complex epistemic hierarchies distinguishing one mode (or instance of a mode) to be better or more valued than another.

But is there a theoretical inconsistency between a hierarchical account of knowledge, and our contention that one must not use the criteria for one mode of knowing to pass judgement on another mode of knowing? For example, when one observes that liberative or theocentric knowing is superior to factual knowing isn't one guilty of utilizing the criteria of one mode of knowing (liberative knowing) to devalue another mode of knowing (factual knowing).

To determine whether this principle is or is not violated, let's consider the case of one who accepts the existence and ultimate superiority of spiritually based knowledge such as theocentric or liberative knowledge. Theocentric knowing—for those individuals religiously inclined—would be recognized as possessing more importance because the object of this knowledge, i.e., God, has supreme importance. Theocentric knowledge guarantees the knower (in the least) a place in heaven after death, and a view of God before death occurs. Liberative knowing, on the other hand,
is held to be supreme knowledge because of the fact that it sublates all other worldly knowledge when it arises. In addition, it ends the cycle of rebirth and destroys ignorance.

Yet, for those individuals who have not experienced liberative or theocentric knowing and do not recognize the supremacy of such knowledge, obviously, their hierarchy of knowledge is quite different. This variance is in accord with the normal manner in which we conceptualize knowledge. An atheist does not believe in God; yet hundreds of millions of people do believe in God. Of those millions of theists, thousands may have directly encountered God and millions more acknowledge that theocentric knowing occurs. Consequently, a general epistemological account must recognize and incorporate this epistemic factor regardless of whether one or a thousand atheists do not recognize theocentric knowledge as reflecting a true state of affairs.

Consider the case where such an account did cater exclusively to the atheist position, what classification would one assign to theocentric knowing? It would make no sense to say that these mystics falsely believed they "saw" God as they had a "knowing" experience. Rather one should rightly say they think they know God (or they believe that they saw God, meaning they are under the impression that they saw and therefore know God directly through this theocentric experience). Whether this psychological
experience becomes extended to the status of a recognized mode of knowing is determined by a number of factors.

Factors influencing word usage

One may remark initially that we collectively, as users of language, determine the meaning of a word. This is to say that if we want to know how the word "knowledge" is used and what is denoted in its usage, we need merely to catalogue its usage. This in large part is what was attempted in Chapter Four: catalogue the commonly recognized ways in which we are said to know. As we argued earlier, a comprehensive definition or theory of the central epistemological concept of "knowledge" must adequately reflect the phenomenon which the term is suppose to denote. Common usage of a word, then, has a determining role in forming definitions. And as usage changes or new usages are introduced, so our definitions and conceptions of a particular term are changed and/or expanded. This account, however, needs to be taken a step further and determine what shapes common usage, the determining factors which shape our conception of knowing.

Our acceptance of a particular mode of knowing and the use of the word "knowledge" in reference to it is influenced or determined by a variety of factors. Further, each mode of knowing is affected by different combinations of these factors. For example, factual knowledge about something in
the world becomes commonly accepted as true if (i) it reflects or "corresponds" to the perceived nature of that thing, (ii) many people intersubjectively attest to the accuracy of this known fact, (iii) this fact does not appear to conflict with other accepted facts, (iv) a reliable person or source provides or supports this fact, and so forth. A similar looking list of factors could be used for theoretical knowing, though the factors which would lead to acceptance would be dominated by the factors of a reliable or authoritative person proposing or knowing the fact and the ability of the theory or fact to withstand scrutiny or falsifiability testing. As these two modes of knowing constitute much of our knowing activity employed in day to day activities and scientific inquiry, the acceptance of these modes of knowing goes nearly unquestioned. Similarly, practical, somatic, aesthetic, analytic, intuitive, and moral knowing processes are generally acknowledged as part of the knowing capacity, though each is influenced by specific factors, be it performative skills, tautological formulations, resonance with social morals, and the like.

However, with theocentric and liberative knowing, common usage becomes difficult to determine. It is a moot point, perhaps an unresolvable one, as to whether people commonly recognize such modes of knowing. While the "man on the street" might know who a mystic is, he may or may not consider them as being privy to a unique mode of knowing. It may very well be that many people have no opinion on this
matter at all. Thus, the question of the epistemological status of liberative knowing may not be determined solely by reference to common usage of the word "knowledge." But what then?

**Factor of personal authority**

To begin with, if we ask a Christian if Jesus knew God, or a Buddhist if the Buddha knew or reached liberation (nirvana), the question would unequivocally be in the affirmative. Thus, there is a precedent for the use of "know" in the theocentric and liberative modalities. But again, there are no doubt a great number of atheists and agnostics as well as theists who do not recognize the mystical encounter. As such, it appears that the inclusion or exclusion of either theocentric or liberative knowing into one's epistemological hierarchy is a personal choice. The question then becomes what factors are drawn upon to evoke support or acceptance to those who recognize liberative or theocentric knowing.

A topic within the area of history of religion centers on the question of why specific religious figures gained recognition and following while others did not. Consider the Buddha and Jesus who were mentioned earlier: both these individuals lived in turbulent religious times when great numbers of "enlightened teachers" were offering spiritual advice, yet both gained extraordinary followings while
others did not. Could this recognition be due to mere luck or successful political coaching? It is unlikely. In a word, such figures possess the element of authority. Here we are not speaking of dominance or control in a totalitarian sense; rather, liberated mystics or spiritual teachers radiate a compelling presence that evokes a recognition and acceptance by those who encounter them either directly or indirectly. They have the ability to create a contagious fervor in those who encounter them. This charisma lies not merely in their physical (spiritual) presence, but in the words they speak and deeds they enact. People appear to be able to sense this quality of authority, and are affected by it in often dramatic ways.

A key way to recognize and validate an instance of liberative knowing is in this factor of authority, the ability of an individual to create a contagious fervor of spirituality in others generated from his liberative or theocentric knowing. This factor of authority is considered in Advaita literature. In the *Upadesasahasrī*, Śaṅkara compares an enlightened teacher to a boatman, his liberative knowledge (*vidyā*) is the boat, and the passengers are his students. The impediment that prevents them from experiencing liberative knowing are given as demerit, worldly laxity, absence of previously firm learning of what constitutes the subjects (i.e., Self and self) of discrimination between the eternal and noneternal, courting popular esteem, pride of caste, etc. Śaṅkara contends that
attributes in the teacher that remove these causes are non-anger (akrodha), abstinence from injury and other abstentions specified in vows of proper action (yamas and nivamas) which include purity, contentment, austerity, intensive study, and devotion to God. The teacher is one who is endowed with the power to furnish arguments pro and con, of understanding (the student's) questions and remembering them, who possesses tranquility, self control, compassion and a desire to help others, who is versed in the traditional doctrine and is unattached to enjoyments both seen (here) and unseen (hereafter), who has renounced all rituals and their requisites, who is a knower of of Brahman and is established in it, who leads a blameless life free from faults such as deceit, pride, trickery, interests, and so forth. It is for the purpose of helping others only that he wishes to make use of his liberative knowledge.

This need to help others and the capacity to lead a morally perfect life appears to be an outgrowth of liberative knowing, due in no small part to the cessation of selfish desires. In effect, one's will and desires become the Will and Desire of God or the needs of the cosmos as a whole. One is in harmony with the unmitigated unfolding of existence. Though the liberated person perceives the world as a phantasm arising out of cosmic forces (avidyā and māyā), nevertheless, due to his trace of ignorace (lesāvidyā), he remains in this illusory world and acts in a
manner that best supports the harmony and purpose of its workings.

Obviously, not all individuals who undergo liberative knowing become spiritual leaders of worldwide significance; yet, recognition of their state of consciousness will be apparent to those sensitive to their state of authority and the purity of deeds and words they manifest. It must further be noted, however, that people at times wrongly interpret some "leaders" or "mystics" as possessing this authoritative element as is witnessed with conmen or unscrupulous religious leaders such as most recently Jim Jones of Jonestown or Oregon's Sri Bhagawan who have inflicted suffering, abuse, even death on their followers apparently for their own selfish gain or demented ends. Such cases as these demonstrate that the absence of the attribute of authentic authority and moral purity indicates the nonoccurrence of liberative or theocentric knowing in these individuals even though they claim to possess it.

Factor of established authority

Public perception of liberative experience is influenced by the "authoritative presence" projected by the liberated person, but also by another kind of authority. In this case, it is not the personal authority radiated by such a liberated person, but the authority possessed by a recognized group of experts. Such figures as St. John of
the Cross, Meister Eckhart, Ramakrisna, Joan of Arc, are recognized by most people as having experienced theocentric knowing due in large part to their having been accepted by an established religious authority (e.g., church, pope, state or religious leader, etc.) as an authentic saint or mystic.

Here the vindication by an authority or group of authorities of the authenticity of one's liberative or theocentric experience is a factor that influences opinion on proper identification of such knowing conditions. There are often set criteria that pronounce standards or parameters that all bona fide liberative or theocentric experiences must satisfy. A sample list includes (a) agreement with scripture, (b) morally accepted actions by mystic, (c) good results from the experience for the experiencer as well as the community, (d) no indication of influences on the experiencer of evil or demonic forces.

Factor of argumentation

Rational argumentation, often employed in philosophical/theological discussions about liberative or theocentric knowing, may influence public opinion as well as policy adopted by authoritative councils. As mentioned earlier, Advaita philosophers have presented numerous arguments in support of their position and in opposition to other views. Though the perceived outcome of such
philosophical debates is not decisive, it, like the previously mentioned factors, is influential.

Problem of Criteria

We began this section with the remark that the meaning of a word can be determined by examining it usage. However, this does not mean that the meaning of a word such as "know" can be determined merely by taking a poll amongst language users. As we have just seen, the process of word usage development and the further cataloguing or defining of this usage are extremely complex processes involving a number of factors. A traditional problem associated with this area of analysis, the problem of criteria, points out that the related questions, what is the extent of our knowledge? and what are the criteria of knowing? appear to be mutually determining. To determine what the criteria of knowing are, we must first know what sorts of conscious states or processes are included as "knowing"; yet to know what are included as knowing states we must first have some sort of criteria to delimit our class membership by. This problem can be broken down into two questions: Does class extension and criteria for membership arise simultaneously or one before the other? and What factors are responsible for the origin of a word usage?

In this work, it has been repeatedly argued that any definition of "knowledge" must properly reflect how the word
or concept "knowledge" is used in common parlance. To catalogue this usage amounts to determining the extention of the term "know," once we have identified the sort of conscious processes generally denoted by the word "know," we are in a position to specify the criteria (or set of criteria) employed to identify the various modes of knowing or kinds of knowledge. As to how we initially came to identify these states as "knowing" or "knowledge" and to what extent they presuppose sets of criteria can be determined by examining the assorted factors that influence these usages.

Without attempting to gloss over the problem of criteria, let's assume for the moment that criteria and extention of a word are developed closely if not concurrently. Consider the cases of theoretical and factual knowing. Presumably from time primordial man has perceived his surroundings and held that certain of his observations about the world are true. This condition of certainty about some observation about the world at some time in the history of human intelligence and linguistic development came to be regarded as "knowledge" or "knowing." Presumably one could adopt here an account like that of Saul A. Kripke's "initial baptism" where a referent is determined by a description. In dealing with instances of factual knowing, this identification of our true awareness of the world with the concept or word "knowledge" must have developed slowly and sporadically from one group of language users to another.
In the case of theoretical knowing the situation is quite different.

Theoretical knowing is an artificial or contrived knowing process, in that man has elected to create theoretical knowledge within the confines of a specific process or method. Generally, one proposes a hypothesis to explain a certain set of phenomena and then test to see if it holds up to further scrutiny in which one applies it to further cases. Here these may be situations where one may postulate the criteria that must be satisfied for us to know (theoretically) that a particular object (e.g., kind of atomic particle, or species of animal or plant) exists. The extension of this kind of knowledge appears to be preceded by its criteria, though the conception or delimiting definition of what it would be to know the object (and thus what such objects would be like) exists in the scientist's mind while he was laying out his criteria for knowing such an object.

In liberative knowing, the criteria for knowing can be divided between those applicable to the person undergoing the experience and those to be utilized by others attempting to understand the nature of such a conscious state and/or attempting to "validate" that another has undergone such a knowing state. For one who has undergone such an experience, the verbal, traditional description of liberative knowing serves to identify its significance and
function. (The experience itself is alleged to be "self-validating.") In contrast, the condition of authoritative presence, moral purity, verbal "appropriations" of its nature, doubtlessness on the part of the knower about the validity of his experience, all serve as criteria to identify probable occurrences of liberative knowing.

Resorting back to the discussion of each mode of knowing given in Chapter Four, one could provide similar discussions about each modality, though the three accounts of modes of knowing given above should suffice our immediate purpose. What should be clear from the discussion of these three modes of knowing is that neither criteria nor extension appears to precede the other in the sense that one gives rise to the other. These three cases illustrate our assumed contention that both of these elements arise concurrently. It makes no sense to speak of criteria without knowing what one is defining, and one cannot speak of a referent without having some sort of criteria to delimit class membership. The factors which give rise to usage or identification/creation of a referent simultaneously determine the criteria and extension of the phenomenon denoted.

In regards to our topic of "knowledge," one can observe that we come to develop at some point in our intellectual and linguistic history a concept of "knowing;" in the
process of recognizing distinct modes or variants of this knowing process, we must consider specific factors which serve to influence our ultimate recognition or rejection of an alleged mode of knowing. Whether we recognize a certain set of related experiences as constituting knowing states is dependent on whether it satisfies our overall conception of knowing and whether the factor(s) relevant to a specific mode of knowing sways our opinion toward recognizing it as such. Obviously, this is not a purely individual decision as the general consensus of one's peers or society also functions as a determining factor in our recognition of a particular mode of knowing. It's often the case that we don't individually deliberate on the epistemological status of a knowing mode, but "blindly" accept it as part of our early social/linguistic conditioning. We may be noncommited or unaware of the occurrence of liberative knowing, but an encounter with the writings or personal presence of an alleged liberated man and the authority he projects, may provide the influence that allows us to recognize liberative knowing as a mode of knowing.

Ultimately, we have a right to not accept that the earth is round, that Darwinism is a true theory, or the Lee Harvey Oswald shot President Kennedy, even though most people hold that they know these facts. The colossal bank of information we call upon daily and the influential factors relevant to specific knowing modalities serve to help us determine (or determine for us) our epistemological
hierarchy including what modes of knowing we recognize and employ. In this, there may not be any final or ultimately correct hierarchy of knowing states. While liberative, theocentric, and intuitive knowing modalities entail that a specific hierarchy is right and a necessary condition of recognizing them is to modify one's hierarchy in a certain way, the general concept of knowledge and the use of such terms as "knowledge" and "know" does not require any specific hierarchy or acceptance of all modes of knowing. However, it has been argued that there is one prohibition, namely the prohibition against cross-modal validation, that must be observed.

Prohibition against cross-modal validation

To answer whether one's hierarchy contains such a violation, one must determine the grounds upon which one came to accept one's specific hierarchy of knowledge. For example, if one holds that factual knowledge is illusory, based on the fact that it is not nondual and does not dissolve ignorance as was the conditions of knowing as found in one's state of liberation, then this position violates our prohibition against cross-modal usage of criteria. However, if an appeal to scripture or argumentation, or authoritative presence was the instrumental factor, then one can justly adopt such a hierarchy in one's epistemology. This applies to all epistemological hierarchies whether one
takes a materialistic, atheistic approach in which factual and theoretical knowing are paramount or a theistic orientation with theocentric knowing on top: the key legitimizing condition is that such hierarchies must be sanctioned by argumentation and authority and not based in cross modal valuation judgements.

Final consideration of initial topical questions

As a final check of the epistemological position I have adopted, let us reconsider the two topical questions raised at the outset of this dissertation. (1) How are we to classify mystical knowledge within a general epistemological mapping? (2) How are we to evaluate the epistemological and metaphysical claims of the mystics?

Upon encountering the claims of mystics, how is one to determine or evaluate their epistemic significance? If one is a nonmystic, then one neither has personal experience to compare with nor an accessible referent to approach by other heterogenous means of observation to verify the content of the mystics' experiences. There does not appear to be an easy answer to these sorts of questions; the question, "does liberative knowing have epistemological status?, cannot be answered with a simple "yes" or "no." One cannot provide a statement of the sort, "liberative knowledge is the paramount epistemic state," and expect the logical positivist, phenomenologist, theist, existentialist, and
Advaita Vedāntist all to agree heartily. Because we all have adopted slightly different epistemological hierarchies it is difficult to get universal agreement on such a controversial epistemological proposition. And while it can be hoped that eventually the factors that influence our epistemological viewpoints may someday create a universal epistemological hierarchy shared by all men, the past does not appear to support this possibility.

Each person determines whether some awareness or conscious state can be classified as knowledge. Often this determination amounts to merely adopting or being conditioned by a particular peer group or society's mores, customs, language usage, and religious viewpoint.

The meaning of "knowledge," like other words/concepts is reflected in way the people use/possess it. A word's meaning which expresses our concept of the denoted object changes over time. If a fair percentage of people use the word "knowledge" to denote a certain phenomenon, e.g., liberation, then this constitutes sufficient grounds for calling liberation "knowledge" without fear of misusing the word "knowledge." Whether liberation constitutes a "knowing state" is determined by whether it satisfies the overarching or fundamental condition for the knowing condition, i.e., a conscious state possessing certainty regarding some state of affairs. These shifts and expansions are not capricious, as it could hardly be the case that a group of people suddenly
decide arbitrarily to give a new meaning to a word or change our concept of the denoted object and from that moment on all people will adopt this new meaning.

In the discussion at hand, if liberative knowing is experienced by a good number of individuals throughout the world and a great number of individuals ascribe to the tenets of Advaita Vedānta and other kindred philosophies found throughout the world, liberative knowing must be recognized as one of many modes of knowing experienced by man.

This statement, however, does not entail that each one of us personally ascribe to the contention that liberative knowing is the paramount liberative state; rather, it entails that none can deny that many people experience a liberative knowing state and that this state is capable of being called "knowledge." However, it might also be the case that those undergoing this state only think they know, for in actuality this state might be some shared hallucination or delusion. It is up to each individual whether he wishes to recognize or reject liberative knowing as a bonafide knowing type.

The initial problem raised has become, "how does one decide whether to recognize (i.e., accept popular usage) liberative knowing as a bonafide, paramount knowing state? An obvious answer is that one attempt to undergo liberative experience oneself to gains a first hand evaluation of its
nature. As such knowledge is alleged to be self-validating, incapable of being denied once it arises because of it radical transformation of identity, one could surely determine if all this actually occurred. Unfortunately, liberation is not immediately attainable but takes years of preparation. Thus, the only realistic or immediate way to come to accept or dismiss liberative knowing for what it is claimed to be is through examination of the various factors applicable to liberative knowing (e.g., philosophical arguments, authoritative presence, etc.).

III

Future directions of philosophical study of mysticism

Given what has been said in the preceding two section, then, what future directions should philosophical studies of mysticism take. Consider the origins of the study of mysticism itself. The beginnings of man's study of mysticism is difficult to determine. The experience itself has been a part of man's life since prehistoric times. Later, in the teachings of Heraclitus, Lao Tzu, and Buddha as well as in such texts as the Upanisads, and the Gathos, one can see references to a mystical consciousness. Plotinus in his Enneads, appears to be one of the first western philosophers to address mysticism in a somewhat rigorous fashion. Mysticism continued to be a topic of debate in medieval times particularly under the strong influence of Christianity. Buddhist, Taoist, and
Brahmanical philosophers investigated mystical experience and mystically derived knowledge with great vigor and sophistication from the second millennium onward. Yet in the west, despite the importance Spinoza gave to it as the highest mode of knowing, interest waned in philosophical circles from the modern period to contemporary times.

It is only at the turn of this century that interest amongst philosophers and theologians has emerged again. Initially mysticism was viewed as a by-product of religion, a religious fervor that affected some of the devoted. Soon, however, mysticism began to be studied as a religious phenomenon in and of itself. It began to be seen as playing an important role in the development and exuberance of religion. Mysticism, in certain cases, was viewed as the catalyst, the initial stimulus that gave birth to a religion. Yet it must be remembered that at times mystics were at odds with established religious dogma and were excumenticated as heretics (e.g., Meister Eckhart or al-Hallâj).

A fundamental characteristic of this initial study of mysticism was the intention to treat all mystical accounts universally. Great effort was made to show that mysticism was a crosscultural, crosstemporal phenomenon. Most writers felt that by demonstrating mysticism's basic and universal nature, it would gain in credibility and importance. Mysticism should be regarded as possessing great
significance in the history of humanity due to the fact that it has occurred at all times and all places. A central task for the student of mysticism then was to collect all the literature with a mystical content worldwide for subsequent analysis and classification.

A problem quickly arose due to the disparity between the sorted accounts offered by mystics. There developed a number of mystical typologies designed to catalogue the various "types" of mysticism. It still remains unanswered as to whether the disparities amongst various mystical accounts arise principally on the level of interpretation of the experience by the mystic or in the very nature of the experience itself. Most writers in the field support the view that the basic disparities (i.e., monist vs theist, polytheist vs monotheist) are due to the differences in the experience itself.

Yet we must also recognize the influence that guides a mystic's account. For as each mystic must express himself through the religious concepts and terms of his own tradition, it is only natural that mystics from different cultures would describe their experiences differently. After all, how could we expect a Christian mystic to use the word "Krsna," or "Allah" when speaking of the godhead he encountered? Or more to the point, the attributes and characteristics attributed by his tradition to God will be superimposed upon the deity he experienced. Other related
religious superstructures, i.e., relation of God to the world, relationship between God and man, nature of human salvation, etc., are also presupposed by the mystic in his account.

However, it cannot be denied that some mystics have felt constrained by these conceptual structures and have either expressed their differences within their tradition at the risk of being labelled a heretic or privately expressed their differences only to immediate followers for fear of retribution from the establishment. At any rate, the predominant view, while recognizing such cultural and religious influences in interpretation, still maintains that there exists a minimum set of opposing characteristics that distinguish a basic difference amongst assorted types of mystical experiences.

The combined work of these scholars has enabled the study of mysticism to become an important area of investigation in the fields of philosophy, religious studies, psychology, sociology, and anthropology. Besides collecting together and classifying the mystical literature of the world, they have identified many of the important issues that any future studies must address. Certain of these issues, perhaps, have been developed as far as can be expected. One of these issues is the attempt to construct a universally accepted typology of mystical experience. This
is due to the fact that it appears impossible to disentangle interpretation from the experience itself, so one cannot be sure whether one's typology is between mystical experiences or religious/cultural interpretations. In addition, such crosscultural comparisons necessitate constructing extremely generalized categories of mystical types which does not lend well to rigorous philosophical analysis which considers consistency within a system. Removing the specific and detailed elements on each account leaves nothing for the philosopher to ponder. Generally, there has been increased focus on topical discussions within a particular system or set or related systems in recent years.

In philosophy particularly, most studies have been directed toward the issues of religious or mystical language and the epistemology of mysticism. Some of these topics include: (i) the paradoxical nature of mystical utterances, (ii) the inherent ineffability of mystical experience and its effect on mystical utterances; (iii) verifiability of a mystical experience and/or resultant mystical-based knowledge; (iv) the subjective vs objective quality of mystical experience; and (v) criteria of truth for mystical claims.

With the improved availability of mystical literature and some initial general analysis of the similarities and differences amongst experiences accomplished, it is only natural that the investigation into mystical experience
become more focused and detailed. In addition, it no longer has become necessary to establish the importance of mysticism by stressing the universality and perhaps uniformity of mystical experience. Some contemporary writers persist, unfortunately, in the project of establishing mysticism as a uniform occurrence and continue to work within the structure of typologies. This practice serves to compromise such studies because by generalizing their discussions they are unable to work with specific details and sublities within a particular school of thought. When looking for inconsistencies or consistencies one must be able to address the whole of a system of thought. Each tradition has specific indigenous cultural and intellectual structures that one must attempt to work through; and any attempt to superimpose a metastructure or "universal" conceptual framework for analysis of a number of distinct traditions is doomed to inject prejudices, distortions, and misunderstandings into the work.

Future studies in mysticism must, therefore, avoid the sorts of broad generalizations and universal treatment of mysticism found in the past. As in this study one must chose a tradition, a system and do a thorough conceptual analysis of it. Great care must be taken to reduce the superimposition of one's own cultural conceptual structures, rather attempting to isolate and then work within the conceptual structures inherent in that tradition. Identify the problem one wishes to address and then using these
indigenous conceptual structures see how it might be resolved. Only then can one try to apply that solution to another cultural-religious tradition taking care to line up and contrast these indigenous conceptual structures in the process.
1. A recent alternative to the belief that the way to analyze a concept is to state its truth conditions is offered by John L. Pollock, *Knowledge and Justification* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974). Pollock argues that conceptual analysis must involve an analysis of concepts in terms of their justification conditions rather than their truth conditions. It is argued that "given any perceptual attribute \( z \), '\( \mathcal{S} \) is appeared to \( z \)ly' is a prima facie reason for \( \mathcal{S} \) to believe that there is something \( z \) before him."(p.80) This constitutes the justification condition of something being \( z \) and presumably \( \mathcal{S} \) being aware of it. In our example it could be said: (i)"I am presented with a plumeria blossom" is a prima facie reason for me to judge that I see that object; (ii) If "five petals" is a visual attribute, then "that looks "five petaled" to me is a criterion for me to judge whether that is "five petaled," and "I see that" is a precondition for the criterion. A similar analysis would follow for the other sensory attributes attributed to this kind of blossom. In some ways other philosophers, specifically Wittenstein, Malcolm, Strawson, and particularly Roderick Chisholm share a position approximating Pollock's shift toward justification conditions over truth conditions.

3. It is logically possible (however unlikely) for one individual to have what will eventually be called "knowledge," where the mode of knowing operative is unique to him alone. This would occur in a situation where someone may discover a new mode of knowing and utilize it before anyone else learns how to employ it. Yet given the social basis of the use of the word "knowledge," his experience would not be categorized as knowledge at that time.


6. *Upadeśasāhasrī* II.i.2-4.


BIBLIOGRAPHY


