

On the metaphysical meaning of major religious symbols for a globalized world

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Abstract Two running themes of this paper are as follows: (1) there is an underlying unity—which in fact is ‘identity’ of the substance—of all major world religions, and (2) different modes of Universe and the unification of cognitions therein are expressions of answer to various metaphysical questions. The present endeavour in this way keeps the unity of human society—a step towards realizing ‘*vasudhāeva kuṭumbakam*’—‘Whole of Earth is a family’—as its ultimate goal. This paper envisages the realization of this objective through arriving at the common metaphysical structure of religions that constitute the core of humanity’s beliefs. The endeavour in this sense is essential for a globalized world since a globalized world of twenty-first century will be awfully susceptible to cataclysmic possibilities in the absence of knowledge of existence and understanding of such a common metaphysical structure, unlike as in the non-globalized world of nineteenth or even that of twentieth century, for example.

Keywords *Aparokṣa* (non-indirect apprehension of the Self) · Individuating Factor (I-Factor) · Canvass of consciousness · Geometrization (or mathematization) · Ontologization · *Adhyāsa* (superimposition) · Hypersurface (Block) · Event Horizon · Dimensioned point · Dimensionless point · Kenosis · Pascal triangle · Mystic Hexagram · Projective Geometry · Kaaba · Lattice packing

1 Introduction

Hitherto, many scholars have attempted at understanding the underlying principles of major world religions in different ways. All—or most—of such attempts have focused on culture, customs, art, history, tantra, and mysticism, or some combinations of them thereof. In this direction, scholars such as Peter Koslowski, H.P. Blavatsky, Francis Clooney, John Hick, Ninian Smart, to name a few, have immensely contributed to and enriched the knowledge repository of the world religions. However, it is conspicuous by its absence that there have been hardly any study based on important religious symbols, such as maṇḍalas/yantras, as for example, Buddhist Maṇḍala, Advaitic ŚrīCakra, Viśiṣṭādvaitic Tirupati Gopurams and Śāṅkha (Conch), Cakra (Disc), Gadā (Mace), Padma (Lotus), Dvaitic CakrābjaMaṇḍala, Christian Cross, Judaist Sefhira, and leading religio-architectural/sculptural representations, such as Mosque/Kaaba, Biblical Pyramid in a thoroughly metaphysical manner comprehensively. In this work, I propose to explore the metaphysics involved in the major world religions via the religious symbols (referring to both figures such as yantras and architectural representations) and arrive at their true metaphysical import, and thereby display the common metaphysical structure hidden in them. From such a study, it would become easier to work out the ethics, logic, and epistemology in a more accurate manner, in the respective system, in the years to come. A hypothesis is that the cultural practice and cultural symbols themselves are logically derivable from the metaphysical principles involved in these religions. However, working out the implications of this hypothesis is deferred for a future endeavour. I am aware that the proposed work is really vast and unwieldy. But I reiterate that if one wishes to do justice with the underlying

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metaphysics of world religions, then a piecemeal treatment of the topic is neither advisable nor is it possible, as major world religions have a smooth logical continuity. Therefore, approaching them in a piecemeal manner is fraught with the dangers of missing the kernel for the shell. Therefore, unless we make our point at one go—however hazy the same might be—there would be no beginning made at all for unravelling the grand metaphysical structure and synthesis of world religions, already carried out arguably first by Islam, and later—and presumably—by Sikhism and Baha’I. Of course, these exist as of now hidden from our open view. Generally, there are two types of religions: (1) non-synthetic and (2) synthetic. Included in the former are Hinduism (Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita, and Dvaita), Buddhism, Christianity and Judaism, and in the latter, Islam, Sikhism, and Baha’I. In this work, I have dealt with Islam alone under synthetic category. Of course, it is possible to construe Hinduism in its entire sweep as a special sort of synthetic religion. Furthermore, we should note that in some of the former type one could find some features of synthetic religions as well, even though the concerned original systems may not contain explicit statements to that effect. It is the former type—non-synthetic—that go to furnish the building blocks for a synthetic religion of a full-fledged nature.

1.1 Why understanding religious metaphysics is indispensable

In Kannada, there is a saying: *mullannumullinindaletageyabeku*, i.e. ‘thorn (can) should be removed by thorn alone’. Translated in this context, the saying means that the clash, which has its roots in religions, can be stopped or prevented *only* by the religions themselves. This is just like the pain, which has its source in a pricking thorn can be subdued only by another thorn that will remove the source of pain—the pricking thorn. In other words, religion alone can stop the conflict born out of religion. This is not to put two or more religions in opposition, rather, only when the true import of all major religions is understood as metaphysically grounded having a common synthetic structure, could the clash be averted.

We, the modern humans, are sub-species *homo sapiens sapiens* of the genus *homo* the human, the ‘wise men’. Yet it requires no proof to say that we are not wise enough to safeguard our own existence! In fact, we act in ways that invite our own extinction sooner than later. Professor Radhakrishnan, in a contrary vein of mass survival—rather than extinction, once said:

“The greatest event of our age is the meeting of cultures, meeting of civilizations, meeting of different points of view, making us understand that we

should not adhere to any one kind of single faith, but respect diversity of belief. That is what we should attempt to do. The iron curtain, so to say, which divided one culture from another, has broken down. It is good that we recognize and emphasize the need of man to regard other people, their cultures, their beliefs etc. to be more or less on the same level as our own cultures and our own civilizations. It is not a sign of weakening faith; it is a sign of increasing maturity. If man is unable to look upon other people’s cultures with sympathy and if he is not able to co-operate with them, then it only shows immaturity on the part of the human individual. We need co-operation, not conflict. It requires great courage in such difficult days as the present to speak of peace and co-operation. It is (easier) to talk of enemies, of conflict and war. We should try to resist that temptation. Our attempt should always be to co-operate, to bring together people, to establish friendship and have some kind of a right world in which we can live together in happiness, harmony and friendship. Let us therefore realize that this increasing maturity should express itself in this capacity to understand what other points of view are.”¹

There can be no doubt that the humanity is passing through an extremely difficult phase—cynically called the ‘era of clash of civilizations’—that has the potential to wipe out the humanity from the face of the earth. At the root of the clash, surely are the ‘clashing religions’ or their ‘clashing ideas’. If a foundational synthesis containing in it the metaphysical aspects that are universal—including different understandings of one’s own Self, the Universe, the God and the Absolute, and their comparability, and so on—can be provided, then it may kindle a glimmer of hope for humanity’s survival, especially in a world that is getting increasingly globalized.

Radhakrishnan—the philosopher king—who was the second president of India, cherished an unflinching optimism with regard to peaceful co-existence of civilizations even on the face of instability of times which he designated as ‘difficult days as the present’. Radhakrishnan made this statement in 1965 much before Samuel Phillips Huntington published his *Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (1996). After Huntington, one could still pose a question: would Radhakrishnan have held this optimism if he were to be exposed to the horrors of the like which Huntington implies as a result of clash of civilizations, and which, in some measure, have already actualized in the late twentieth century and in the first decade of twenty-first

¹ Radhakrishnan (1965).

century, and are continuing?² One could be tempted to say: ‘it is extremely unlikely’, if not a firm ‘No’. Yet, perhaps Radhakrishnan might never have budged an inch from his position. If we look at the second part of the title in ‘Clash....’, we would note that there is a possibility of the ‘Remaking of World Order’ envisaged by Huntington. Taking cue from this ‘remaking’, Radhakrishnan, in all likelihood, would have focused on this ‘remaking’, and thereby continued to stick to his unflinching optimism of peaceful co-existence of civilizations. Of course, the way in which Radhakrishnan would have envisioned the ensuing ‘order’, most likely, would have been different from that of Huntington’s—i.e. not so much in political terms as an attempt at articulating the underlying unity of deepest religious consciousness itself.

The nomenclature ‘clash of civilizations’ sounds a little too harsh and unforgiving, since it apparently presents a surreal conception of a temporally continuous and spatially dense conflict involving each and every human being of every culture and civilization of every hue and colour. However, it appears that this cannot be the case due to the very deep embedment of positive religious consciousness itself in the civilizational psyche, as opposed to the destructive force produced by the *same* religious consciousness, albeit *externally*. This situation is/can be understood by the oxymoron involved in the phrase ‘clash of civilizations’ itself. Yet, there is some such potential scenario—howsoever obscure it may look—which, if materialized, could wreak havoc to humanity. If such is the case, then it could, perhaps, be best called as the clash of ‘monotonous barbarians’ rather than of ‘dynamic civilizations’. However, we should not fail to appreciate a great deal of truth contained in Huntington’s term ‘clash’. Even then, should not we trace the ‘clash’ to a concept that is more fundamental containing within it two opposites that mark both ‘civilization’ and ‘barbarism’, without forgoing the causal efficacy of the said concept to generate ‘clash’ or ‘remaking of world order’—in order to reduce or if possible, to eliminate altogether—the oxymoronic intent contained in the phrase ‘clash of civilizations’? In fact, Huntington lays emphasis on ‘ancient religious empires’ as the roots of clash. However, this is couched in political terms without the actual explication of religious metaphysics behind the same. Somewhere, Huntington even uses the term ‘clash of religions’ without actually explicating the core of religions itself. If we succeed in tracing out a more fundamental concept that is the ‘cause’ of clash, then, in all likelihood, it would be ‘religion’—and perhaps

‘religion alone’. This is because for every human being—with a very few negligible exceptions—‘religion’ is more close than the jugular vein. In every clash, takes place an offsetting of something that is closest to heart. Generally, for the occurrence of a clash, mainly three conditions need to be met: one, what is closest to heart must be offset; two, this offsetting must take place in the psyche *en masse* in a unitary time locus; three, there must be an opposing force more or less equally powerful against the *en masse* offset that has taken place. By extension, for a clash of ‘barbaric civilizational’ magnitude, Religion alone fits the bill. Religion being closest to heart and also its offsetting can alone take place *en masse* (directly or indirectly) in a unitary time locus, with an opposing counter-force more or less equally powerful, can slither us into the abyss of civilizational clash. In this view, religion connotes both civilizational intelligence of the highest order and the barbarism of the most hideous kind. In other words, religion contains both the seeds of intelligence of highest kind and the terrible *external* potential (misunderstanding of the religion’s concepts by some minds) to lead humankind to devastation of the worst magnitude.

While this paper deals with religions and their synthesis, one will neither find ‘concepts’ within religions that generate clash, nor a solution to the conflict, in black-and-white and being directly dealt with. What this paper essentially endeavours to do is to metaphysically synthesize the religions, or better, unravel their synthetic structure—a structure that is presumed to exist but which has remained concealed so far. However, the present synthesis can be understood to be capable of indicating the exact locus of ‘misconception’ regarding different religious notions that are at the root of almost all civilizational clashes. Methodology to identify such misconceptions, in principle, is to juxtapose relevant historical/sociological clash-potential concepts with the relevant concepts from this Synthesis for a logical entailment or, otherwise, comparison and contrast. By doing this, the differential—the true generators or causes of clash—will be uncovered/identified and laid bare, and eventually, the same may be banished from the human psyche altogether to remove or prevent clash itself. In this way, both the problem and the solution can be identified with the assistance from the foundational ideas—both socio-metaphysical and purely metaphysical—made out in this work overtly or covertly.

2 Religious metaphysics: introduction

I shall present a summary statement of religious metaphysics here below. I hope this will succeed in its intention of familiarizing the reader with certain key concepts and terms. This paper is mainly based on a metaphysical

² Wheaton (2008) “The New York Times obituary on Samuel Huntington notes,...., that his “emphasis on ancient religious empires, as opposed to states or ethnicities, [as sources of global conflict] gained.... more cachet after the Sept. 11 attacks.””.

understanding of leading symbols of major world religions. My endeavour here, therefore, is to express what exactly constitutes the metaphysical meaning of major religious symbols including how metaphysical synthesis is carried out by Islam. The term ‘religious symbols’ used here basically means ‘yantra’, or ‘tāntric diagram’, or ‘maṇḍala’, or ‘architectural representation’, and the like. In accordance with this, only particularly chosen leading symbols of the major world religions are taken into account for analysis and synthesis. We have mainly chosen, for example, ŚrīCakra of Saundaryalaharī (Advaita), common feature of Buddhist maṇḍalas, Pyramid of Giza (Khufu, Cheops)/Gopuram of Tirupati for Christianity/Viśiṣṭādvaita, Kaaba of Islam, Christian Cross as 4D tesseract, CakrābjaMaṇḍala of Dvaita, Sephirot of Judaism—Yosher and Iggulim.

The statement and elucidation of the ‘common metaphysical structure’ is the core objective of this endeavour. In doing so, I would *not* speak *about* some meaning of leading religious symbols already made out by some or the other author/s; rather the meaning I would put forward will be entirely novel save the intentions of the founders of the systems themselves. My claim for ‘exactitude’ of meaning is to be construed as indicative and not comprehensive. However, the claim for the meaning made out here does presume that the metaphysical meaning/s I make out of different religious symbols correspond/s to its/their originally intended metaphysical meaning and that such meaning/s, therefore, already exist *albeit* in a concealed manner, i.e. without clear propositional expression to that effect, or at least partly so, within the concerned religious domains, including Islam’s. Reasons for ambiguity or intended cryptic nature of propositions in original scriptures can be manifold—ranging from desire to keep certain matters secretive to the loss of important manuscripts that might have elucidated the cryptic statements. This idea of the correspondence of meaning, basically, stems from the fact that usually a good linguistic description of state-of-affairs and its diagrammatic representation, if any, have a mutual one-to-one correspondence. Hence, certain concerned propositions stated in the scriptures (and/or important commentaries such as *bhāṣya* on them) as a description of state-of-affairs (or their implications) will have to correspond with the physical representation of them through diagrams, or yantras or maṇḍala/s, or architecture. Since all required descriptive statements of the systems are not available or are in some ambiguous state, required description needs to be supplied afresh and as far as possible, in entirety. These being the case, once the meanings of concerned religious symbols are supplied explicitly and substantively to the scriptural statements, it follows that whatever linguistic description existing in the concerned scriptures necessarily reflects the conceptual

design and meaning of the concerned symbol/s, directly or indirectly, we make of them (the religious symbols). However, these statements cannot be compartmentalized; rather they will form a continuous whole and form a logically cohesive body of propositions. The test of validity of the enterprise largely and ultimately rests on the comprehensiveness and the quality of the meanings that are made of and attributed to the symbols along with their logical correspondence with the original scriptural statements thereof. It is important to note that in making out the metaphysical meaning/s of these symbols, I, almost entirely, confine to the ‘metaphysical’ content alone and would not drift away to other aspects of the religions, even though, at times, I may borrow a few concepts from other domains to facilitate/strengthen the metaphysical meaning/s that are made out. I do concede that there indeed are other types of propositions in the originals, which may not directly reflect the metaphysical, but only state for example, the ethical, historical, cultural, actional. These other types of propositions or their diagrammatic counter-part, if any, will not constitute the subject-matter of the present endeavour. However, it is held that these other types of propositions are generally the consequence of the elucidated metaphysical propositions.

The need to re-stating or re-expressing the ‘meaning/s’ of symbols has arisen because neither what is extant as linguistic propositions in the scriptures/commentaries have been sufficiently clear to the modern mind, nor have the religious symbols been understood as being in consonance with the scriptural statements, even remotely. Perhaps there could be a handful of exceptions to this, but these exceptions seem to be in the domain of non-metaphysical statements/propositions such as ethical. If at all there are some proper understandings of metaphysical propositions available in the contemporary times, then they are so mostly by default or mere coincidence, rather than by conscious awareness of the comprehensive framework. Thus, there is a lack of clear understanding of the foundation of the religions as Metaphysics in both domains of linguistic propositions of the scriptures, and the meaning of the symbols. More seriously, it is also a fact that there is the clashing understanding between different religious scriptures and/or their respective symbols. Thus, where two claims about certain ‘concept’ such as ‘God’—contradictingly exist between two different religions, it is a matter of logical conclusion that both cannot be true. Hence, elucidation is necessary in and through, and if possible, a comprehensive metaphysical analysis and synthesis.

2.1 The ‘metaphysical’

What does the term ‘metaphysical’ mean? The meaning of this term is dependent partly on the term ‘physical’. What

is beyond the physical is ‘metaphysical’. This ‘beyond’ can be understood as the realm for the actual ‘existence’ of certain non-physical entity and constitutes a state to which there is no physical/empirical access; even then, the physical may act perhaps as a boundary line between the metaphysical and itself. Further, it can even be said that such a metaphysical state does allow initial access to human consciousness or the awareness by the subjectual experience of a special sort, known in general Vedāntic parlance as *aparokṣa*, ‘non-indirect experience’, as in one’s own inner Self. This is the same as the core-subject, or consciousness, which is by its very nature not objectual, but subjectual. Hence, the term ‘metaphysical’ may essentially mean ‘consciousness’ per se—individual or cosmic—whose nature, form, and function may vary in different thought-systems, with some common strand arguably running through all of them.

It must be noted that all major world religions have mutual metaphysical continuity in a hidden manner. In other words, all major world religions, (1) for their metaphysics, bank upon the possibility of reaching the ‘beyond’ the physical by venturing into the subjectual ‘consciousness’, in one way or the other, (2) permit logical movement from one system to the other, while leaving some space for distinctness and difference of each system. An individual’s reaching the ‘beyond’ marks in each religion a departure to the state of liberation from the Social Contract and marks the relation (including ‘nullity’ and ‘identity’ as relations) between the ‘region of liberation’ (which is with certain ‘ontological content’) and the individual soul (if any) and (3) contain some or the other material design of the Universe along with what is beyond it. By showing the material design and what exists beyond it, the metaphysical meaning of different religions and their synthesis, as in Islam, can be demonstrated.

2.2 Consciousness, the physical and mathematics

Buddhism, Hinduism (three major schools of Vedānta—Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita and Dvaita), Judaism, Christianity and Islam, are all religious thought-systems, which speak of the realm of ‘beyond’; and in the process of establishing the ‘beyond’, they evolve certain designs of the ‘physical’, which are unique and distinct to each religion. These designs are called as Individuating Factors (‘I-Factor/s’). Thus, the ‘beyond’ has an essential reference to the ‘physical’ inasmuch as the ‘physical’ provides a sort of boundary line between itself and the ‘beyond’. In a way, it may be said that the designs of the physical are projected ‘on’ the canvass of ‘consciousness’, (the ‘beyond’, the ‘transcendental’, the ‘metaphysical’). However, the question is: ‘how do we logically arrive at the

‘canvass of consciousness’ itself, in the first place?’ See below Sect. 3.1 and 3.2. The ‘canvass of consciousness’ is provided by the Advaitic Brahman. This canvass is also known as ‘Block of Hypersurfaces’.

Let us note that the unique designs of the ‘physical’ provided by different systems are broadly based on the conceptions of different states/modes of the Universe, which are basically three—Destruction, Creation and Sustenance. These designs, arguably, are further based on the number of dimensions conceived for an ‘object’, ‘the Universe’, and also for the ‘beyond’, which in turn gives rise to geometrical models, or vice versa. This process of moving from ontology (physical/metaphysical) to geometry (mathematics) may be called as geometrization of the ‘object’ or ‘ontology’. Alternatively, attempting to locate ontological counterpart to what are basically mathematical/geometrical models may be called as ontologization of the logical/mathematical models. Basically, both these processes involve some form of mathematics and ontology. Hence, a specialized treatment of these processes may make technical use of appropriate terms in a more elaborate manner in a different work. Suffice it here to say that Buddhism (ālayavijñāna), Advaita, and Viśiṣṭādvaita/Christianity may be considered as examples for geometrization of ontology and Judaism and Dvaita may be example for ontologization of geometrical/mathematical models. Islam may be considered as a combination of these two processes. In either case, ontology and geometry/mathematics become essential components for the understanding of the ‘beyond’. At the end, *ontologization* of mathematical/geometrical models or *mathematization/geometrization* of the ontology would both ensure (1) truth to the religious thought-systems as they are a priori (or *a priori* their ontology) and (2) facilitation to hypothesize the *actual* existence of both the ‘physical’ and the ‘metaphysical’. In view of these a priori models, it is no wonder that the designs of the Universe from the Eastern part of the globe have some kind of identical—or near-identical—counter-parts in the religions of the Abrahamic Tradition or vice versa. However, historically, there may be some variance in their exposition, which is basically inconsequential to the present overall metaphysical point of view and framework. Further, it may be noted that it is the a priori nature of the system that ensures truth to the scriptural testimony in which such expositions are originally made.

2.3 The framework

Until we understand the conceptual framework of the metaphysics of world religions provided here, we must hold back our anxiety to locate exact references for all our

claims from the scriptures or the commentaries on them. Or else, we would end up in a chaos through part-understood or totally non-understood metaphysical framework and land up in a muddle that would not be easy to clear-up. This is because, as hinted already, most of our understandings of the original scriptures or religious symbols/architecture are vague or ambiguous or at any rate are unaided by an appropriate framework and is without holistic comprehension. One important reason for this haziness and the absence of holistic comprehension could be our total disconnect with the tradition that has taken place over a period of time. The present fact that most original sources are mired in some or the other controversy—such as, historical—adds to our desolate path. Moreover, vast branchings and sub-branchings of almost all religious thought-systems land us up in untold academic misery. However, we are confident that appropriate references from the originals will be cited and each branching will yield itself for a thorough and appropriate metaphysical inquiry, once there is the understanding of the holistic framework that we suggest in this work. The above caveat is because unless and until we arrive at and understand some comprehensive framework—be it this or any other framework—clearly, it is difficult—nay impossible—to understand the religions in their metaphysical grandeur because of pervasive vagueness. And, we are sure that when our own framework is understood in its essentials, it would become amply clear that the written matter available in various scriptures simply fit into the framework—such as a well-sutured dress fits the body-physique for which it is sewn. And this is so because of the above said correspondence between the diagrammatic representations and their linguistic description and expression. Of course, it may be possible to locate certain relative discrepancies in the framework vis-à-vis the scriptures or commentaries (when the concerned originals are of doubtful nature). But, I am sure, most of such discrepancies would fizzle out as soon as certain (permanent/ad hoc) modifications (if required) in the metaphysical framework itself are incorporated. Of course, we have to keep in view the possible difference in readings by different subsequent author/s over an inordinately long stretch of time spanning over few hundred/thousand years, as the case may be. Alternatively, we have the option to ignore certain ‘originals’ indeed, which are of doubtful nature.

3 Destruction mode: outside view

While dealing with the concept of Adhyāsa (superimposition) of Śāṅkara’s Advaita, Daya Krishna (DK), way back in 1965, wrote an interesting title: ‘*Adhyāsa—A Non-Advaitic Beginning in ŚāṅkaraVedānta*’ in *Philosophy East*

and West.³ Implicit to this title is the requirement of two entities—instead of the single Non-Dual One—for the *adhyāsa* to occur at all, and this gets reflected once again in a more focused way in his ‘*Is “TattvamAsi” the same type of identity statement as the Morning Star is the Evening Star?*’⁴

There can be no doubt that DK with his very common sense logical viewpoint was nevertheless on the right track when he imagined the logical necessity of ‘two’ entities for the ‘identification’ of one with the other as in *adhyāsa* or as in ‘*Tat tvamasi*’. The two entities he imagined with regard to ‘*Tat tvamasi*’ are as follows: (1) the Ātman, i.e. one’s own self (*tvam*: ‘you’); and (2) the ‘theoretical’ (*tat*: ‘That’) (generally, ‘Brahman’), the Brahman—and which is ‘out’ there in the Universe (or actually, ‘outside’ of the Universe, which ‘outside’ DK missed out somehow) for an ‘identity’ to be spoken out at all. However, the error of DK consists in his weak and fledgling understanding of the so-called ‘theoretical’ entity, which arguably, he thought has no ontological existence. Moreover, DK missed out and wasted an excellent opportunity to visualize the ontological location of the ‘Consciousness’ (Brahman) outside (of the material Universe), by hasty characterization of the second entity as merely ‘theoretical’. Another vital error of DK, in the context of *adhyāsa*, is that he failed to recognize the necessity of characterizing the illusory entity involved in the *adhyāsa* as *ad hoc but actual* in its ontological existence, within Advaita. As such this illusory entity is an ‘attribute’ and is fleeting. Later we shall see that ‘Universe’ itself becomes a *real* attribute of the substance-‘Brahman’ in Viśiṣṭādvaita/Christianity. Rather, DK appears to have made a case for full-fledged existence for the Material Universe by implication, rather than making it *ad hoc*, without noticing the logical force of Śāṅkara’s *Adhyāsa* where the ‘attribute’ is always illusory, fleeting and impermanent. All these DK has done at the expense of the highest Reality the Brahman and His eternal existence, which he calls as merely ‘theoretical’. DK also failed to notice the notion of time as inseparably coupled with the concept of *adhyāsa* (superimposition) of Śāṅkara. Had he recognized this point of *ad hoc* existence of the Universe in Advaita, he would have perhaps eventually arrived at the Material Universe in totality, ‘existence’ of which is *extremely critical* for arriving at the very concept of what is non-material and eternal, the alleged theoretical entity—the Consciousness Brahman—even while making the ‘Material Universe’ an *ad hoc* entity (Māyā) without according to it an equal status on par with the Brahman.

³ *Philosophy East and West* (1965).

⁴ *IPQ* (1998).

However, for our own purpose, such a material (or ‘Material Universe’) in its seed form can be called as Primordial Singularity (PS). And time is born with the PS. In fact, it is this PS and its specimen in the 3D world—an ordinary object—as time-impregnated object are what historically have set the philosophical thought-process into motion, in and through Buddhist philosophy, long before Śaṅkara could come up with his systematized Advaita. In fact, Judaist and Buddhist metaphysics, roughly, in its stage of Theravāda (and which almost shares chronological contemporaneity with Judaism), have more similarities than thought, as both, more or less expound the ‘inside view’ of the Universe, where Buddhism in its various schools expounds different views of the Universe, including ‘outside’ and ‘inside’ views. However, Buddhism is called ‘Extreme Outside View’ in our scheme, because the so-called Universe vanishes into thin air as if it is being viewed from a ‘great distance’. After all, the ultimate thesis of Buddhism is that there is neither the Universe nor an enduring self, both of which ‘appear’ to persist *ad hoc*.

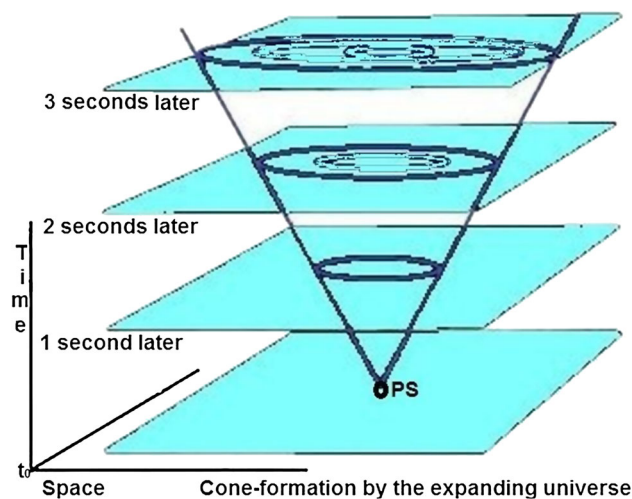
3.1 Buddhism: Buddhist Maṇḍala (extreme outside view)

3.1.1 Time

One of the most crucial Buddhist theses is that time affects every object, and therefore, no object remains the same for more than a second, *kṣaṇa*. This doctrine is well-known as Kṣaṇikavāda or the Doctrine of Momentariness. This Buddhist thesis directly takes us to conceive an object as having 4 dimensions—3 space dimensions and 1 time dimension. As a matter of fact, dimensions are what basically enable the existence of an object as an identifiable entity. The dimensions lend the object a ‘name’ and ‘form’. In this view, then, attributes *per se* like for instance, blueness, of an object are not dimension/s in a mathematical sense. For the Ultimate Consciousness—the Canvass—the material Universe becomes an attribute with 4 dimensions, as we shall see later both in Christianity and Viśiṣṭādvaita.

3.1.2 Mapping of 4D objects on 3D and 2D graphs

How do we map 4Ds on a plain paper’s 2D surface? To map so, first, we have to drop or ignore one of the 3 space dimensions and make it a 2D circular hypercircle. Since the object is changing in time (usually, change is denoted as expansion of an object), time, on a perspectival 3D graph, is represented on the vertical axis.



When we drop one space dimension from an expanding sphere, we get a hypercircle. We then join the circumferences of expanding hypercircles. So we get a cone—a 4D cone on a perspectival 3D graph. When we drop one more space dimension from this cone, we get a triangle mapped on a 2D surface with 2 axes—1 time (vertical) and 1 space dimension (horizontal). In Buddhism, the ultimate material object is PS (expanded/non-expanded). This PS initially begins to expand from its tiniest existence—including its form as ‘nullity’ or ‘Nothingness’, (or in its form as identity with ‘some other Nothing’, where the identity could be expressible as $x = y$). PS takes the shape of a sphere in normal 3D space, or as 4D cone as in 3D perspectival spacetime graph (see figure above). Similar graph can be constructed for a contracting cone, which ultimately results in PS as a (hollow) dot-sphere. In Buddhism, this PS annihilates into Nothingness both in its ultimate states of expansion and contraction. Since, the so-called ‘Ātman’ in Buddhism is entirely dependent upon materiality, when the matter annihilates, the Ātman also annihilates, necessarily, without trace, and Śūnya will be the end-result.

3.1.3 Unification of temporally scattered object

If an object changes in time then there has to be a unifier of the changing object in order that one could speak about the ‘change of the object’ itself. Who is the unifier of temporal moments (or cognitions) with regard to this ‘changing object’, the PS? Our answer to this question will also constitute answer to an earlier question: ‘...how do we logically arrive at the ‘canvass’ itself, in the first place?’ Buddhism has an *ad hoc* unifier consciousness both in the ‘inside view’ (Kṣaṇikavāda/Sautrāntika and Vaibhāṣika) and ‘outside view’ (ālayavijñāna). This unifier consciousness takes the form of a cube, which is the ‘canvass’, or Block of Hypersurface.

3.1.4 Expansion of PS, hypersurface, and concept of time

Light is accepted to be the fastest material entity ever with a speed of about 300,000 km/s. An important quality of light is that it travels in all directions with constant speed from its initial appearance regardless of the speed of the source from where it is emitted or the medium in which it traverses. This implies that, for example, after one second, the light would form a sphere of light with a radius of 300,000 kms. The light sphere would continue to expand once it is emitted. For every observer who is moving with relatively negligible finite speed, after one second in his watch, the light appears to have travelled exactly the same distance (app. 300,000 kms.) as it appears to a given observer, even if two observers are separated by, say, 50 kms. This does not simply mean that the distance of 50 km is inconsequential; rather it has implication on the notion of time itself. Further, it means that the ‘normal simultaneity’ that we all experience will crumble at the cosmic distance of 300,000 kms and more. That the time ‘now’ is no more the same for observers located at distant points in the Universe, inasmuch as it is actually not the same for observers at small distances as well, logically speaking. If so, can there be a Universal Simultaneity? Before proceeding further, now, let us substitute the light with the PS, so that the light cone would become the Material Universe cone.

Yes, definitely we can have a universal simultaneity conceptually speaking. If we pull apart all space points and spread them out as if on a 2D surface, then we will get a 2D Hypersurface. This is a surface with minute thickness belonging to the third dimension of a normal 3D space point. It is somewhere *on* this infinite (because space is infinite) 2D Hypersurface we must place the PS initially at time t_0 . The time, in which the expansion of the PS takes place, is marked on what was earlier the third spatial dimension on a 3D perspectival graph, i.e. the vertical axis.

If I become aware of an object, in the normal course of my epistemic interaction with an object, it may be said that my awareness has enveloped the object just as the space envelops a normal object in 3D. Consciousness ‘in fact’ travels through this space and envelops (or supposed to envelop) the object from all sides. Thus, the hypersurface, which comprises the self-same normal space points, can, in principle, be endowed with consciousness. If the PS is enveloped by the ‘Consciousness’ at ‘zero’ time, so is it enveloped by consciousness at times $\{t_1, t_2, t_3, \dots, t_n\}$ etc., in the course of its expansion. This is because the very idea of expansion or change of the ‘same’ object presupposes the existence of unifying consciousness that does not change and is all-pervasive. In this way, ‘several’ identical hypersurfaces are piled up, which now surround the expanding object. So we get a Block of Hypersurfaces. A

Block of Hypersurface (BoH)—the consciousness block ‘*prajñānamghanah*’—is created from outside of the cone, for both its expansion and contraction phases. In Buddhism, this *ghanah* (cube/solid) is itself the ālayavijñāna, with some minor variation from the *ghanah* or cube of Advaita and is *ad hoc* in nature. However, the initial Theravāda Buddhism is heavily a view of temporal cognitions from the inside of the object, which in this case is PS. In this case, a ‘hollow’ space inside the PS is culled out. Such hollow space is attributed with consciousness—and preferably named as Buddha consciousness. Some more details of this thought will be stated in the ‘inside view’ of Judaism/Dvaita.

In Buddhism, we know that the destruction of the matter leads to the destruction of the ‘consciousness.’ Hence, we get ‘Nothing’ at the end. Such ‘Nothing’ posits that there is neither the object nor the subject at the end. It is a matter of construal which way one would like to paint the picture of this ‘Nothing’—whether as a ‘conscious state’ similar to Advaitic Brahman or as unblemished pure ‘Nothing’. If the ‘Subject’, in every conceivable way is assumed as, absent along with any ‘object’, then it would be pure or ‘Absolute Nothing’. If the ‘Subject’ is accepted to exist in a sort of ‘pure form’ without any ‘object’ then the ensuing (so-called) Śūnya would be identical to Advaitic Brahman, and hence, it would be the Subject, even while the ‘Nothing’, solely resulting from object’s negation/annihilation, may continue to persist.

3.2 Śaṅkara’s Advaita: ŚrīCakra (moderate outside view)

In contrast, in Śaṅkara’s Advaita, the ālayavijñāna is developed further in such a way that the enveloping BoH is taken to its logical limit. Hence, the BoH becomes a ‘complete solid block’ without even a minute hole in it and is attributed with infinity and would not allow any real movement or change for itself in any form whatsoever, nor will it allow such movement to take place within its body. Even the PS, which is supposed to move, will be permitted to move merely as an appearance and not as a real movement within the BoH, since there is no space where BoH does not exist. The only ‘space’ for PS’s movement being the ‘body’ of the BoH, the PS in all its forms is a ghost and its movement, ghostly movement, as it is, and moves within the body of BoH. In fact, the BoH ‘penetrates’ the Universe in such a way that it makes it a ghost. The so-called ‘change’ in Universe in no way effects a change in the BoH, because after all, unifier of the change cannot change itself in any way whatsoever—spatially, or temporally or internally or externally. The BoH, the NirguṇaBrahman (NB) (attributeless Brahman), is thus *kūṭasthanitya*—rock-like permanent. What is actually

happening between the Universe and the BoH is that gradually increasing amount of volume of BoH gets ‘involved’ with the expansion of the PS, but completely unreal. The expansion or even the existence of a material particle itself demonstrates the temporal incompatibility between the time element of the BoH (which is marked by simultaneity and presentness) and that of the Material entity. In the beginning, i.e., at the Buddhist development of ālayavijñāna, it seems to have been realized already that there cannot be any relation between the PS and the background on which it makes appearance. However, in the ālayavijñāna, it seems to have been thought that ‘some kind of consciousness’ (of the nature of BoH) could in fact envelop the expanding cone of the PS. While so enveloping, the Buddhist BoH could maintain time consonance between itself and the PS. However, to the utter dismay of the ālayavijñāni—and more so for the Advaitin—the incompatibility continued to persist because of the conceived simultaneity of time in the BoH on one hand and ever-growing non-simultaneity (due to expansion of PS) on the other, could never be reconciled. Buddhism, in order to deny such possible incompatibility, finally denies the Universe and the so-called unifying subject in totality. Advaita, on the contrary, construes the Universe to be ‘unreal’ or ‘illusory’, and there could be no real relation between the Real and the illusory. And the only Real is Brahman.

The Buddhist episode of material entity’s total ‘annihilation’ is converted by Advaitin merely into a sort of magical disappearance, only for its re-appearance later, within the Advaita. Thus, there would be no time when a complete ‘Nothing’ of Buddhism—a state where either the object ceases to exist or Subject ceases to exist or both cease to exist—is realized within Advaita. Rather, the Universe indeed is an illusion or Māyā in Advaita. On the theoretical plane, the Advaita disallows the ‘Nothing’ of Buddhism through an epistemological twist—after all, how does one claim his own absence anytime, by claiming—‘*nāhamasmi*’—‘I do not exist’? Thus, Buddha’s non-existence of the ‘subject’ becomes a mere ‘psychological possibility’ without an epistemological confirmation of the same to a perceiving Subject by a subjectual experience of profound nature as in *aparokṣa*. Hence ontologically the psychological Nothing has no corresponding entity.

The PS, in its contracting mode, gives rise to Event Horizon, as in the case of a star.

As the star contracts, the gravitational field at its surface gets stronger and the *light cones get bent inward more*. This makes it more difficult for light from the star to escape, and light appears dimmer and redder to an observer at a distance. Eventually when the star has shrunk to a certain critical radius, the

gravitational field at the surface becomes so strong that the light cones are bent inward so much that light can no longer escape. (Figure 6.1) According to the theory of relativity, nothing can travel faster than light. Thus if light cannot escape, neither can anything else; everything is dragged back by the gravitational field. So one has a set of events, a region of space–time, from which it is not possible to escape to reach a distant observer. This region is what we now call a black hole. Its boundary is called the event horizon and it coincides with the paths of light rays that just fail to escape from the blackhole.⁵[*Italics mine.*]

In this way, we get a region of space–time from where nothing escapes. Thus, whatever is within this region, and the whole region exists as an object opposed to the subject. It is a different matter that there could be a ‘subject’ located within this region to look at certain ‘other’ as the ‘object’. However, when one considers the BoH—the Subject Consciousness—along with the said region of space–time, but from outside of it, along with a *real* relation between them, a totality of the {Subject object} is obtained and the totality so obtained is known as Saguṇa Brahman. The Event Horizon—the Śivaliṅga—in itself is the mark of the Saguṇa Brahman to indicate the location of creation potency regarding the Universe, which potency, however, is wielded by a subject (Īśvara) who views the Universe in a *real* manner. Such a mark also constitutes the mark of the NB Himself, because outside of such an Event Horizon exists the NB in an unblemished and unchanging manner. So, if one confines solely to the BoH, without according any ontological status to the Universe (Event Horizon), then such a BoH will be known as NB. And, from the viewpoint of NB, there is no real world or Universe. If NB chooses to view the Universe at all, then the Universe would only be a shadow- or ghost-like entity for the NB. However, if NB ‘views’ the Universe as a real entity with performance of actions such as creation, then such a viewer of the Universe will be called as Saguṇa Brahman rather than NB. Thus, NB is defined as ‘*satyam, jñānam, anantam*’ in his *per essentium* definition (*svarūpalakṣaṇa*) and defined as the cause of creation, etc. as in *janmādyasyayataḥ* by *per accidens* (*taṭasthalakṣaṇa*).

While the Buddhist thesis of Nothingness becomes a purely psychological possibility without any corresponding claim for an epistemologically identifiable ontological state, we have a different story to tell in Advaita. In Advaita, both the ‘state’ of Universe and the ‘ground’ on which it is supposed to exist have ontological reality. Both Buddhism and Advaita conceive the Universe in its

⁵ Hawking (1988, p. 50).

Destruction Mode in some way or the other. While no view of destroyed Universe obtains in the Buddhism, the ‘view’ of the destroyed Universe (or otherwise) obtained in Advaita is purely an illusion and this view is entirely from ‘outside’ of the Universe, which view, as such, takes no cognizance of the Universe. Just as an object when viewed from an extreme distance away from it, the ‘object’ is non-existent for the viewer, we have in Buddhism, the ‘view’ of the complete Universe that never obtains, because the subject who is dependent on the material goes on diminishing in his own constitution, and when the matter completely vanishes, the subject also vanishes into thin air making it impossible to view the resulting ‘Nothingness’. Therefore, the Buddhist view can be aptly construed as ‘extreme outside view’ or ‘psychological view’, rather than ontological view of the Universe. Therefore, it may be an ‘Absolute Destruction’ ‘view’ as well. In contrast, Advaitic view may be called as ‘Moderate Outside View’.

4 Creation mode: middle view

No doubt, the Advaitin had created a BoH in right earnest. But the NB—the BoH—does not permit either a real creation or for that matter, even a real destruction of the Universe. This implies that if one wishes to have real creation of the Universe, then he must move the Universe away from the BoH or must retain only the initial hypersurface or some such thing. In any case, the dimension in which the Universe exists has to be different from the ‘simultaneity Hypersurface/Block’, which is a 2D surface.

It may be noted that in the theories of Ālayavijñāna and Advaita, there is some Blockhood. The former conceived it as an ad hoc entity, and the latter conceived it as permanent and all-pervasive. Both these systems had done so, respectively, for the purpose of satisfying the requirement of unification of the temporally ‘changing object’. In addition, such a Block vanishes after sometime in Ālayavijñāna and in Advaita, the Block never vanishes and never moves. In the whole Advaitic process, as we already know, the BoH ‘swallowed’ the Universe and made a ghost out of the Universe, *as it were*. It must be pointed out, however, that the Block, which was conceived mainly for the purpose of unification of the changing object, *could not* perform its assigned task, since the Block became totally ineffective as a unifier of change as it ‘devoured’ the very changing object it was supposed to unify, thus changed the ‘object’s’ nature.

Therefore, in order to ensure the real creation of a real Universe, and a real unification of its expansion, first and foremost we must remove the Universe from the belly of the BoH. Thus, for [both Christianity—historically Christianity needs to be further investigated upon)and] Viśiṣṭādvaita of Rāmānuja, the immediate concern is to

create a logically viable unificatory process even while removing the ghostly nature of the Universe by removing it from the belly of the BoH. This removal implies the creation of a new dimension for the Universe, unlike the BoH. The new dimension will be the third dimension in the 4D spacetime graph.

We know that the BoH denotes graphically a 4D infinite object. However, whether we have a BoH or a single hypersurface, the logical point to remember within Advaita is the simultaneity of time. Whatever happens within the BoH in Advaita. On the contrary, if the Universe is to be created in a real manner and should be made to exist in a real manner, then it has to be an effect of the BoH *outside* of it without the created Universe being engulfed by the BoH. If so, there may be a single hypersurface ‘on’ which a single particle (dimensioned point) is made to appear. In so doing, the single hypersurface (or the BoH) becomes a single point called dimensionless point (DP), since the simultaneity of time exists at any two given points of the given hypersurface. And it is from this DP, the creation proceeds by positing a sort of dimensioned point—a point which is the initial particle—just separated from the DP itself.

However, the DP in Viśiṣṭādvaita itself involves essentially two real entities in an identity of the form of $x = x$, which later becomes $x = y$ (as in Pascal triangle symmetry, where both $x = x$ and $x = y$ hold true)—the consciousness and the potential matter.⁶ Matter—potential or manifested—is the attribute of the Consciousness. They always exist in an inseparable state. However, when the differentiation (not separation) between them commences there appears a physical point/particle, the dimensioned point. Such a particle, when pushed vertically downwards, gives birth to 1D line. This line when pushed horizontally gives birth to 2D plane. Plane when pushed vertically down gives birth to a 3D cube. Finally, when the 3D cube is pushed horizontally, it results in a tesseract. This 4D tesseract is the BrahmāṇḍaKośa. The sense of upwards–downwards, etc. requires human-like figure. In Christianity, the tesseract is the 4D space—this Universe—where Jesus Christ incarnates with the process of Kenosis being complete.

The edges of all the different formations beginning from 1D line to 4D tesseract form the unificatory line. Of course, all the changes finally report to the DP. Hence the DP—the erstwhile BoH—is the ultimate unifier, even while the edge line forms the middle because it exists between the created object and the DP, the BoH. BoH being the First Cube as in Advaita, all states of affairs of the material universe will occur within this First Cube. Then, logically, the dimensioned point and the 1D line, etc. will all be inside this First Cube. If 1D line is going to be the unifying line as a

⁶ It clearly appears that Buddhism, Advaita, Viśiṣṭādvaita and Dvaita, are in a Fibonacci series—{Zero, One, One, Two, Three, ..., n }.

Hamiltonian path, then this path will lie in between the ‘real content’ of the object and the First Cube (or DP or BoH). Therefore, the view of Universe obtained here is Middle View.

Since the DP is virtually the Advaitic 4D (or infinite D) BoH, different stages of creations with further sub-stages are conceived within such a BoH, and each stage is unified by the Hamiltonian Path beginning with 1D line and moving on to all apexes of 2D square-surface, 3D cube, 4D tesseract, etc. Different stages of creation illustrate spiral-line expansion of the Universe from its PS-hood in consonance with Fibonacci series. Pascal’s triangle in its Pyramidic form corresponds to the whole process of real creation both in Christianity and Viśiṣṭādvaita. The capstone of the Giza is ‘missing’, because it contains a 1D line and upper tip is the dimensioned point and further above is DP, the BoH, within which rest of the pyramid itself rests.

The DP or even the pure BoH of Advaita, being an infinite space, does not permit the senses of left–right, above–below, front–back, etc. The pure BoH of Advaita does not have a real boundary marked by real axes. On the contrary, for a real creation, the above senses are absolutely necessary and indispensable. Therefore, it is in this vein, the real axes come into play by virtue of a humanlike figure attributed to the DP—the God, the Infinite Space, where both Consciousness and the Material (the Father and the Mother) exist inseparably and on equal-footing. Going by the left-hand rule, the spiral of creation begins to move clockwise and downwards from the top or apex of the pyramid. In the religion of Synthetic Mode, viz., Islam, there is the unwinding of this spiral of creation by a counterclockwise movement, in order to reach the God back, which is accomplished by counterclockwise perambulations to Kaaba.

5 Sustenance Mode: inside view

Dvaita⁷ agrees with Rāmānuja in that there is a real creation. However, the Viśiṣṭādvaitic process of creation cannot posit a real relation between the creator and the created. The creator is DP and the created is the dimensioned point. One of the major objections from Dvaita to the pyramid formation is the very impossibility to effect a connection between DP and the dimensioned point. In fact, even the so-called dimensioned point cannot have a connection between itself and 1D, except that top end-point of the 1D line itself is the dimensioned point. But then 1D line has no segregated points. Therefore, the first creation seems to be 1D line and not a dimensioned point according

⁷ See Govindacharya (1996) for Madhva’s “*Tantrasārasaṅgraha*” of Madhvācārya.

to the Dvaita. It appears that the DP will have to be located outside of the apex of the pyramid. Advaita had already noticed this spatio-temporal disconnect between the initial hypersurface (which is now the DP) and the first particle of creation, the dimensioned point. This weakness of the Advaita had been used well by Viśiṣṭādvaita for its own advantage by removing the cube-nature of the BoH, and posited DP in its place, which will continue to have disconnectedness with the initially created particle in Viśiṣṭādvaita.

Precisely in order to resolve the whole problem of disconnect once and for all, the Dvaita unconditionally denies any connection between these two things—the creator and the created. Hence, the Dvaita makes a provision for an eternal creation of the Universe. That is, the God had created the Universe already ‘long time ago’ and now He is completely away from His creation except as in his *mukhya-avatāra* (primary incarnation), takes birth as the centre of the Universe. Christianity can be seen partly to move along these lines when the concept of kenosis is made out—the date on which Jesus Christ takes birth is fixed firmly as 25th December. This fact hints at the incarnation in a complete sense occurring on 25th December by the process of pouring out of what exists beyond 24th dimension into the Universe in and up to 24 dimensions.⁸

Since the God as *avatāra* is already within the Universe, all that we need to do is to picture the Universe in its cognitively presented shape and form, which is spherical. But a single sphere in 3D would fail to ensure simultaneity of time or cognition, as there is a plurality of objects. If so, the other alternative is to opt for lattice packing in various dimensions. In 1D, the lattices are 2. In 2D they are 6. And in 3D, the lattices are 12, and so on.

1D and 2D have a fixed number of lattices, viz., 2 and 6. These two dimensions appear to have dense packing in a way, yet they leave out the possibility of a higher-dimensional space. In fact, lattice packing in all dimensions up to 23D leave out some higher-dimensional space along with their own existing dimensional space, in their packing density. Dvaita wishes to give a clear ontological picture of the Universe in lines with the lattice theory, on a mathematical basis. For this purpose, Dvaita analyses different dimensions and sphere packing in them. At the end, the Dvaita concludes that the packing in 24D is the densest and

⁸ “Many Orthodox Christians annually celebrate Christmas day on or near January 7...described in the Christian Bible. This date works to the Julian Calendar that pre-dates the Gregorian Calendar, which is commonly observed.” “Time and Date” (2014). If this date is almanac based then we have to find out the the original day of birth of Jesus. On the contrary, if 7th January is a sort of fixed date then it essentially refers to the 7th layer of the Pyramid where the tesseract has come into full bloom with kenosis being complete.

the number of spheres kissing the central sphere simultaneously is 196,560.

The same may be held true of Judaism. However, more research needs to be carried out in this direction. Kabbala, a sort of t̄antric sect, historically speaking, is said to be of recent origin in 13–14 century, AD. But the Kabbala's spehira formation could not have become associated with Judaism without Hebrew Bible or the TaNaKh (Torah, Nevi'im, and Ketuvim) referring to the same in some cryptic manner. It is interesting to note that TaNaKh has (5, 8, 11) books, respectively, and these numbers add up to 24, which coincides with 24D, indicating the dimension of densest lattice packing. In any case, the final shape of the Universe in 24D is spherical—or near-spherical—and the view of the Universe obtained in it is 'inside view', because the view is from 3D or 4D, or logically from up to 23D space.

6 Synthetic mode: comprehensive view

6.1 Islam: religion with creation focus synthesis

Islam is a synthetic religion with creation focus, unlike, for example, Baha'I, which is a synthetic religion with sustenance focus. Islam synthesizes all the three views of the Universe and also presents its own view of the Universe with the status of Reality to the creation, on the psychological background of Buddhist Nothingness. The reality status accorded to the Universe and Islam's own view of the Universe is evident from the fact that Hazr-al-aswad—the Universe as PS (expanded/contracted)—is accorded a distinct existence, in the scheme of Kaaba. However, its lesser value is apparent from its placement below the surface of the floor-level of Kaaba in a corner, viz., Eastern corner. For those pilgrims who are still in the process of perambulations to Kaaba, which is the Super Subject Consciousness, is only an object of awareness—because of their (the pilgrims) being at the ground level—without its (Kaaba's) immediate awareness. Meanwhile, for the said pilgrims who are on the ground-level, the Hazr-al-aswad still presents them with some reality, since they perceive the 'Universe' in their objectual experience. On the contrary, for those who enter the Kaaba, there is Zamzam, the Ultimate Water, symbolizing 'concretely' the 'Conscious space' inside the Kaaba, which in turn represents BoH/DP, the indivisible infinite Super Subject Consciousness, the Allah, *with* creative potency. In fact, the Kaaba and Zamzam are identical entities, where Zamzam symbolically represents the total conscious space and the Kaaba permits entry to pilgrims, which indicates the identity between pilgrim and the Ultimate. This identity is a Subjectual experience of the highest order. The fact that the BoH [or

DP] is attributed with creative potency, conclusively demonstrates the acceptance of Creation Philosophy's premises. It is because of this reason Islam is a creation focus synthesis.

After all, the path to the Ultimate has to be as real as the goal itself. '*Siraṭillaahil-laziilahuumaafissamaawaatiwamaa fil'arz.*' *Alaaa'ilallaahitaṣirul -'umuur'*, 42nd Suurah: 53rd verse. "The path of Allah, unto Whom belongeth whatsoever is in the heaven and whatsoever is in the earth. Do not all things reach Allah at last?" 42 Suurah: 53rd Verse.⁹

6.2 Objectives of synthesis

Normally, every significant synthesis would attempt to retain the leading principles of all the systems that participate in synthesis. Leading principles are carefully chosen and are put in a single comprehensive logical frame. This can be successfully accomplished only if the chosen principles do not contradict and rout each other. Such leading principles should also be able to represent their mother system in all its important respects in a nut-shell. As regards those principles that are not taken from participating systems, and which have not been accepted in a synthetic endeavour, one may hold that they may contradict the synthesis itself. But such contradiction may be called as contrariety-in-details. This kind of contrariety is a result of details furnished by two or more distinct points of view, without regard to and understanding of the single and common Ultimate principle, which the respective systems actually profess. For example, if two travellers travel a distance together and afterwards part with each other, and again join at the end, then their travel account is expected to coincide at all points of sojourn excepting when they were separated. Their Ultimate goal will also be the same. More or less, so is the case with Synthesis. Of course, this need/does not mean that the details specific to a non-synthetic system within its own domain are false. A synthetic enterprise carefully chooses the Ultimate principle/s of all systems and keeps them in its focus all through its endeavour. In general, the chosen 'leading principles' of different systems constitute the core of a synthetic enterprise. The core objectives of a synthetic endeavour are two, viz., (1) to show that all the purported goals of different systems constitute a single self-same object; (2) to give a holistic perspective regarding the self-same object, since all the chosen systems give only specialized views without holistic perspective. Exactly as per the core objectives stated above, the three Views of the Universe, already discussed in previous sections, are incorporated into Kaaba

⁹ Pickthall (1989).

and are symbolized partly/wholly by the three pillars inside it.

6.3 Kaaba—the synthetic epitome

If the God incarnates in this world from ‘outside’, then definitely an ‘outside’ exists from where God enters the ‘inside’ since He takes birth in this world as an incarnation at some or the other time. This is so even if the ‘outside’ and the ‘God’ are co-extensive and co-terminus. Thus, in any case, the inside view has the logical consequence of implying an ‘outside’. But, if, for example, 24D packing is the densest packing, then nothing can possibly escape to the outside of the 24th dimension from inside. Mathematically, a higher dimension than 24th dimension may exist. But this is without an ontological correspondence. Movement to a higher dimension from a lower dimension necessarily implies that there exists some ‘space’ available to move outside of it in the sphere packing in the immediately lower dimension/s. Since 24th dimension is densest packing, there can be no such movement. However, the God from outside of 24th dimension can enter into a lower dimension, where the densest pack of 24th dimension will not pose any hurdle to Him. For the purpose of liberation of the individual, then, we must not only locate the region—outside/inside—where God (or his incarnation) resides, but also we must be able to sketch a path to reach Him, or His ‘world’, etc. Then, where is this ‘outside’ located or to be located in the Sustenance Mode—inside view of the Universe? The so-called Outside of 24D, in the light of density of packing, can only be an imagination without a corresponding ontological reality. This is because an ontological escape to beyond 24D is ruled out *ab initio*. If so, what is ontological ‘outside’? This will be answered in the next sub-section. (See “Where is the ‘outside’ Sect. 6.4?”)

The other two Modes of viewing the Universe are already known to be ‘outside’ and ‘middle’ views. As we know by now, both these views have ‘Cube’ (BoH) directly/indirectly as the Subject Consciousness. And we already have a picture of the ‘outside’ of the Universe as ‘Cube’ or ‘BoH’ or ‘DP’. Since the ‘outside’ view with ‘Cube’ alone can—practically speaking (as by and through architecture, for example)—comprehend the other two points of view—the ‘middle’ and the ‘inside’—Islam opts to accord Ultimacy to the ‘Outside’ view (both Non-dualistic/Qualified Monistic) as BoH—the Cube. We may recall that this Advaitic Cube is logically convertible to Viśiṣṭādvaitic/Christian ‘DP’ from where the *real* creation proceeds.

In Islam, Buddhism is accorded only a psychological status in its aspect of ‘Nothingness’ of the individual ‘subject’ (i.e. ‘Absolute Nothing’) without any independent ontological existence to it. Islam is keen on according

distinct ontological status to both BoH the Super Subject, and the PS the material entity. In the same breath, an individual consciousness has no locus for its independent existence. The Super Subject rests all by and on Itself and by Its own Glory and Supremacy. The material entity, the PS, does have a distinct existence at a level other than that of the BoH.

6.4 Where is the ‘outside’ for densest sphere packing?

Let us remember that locating the ‘outside’ is the main point for the ‘inside view’ of the Universe as noted already, since the ‘outside’ has to liberate the ‘soul’. As such, this inside view does not permit an ‘outside’ at all. If so, how does Islam make the BoH—the ‘outside’—its platform for synthesizing or incorporating the ‘inside view’, which, apparently, does not permit any concept of ‘outside’ at all? The answer to this question of identifying the ‘outside’ as far as inside view is concerned involves the negation of a normal ‘outside’ as such, and asserting that the centre of the Universe of ‘inside view’ itself is the ‘outside’. Therefore, a pilgrim desirous of liberation must move towards the centre rather than attempting to move ‘outside’ through the 24th dimension, which is a logical impossibility. Conventionally speaking, we know that centre of a globe is a ‘zero’ dimension, and not 4D or infinite dimension. If we remember that the DP of Viśiṣṭādvaita/Christianity is the same as BoH of Advaita, then we would at once realize that the space just above the apex of the creation pyramid constitutes the DP, and the apex point of the pyramid itself is a dimensioned point, even while holding that the FC itself could also be DP. Of course, for the inside view (as in Dvaita or in Judaism) there cannot be a dimensioned point or if there is one then that itself is considered as 1D line. However, whether it is a dimensioned point or a 1D line—both are *within* the DP, the BoH. Since the God outside of 24D has already poured inside of 24D, there is no need of a God to be located outside anymore. So, both DP and dimensioned point (qua dimensioned point) lose their importance in Dvaita/Judaism. This would logically mean that the conventional centre (the dimensioned point) of the globe—which is the apex for (or the space above) several cones formed as a result of sphere packing in various dimensions—is encased within a Cube, the BoH, the DP. Thus, it is possible to construe that the conventional centre-point of the Universe in inside view is itself contained in the BoH/DP/First Cube (FC). Actually then the ‘centre’ of the globe will be a spread-out dimensionless ontological region and not a conventional imaginary tiny point-like formation. This means that the DP may be considered as DP per se, or as BoH. The path from the 24th dimension, for example, to the centre would then mark a spiral through packing space

and dimensional space between different non-dense spheres in lower dimensions. The spiral path to the centre yields a conical way on the inside surface of a cone, whose apex appears to be the same as the centre of the Universe of inside view.

6.5 Geometry

Now, Islam has to first demonstrate the possibility of going ‘outside’ *per se*, even if the purported central region of the Inside Universe is itself a BoH. In other words, how does Islam accomplish reaching the centre, which is the ‘outside’? In fact, solution to this puzzle occupies an important place in accomplishing the synthesis in Islam.

A ‘caplike’ semicircular formation exists on north-western side of Kaaba. This is ‘al-Hatim’—and it represents 2D projection of 3D globe Universe of ‘inside view’ with its central ‘Pointhood’. We, the humans, are located in the 3D space with one more dimension of time, affecting us. In order to move to the centre of the spherical Universe then, we must hit first the pure 3D, and subsequently 2D, and 1D. On reaching 1D, we may think of reaching the purported ‘Zero-D’/the ‘infinity’, the BoH/DP. In order to accomplish this, we ought to make use of different geometry/ies than merely Euclidean geometry. In Projective Geometry, the parallel lines, which are truly parallel in Euclidean space, become a special case of an all-encompassing geometric system, the Projective Geometry, and they meet at infinity. Subsuming of Euclidean Geometry under Projective Geometry has been successfully accomplished by Desargues. Two radii after all meet at the centre of the circle/globe.

6.5.1 Projective geometry

Projective Geometry in fact is more elementary than Euclidean Geometry.¹⁰

Projective geometry is the study of geometric properties that are invariant under projective transformations. This means that, compared to elementary geometry, projective geometry has a different setting, projective space, and a selective set of basic geometric concepts. The basic intuitions are that projective space has more points than Euclidean space, in a given dimension, and that geometric transformations are permitted that move the extra points (called “points at infinity”) to traditional points and vice versa.¹¹

¹⁰ After all, what has been projected forth in creation needs to be withdrawn back. Precisely this is the function performed by projective geometry in the present context.

¹¹ Wikipedia (2011(k)).

The axioms of Projective Geometry are as follows: (A-1) If A and B are distinct points on a plane, there is at least one line containing both A and B. (A-2) If A and B are distinct points on a plane, there is not more than one line containing both A and B. (A-3) Any two lines in a plane have at least one point of the plane (which may be the point at infinity) in common. (A-4) There is at least one line on a plane. (A-5) Every line contains at least three points of the plane. (A-6) All the points of the plane do not belong to the same line.

It is not possible to talk about angles in projective geometry as it is in Euclidean geometry, because angle is an example of a concept not invariant under projective transformations, as is seen clearly in perspective drawing.... Another difference from elementary geometry is the way in which parallel lines can be said to meet in a point at infinity, once the concept is translated into projective geometry’s terms... Desargues (1591–1661) independently developed the pivotal concept of the “point at infinity”... He made Euclidean geometry, where parallel lines are truly parallel, into a special case of an all-encompassing geometric system. Desargues’s study on conic sections drew the attention of 16-year old Blaise Pascal and helped him formulate Pascal’s Theorem.” Pascal’s theorem says: “in projective geometry ... if an arbitrary hexagon is inscribed in any conic section and pairs of opposite sides are extended until they meet, the three intersection points will lay on a straight line, the Pascal line of that configuration.”¹²

Pascal’s Theorem is also known as Hexagrammum-Mysticum. It is said or implied that due to Pascal’s deriving the result (that the three intersections of the pairs of opposite sides of a hexagon inscribed in a conic or collinear, and other two lemmas), he could derive all Apollonius’ theorems on conic and more—no fewer than 400 propositions in all—that he called the hexagram as ‘Mystic Hexagram’ or ‘HexagrammumMysticum’.¹³ However, there is something more to this Mystic Hexagram, than merely the quantum of propositions derived or derivable from Pascal’s Theorem. And, the ‘more’ seems to consist in its role in the formation of a Fano plane derived when three relevant pascal lines are drawn.

6.5.2 Collapsing 3D into 2D mathematical structure

Normally, 3D structures are written as equations in three variables as x , y , and z , and 2D structures are written as

¹² Wikipedia (2011(k)).

¹³ See Bogomolny (2012).

equations in two variables, as x and y . By collapsing one of the three variables of a 3D structure, we can derive a 2D structure. Collapsing one of the 3D variables is the method generally used to derive a 2D structure.

There are two ways of how one of the three variables can be collapsed.

1. The first way is:

If one “casts a projection” of a 3-D curve, a “shadow” (like casting a shadow on a projector screen) results, a solid shape in 2 dimensions.

2. The second way is:

to set the third variable equal to zero. This generates a cross-section of the 3-D structure, but only includes points that were actually part of the 3-D structure.... ((Thus)), Collapse a sphere by ignoring one variable.... If one casts a 2-D projection, the result is a solid circle, a disk.... To illustrate, in Cartesian coordinates, a sphere centred at the origin $(0, 0, 0)$ takes the form $x^2 + y^2 + z^2 = r^2$... ((Now)) by looking at it with 2D eyes, one is ignoring one of the variables. Choosing to ignore z produces a circle with all of its interior points.¹⁴

6.5.3 The Fano plane—a projective plane with fewest points

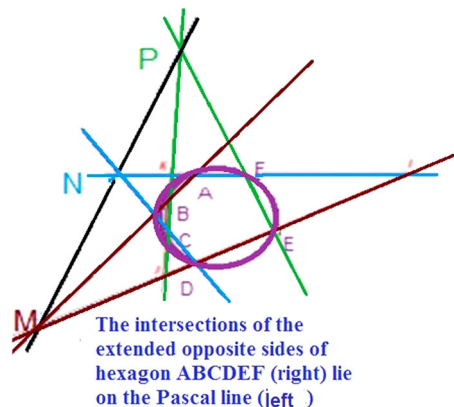
...a projective plane is a geometric structure that extends the concept of a plane. In the ordinary Euclidean plane, two lines typically intersect in a single point, but there are some pairs of lines (viz., parallel lines) that do not intersect. **A projective plane can be thought of as an ordinary plane equipped with additional “points at infinity” where parallel lines intersect.** Thus, any two lines in a projective plane intersect in one and only one point.There are many projective planes, both infinite, such as complex projective plane, and finite, such as the Fano plane...A projective plane consists of a set of lines, a set of points, and a relation between points and lines called incidence, having the following properties: 1. Given any two distinct points, there is exactly one line incident with both of them. 2. Given any two distinct lines, there is exactly one point incident with both of them. 3. There are four points such that no line is incident with more than two of

them. The second definition means that there are no parallel lines...¹⁵ [Bold supplied.]

6.6 Projection of 2D on Fano plane and hurtling into Kaaba

We know that the sphere packing in 3D contains 12 spheres with little more space, but not enough for the 13th sphere. The sphere packing in 3D as a whole itself constitutes a sphere or nearly sphere. To this sphere, if we opt to set the third variable equal to zero, a cross section of the 3D structure will be generated, but which only includes points that were actually part of the 3D structure. On the other hand, we may cast a 2D projection. If such projection is cast then the result will be a solid circle, a disc. Choosing to ignore z (one of the 3 space dimensions), for example, produces a solid circle with all of its interior points. In either case, we have a sort of 2D projection of a 3D structure. This 2D structure needs to be construed as a conic section. We already know that according to Pascal’s theorem:

...in projective geometry... if an arbitrary hexagon is inscribed in any conic section, and pairs of opposite sides are extended until they meet, the three intersection points will lie on a straight line, the Pascal line of that configuration.¹⁶ See figure below for intersection of the extended opposite sides of hexagon ABCDEF lie on the Pascal line MNP.



“In projective geometry, Pascal’s theorem (also known as the HexagrammumMysticum Theorem) states that if an arbitrary six points are chosen on a conic (i.e. ellipse, parabola or hyperbola) and joined by line segments in any order to form a hexagon, then

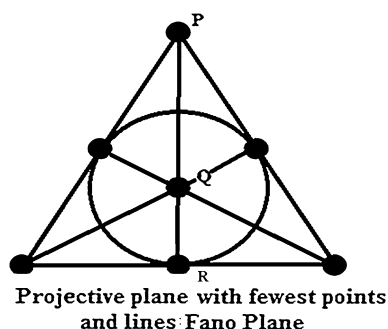
¹⁴ Summers (2012).

¹⁵ Wikipedia [2012(h)].

¹⁶ Wikipedia (2014(a)).

the three pairs of opposite sides of the hexagon (extended if necessary) meet in three points which lie on a straight line, called the Pascal line of the hexagon. The theorem is valid in the Euclidean plane, but the statement needs to be adjusted to deal with the special cases when opposite sides are parallel. A regular hexagon inscribed on a conic section of Euclidean space will also yield Pascal line in the concerned configuration in projective geometry.”¹⁷

By drawing 3 Pascal Lines, which lay outside of the conic section, in such a way that they form a Fano plane, we arrive at projective plane with fewest points and lines.



It is the central circle, which is the same as the projection of 3D sphere on this Fano Plane, now inside the Fano Plane that is halved and is represented as al-Hatim. The apex opposite to the semi-circle (of circle inside the Fano Plane) from inside of it (i.e. towards the centre of the circle) is the first point (noted as ‘P’) inside the Kaaba (immediately next to Kaaba’s inside of north-western wall). This point P, the semicircle’s centre Q, and the point on the curve R are all in an immediate relation. A pilgrim who reaches the tangential point R of the al-Hatim—a common point for a side of the Fano Plane and the 2D projection—will simply hurtle into the Kaaba’s inside. For this reason, it is said that one must move ‘closest’ to al-Hatim (point R) from outside of it while taking circumambulations, especially the seventh one.

7 Response to the points raised by the reviewer

7.1 The significance of monotheism

There are two intertwined concepts here viz., Monism and Monotheism. Religions, in a strict sense, are necessarily theistic, i.e. they accept one or more God/s. Monotheism is the nomenclature used to denote One Godhead being accepted as ‘ultimate’ in a Religion. Essentially then, there

is a duality—the subject (the worshipper), and the Object (the Worshipped—the God). Important Abrahamic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam claim themselves to be Monotheistic—that is, each one of them accepts a single Godhead as Ultimate. By the same token, Hinduism in general is considered as Pluralistic, i.e. as accepting multiple Godheads. Buddhism in its *strictest* sense is considered as Atheistic—not believing in any Godhead. Monism (Non-dualism) has only an indirect reference to the Godhead as the penultimate. It denies Godhead as Ultimate altogether. Monism, by and large, even though appears to deny Godhead accepts God as having an ontological status at least ad hoc. Thus, the Advaita being a Monistic Philosophy accepts a single ultimate Reality, the Absolute, the Brahman, along with acceptance of the God, the Saguṇa Brahman (Brahman with attribute and Brahman with parts), at a lower level. The Ultimate Reality, the NB of Advaita, is *not* an object to be worshipped. (Rather it is the Subject itself when the veil of ignorance (*avidyā*) is removed). Since the Ultimate of Advaita does not allow any Objectual Godhead, there would be no theistic element organic to the system in an ultimate sense. So is the case with Buddhism since the Ultimate is an Absolute Nothingness—neither the worshipped nor the worshipper exists at that stage.

We have endeavoured to make it clear that it is the different facets of the ‘growth’ of the ‘Subject’ (the Absolute, the Brahman, the Ultimate unchanging Substance) into creation, wherein the ‘objectuality’ ushers, that enables theism to stand on its own. Thus, different dimensions are conceived to answer additional sets of questions every time that arise at different phases of the ‘growth’ of the ‘Subject’, the Absolute. It is because every time the ultimate cause of the ‘growth’ of the Subject is the Subject itself, Monotheism emerges every time—i.e. it is the self-same God who is doing what He is doing. However, certain logical modifications are effected into the Absolute each time over.

For example, both Christianity and Viśiṣṭādvaita would like to have a real creation as opposed to, and to overcome—the ghostly (*Māyā*—illusory) creation in Advaita. Therefore, these two philosophies make necessary conceptual adjustments to the Nirguṇa Brahman (or the Pure attributeless Father-of-Christianity-in-itself), by adding a lady-character (Śrī, Lakṣmī, or the Mother) in an identity manner of $x = x$, and $x = y$, where x is the substance, the y is the attribute. Generally, it is the product (the Universe) from lady-character, which is the attribute. This is made in order to locate the creation potency, and of course also because the Father (Pure Substance) cannot move. Add to these two—the Father and the Mother—we have the third—Jesus—as identical to the Father and Mother, makes a Trinity or Three-in-One Godhead. Each one of this Trinity

¹⁷ Wikipedia (2014(a)).

is a Whole in Itself. So, it is a ‘Qualified Monism or Monotheism’.

In this way, monotheism is the preferred theory and is regularly maintained where theistic element exists, and is significant, in order that the Ultimate Substance (the Brahman, the attributeless Absolute) is never denied partly or wholly. Where it is non-theistic, Monism or Non-dualism is maintained with the existence of pure Absolute, the Brahman, who is the Subject. The terminology ‘Non-dualism’ (A-dvaita) is used only for its logical force to negate the ‘second’ and to denote the One, the Subject infinity without boundaries. In mathematical language It (the Father, the substance) is the ‘uncountable infinity’; and it is so not so much because we cannot count but because there is nothing—no parts in It—to count as the same is the Subject. That is why It is both rock-like and rock-like permanent. This is opposed to the ‘countable infinity’ of the material Universe’s Totality. It has parts and are countable though the parts are infinite. This is permanent but is stream- or river-like, *pravāharūpinitya*.

In Islam, creation potency to the ‘Father’ Himself is attributed without calling in a lady character for creation potency. The ‘creation potency’ in Islam is immediate and unblemishing—*Kuñfayakuun*. The Allah being an ‘Object’ of worship—until and if identity of the soul with It can take place at all—the semitic counterpart of Advaitic Brahman (or Christian Pure attributeless Father, the Substance) is treated (until such time as identity of individual soul takes place with Him, if at all) as theistic God, without identity of individual with It. Since Islam is a synthetic system involving many opposing ideas, it requires an elaborate treatment.

7.2 The significance of proselytizing

This concerns the social contract theory as the underlying scheme for all religions. The overriding consideration in each religion is the very terms of social contract and also its dissolution or termination. Social contract terms (especially, the empirical terms of universal imperative and specific imperatives—*sāmānya* and *viśeṣadharmas*) are modified to the extent required at every new conception of the dissolution or termination (mokṣa) of the social contract. And at every termination of social contract, there is the presupposition of actual state in which an individual is supposed to exist (or nihilation of self). Reaching such a state is indeed the ‘liberation’. Thus, every religion with distinct social contract terms would like to proselytize the whole humanity because uniformity is presumed to create a complete harmony, even while all social terms—including liberation—are satisfied by the given religion.

7.3 “They flash upon that inward eye which is the bliss of solitude”—Wordsworth. Does the idea of the ‘inward eye’ have relevance in this context?

Indeed yes. The ‘inward eye’ and ‘the bliss’ and the ‘solitude’—all three are identical. First one is ‘knowledge’ (jñāna); the second one, the ‘solitude’ is the ‘existence’ (cit, the consciousness); and the third one, the ‘bliss’ is the ānanda. Thus, Wordsworth was immersed in that Solitude of Oneness through the inward eye. It is worth noting that he had said: ‘One impulse from a vernal wood, May teach you more of man, Of moral evil and of good, Than all the sages can.’ No amount of outward perception can help one to understand That one strand of one’s own existence, except by the ‘inward eye’ or the ‘one impulse from the vernal wood’. This is known as *vivecana* or *viveka*—*nityānityavastuviveka*—discriminating ability between what is real and eternal, and what is unreal and fleeting. This inward eye leads to the *aparokṣa* (non-indirect apprehension of the Self) and is *almost* the same as the DP of the Christian pyramid in its content where the Father and the Mother are in unison (identity), where the individual souls must be lost into, in the final analysis.

7.4 The problematic basis of treating these issues algebraically and geometrically

The day the Buddha (or for that matter Heraclitus’ flux) had expressed the momentariness of all ‘existence’, a stage for serious philosophy had been set with time as the 4th dimension. This is because no one could deny the time element anymore on an empirical plane. Thus, for any future philosophy, the time element had to be necessarily incorporated into account, either to assimilate or to transcend it. An ordinary object is understood as having three dimensions, which are spatial in character. Time dimension would then become the fourth dimension, naturally. In this way, normal object of ontology gains further volume in the form of time. For an analysis of such an ontological object with 4D, some form of geometry/mathematics is essential. We may recall here that Einstein is said to have extended tensor analysis in order to tackle 4D object.¹⁸ Once this process of geometrization/mathematization of what is ontologically apprehended commences, there is no stopping of Dvaita going for ontologization of mathematics/geometry by going up to 24D mathematically by taking an

¹⁸ “In mathematics, tensor calculus or tensor analysis is an advanced extension of vector calculus to more general mathematical objects called tensor fields (tensors that may change over a manifold, e.g. with space and with time)” Wikipedia [2012(ag)].

inside view of the Universe and identify the geometrical/mathematical elements correspondingly in the ontological world. This was in fact in some sense already accomplished by Theravāda Buddhism and Judaism (we can recall here 24 spokes of Aśoka Chakra which in fact refer to 24 dimensions)—of course, more research needs to be carried out to locate the references. We can also recall that Buddha is considered as an *avatāra* (incarnation) of Viṣṇu. After all, we view the Universe and its change from the inside of it. Unlike empirical approach, metaphysics dives deep into the Subject that unifies the change. Thus, if one has to necessarily move to geometry from 4D of ontology, there is nothing unacceptable about moving to ontology from geometry—as long as logical, epistemological, ethical, and other aspects are all satisfactorily dealt with. Foremost requirement in these endeavours would be to locate the ‘unifier consciousness’, which is invariably associated with the geometrized ontology. Islam, in turn, makes use of Projective Geometry, in addition.

One of the most important goals of and implications for such mathematized approach for the religions is to ensure the truth to their ontological propositions and scheme. The mathematical component involved in these religions would a priori hold true; when other things are demonstrated to be logically plausible, the system becomes a completely valid compendium. In fact, the scriptures are supposed to be rigidly adhered to precisely because mathematics is concealed in the linguistic canvass of scriptures. There is one more reason for a *priorization*: this is the impossibility of empirical verification. For example, during the formation of Event Horizon in respect of Primordial Singularity (Advaitic) there would be no human being to perceive the same; hence, no empirical verification or inferential knowledge is possible. These are some of the important reasons for attributing ‘authority’ to the scriptural testimony as a valid way of knowing/knowledge.

7.5 Is there a contradiction between meaning, exactitude and original intention as implied in the introduction?

The term ‘exactitude’ is relative in its connotation. How much exact is a debatable point. As it is pointed out, the validity has to be ascertained aided by parameters of comprehensiveness, consistency and the clarity of reflection of the original through religious symbols. In Sect. 2 ‘Religious Metaphysics: Introduction’, I have said that: ‘The test of validity of our enterprise largely and ultimately rests on the comprehensiveness and the quality of the meanings we make out of, and attribute to, the symbols along with their logical correspondence with the original scriptural statements thereof.’

7.6 How is it that different branches of the same religion using the same historical text attribute a different meaning to it? What is the relationship between meaning and culture?

Once we agree that it is different branches of the *same* religion, it implies that there is some commonality that is running through all of them, of course, not in the ‘language game’ sense of Wittgenstein. In each branch, there would be acceptance of at least one fundamental proposition from a set of such propositions of the original system. The difference therefore may only spread over some other fundamental propositions or peripheral propositions. However, even when difference over fundamental proposition/s takes place, generally such differences are with regard to the intent of them. When the intent is theoretical, it is possible that logical aspects would be capable of different solutions by laying varying emphases on different dimensions of the problem. Every deviation from the original frame is thus a result of such varying emphasis laid on the aspect/s of original system not acceptable to the deviating/branching sub-system.

This scenario is similar to the emergence of new theory itself—like after Judaism emerges Christianity, with the difference that when a new theory emerges as a successor to a previous theory, there is a fundamental disagreement with the predecessor, overtly or covertly. Such a disagreement, of course, need not necessarily negate the predecessor theory in its (predecessor’s) own theoretical framework. In other words, the new theory may take new viewpoint as different from its predecessor’s; mostly this is done for explanatory reasons. In this way, not always a new theory subsumes an old theory under it. So, all deviations, both within a given system (branching) and new system/s have to be judged as regards their validity, explanatory power and correctness in relation to *their* own parameters keeping the parent or predecessor thought-system in mind.

For example, as regards branching, all Buddhist schools are Buddhist because they all accept three fundamental Buddhist theses. Their variance is only with regard to the way of construal of these theses. The new system Advaita, for example, disagrees with its logical predecessor, the Buddhism, and views the problem from a new viewpoint.

7.7 Relationship between meaning and culture

Here, we presume that the term ‘meaning’ refers to ‘metaphysical meaning’. The leading meaning for culture is stated in italics in the quotation below: “Specifically, the term ‘culture’ in American anthropology had two meanings (1) *the evolved human capacity to classify and represent experiences with symbols and to act imaginatively and creatively*; and (2) the distinct ways that people, who live

differently, classified and represented their experiences, and acted creatively... Etymology: the modern term ‘culture’ is based on a term used by the Ancient Roman orator Cicero in his *Tusculanae Disputationes*, where he wrote of a cultivation of the soul or ‘*cultura animi*’, using an agricultural metaphor for the development of a philosophical soul, understood teleologically as the highest possible ideal for human development. Samuel Pufendorf took over this metaphor in a modern context, meaning something similar, but no longer assuming that philosophy was man’s natural perfection. His use and that of many writers after him ‘refers to all the ways in which human beings overcome their original barbarism, and through artifice, become fully human’¹⁹ I would rather add that ‘... (instead of ‘become fully human’) ... *become fully realized as the part of the Ultimate itself, if not the Ultimate itself.*’

In this case, we confine to customs and practices based on metaphysical understandings. When the metaphysical meanings are transposed to the social domain, there arise social symbolisms. For example, in Islam burial of the dead is directly intended to deliver the soul to the centre of the earth where the centre of the earth signifies the Ultimate. In this way, the relation between meaning and culture is one of transposition and metaphysical symbolisation at the social level in order that the metaphysical is right before the eyes—physical and mental—constantly reminding about the impending mokṣa (*najat*) or liberation to be attained as in a given metaphysical system, the Religion. We do not deny that while we can have metaphysical transpositions as cultural meanings, there could be other socially viable answers. However, we feel that it is the metaphysical meaning’s transposition that is fundamental for culture and society and their study.

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points. I have responded to these points in Sect. 7 above. This is an abridged version of my work entitled “Synthesis of World Religions: Arriving at the Common Metaphysical Structure” to be published shortly. The work was carried out at Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla as Fellow during 2010–2012. I gratefully acknowledge the then Director of the Institute, Prof. Peter Ronald de Souza, for his whole-hearted support and encouragement.

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¹⁹ Wikipedia (2014).