

East and West: The Mystic and The Revolutionary

Nietzsche regarded the Will To Power as the fundamental impulse of human beings, while Jung regarded it as being the primary factor in the psychology of the Introvert. Jung synthesised the teachings of Adler and Freud, having noted that each seemed correct in some cases despite their seeming incompatibility. Adler's school of psychoanalysis believed that humans' deepest innate drive was the Will To Power, while Freud believed that everything came down to the Erotic drive. Jung's great innovation was in creating the concepts of Introversion and Extroversion, the former being guided by the Will To Power, the latter by Eros.

Essentially the Introvert is primarily centred on the Subject, the interior world, while the Extrovert is centred on the Object, the external world. While the Introvert seeks to retain the subject, to have dominion over the object rather than being overcome by it and losing their identity, Extroverts lose themselves in the external world, letting the object have dominion over them. Evidently both types of personality can be healthy tendencies, and indeed everyone is in fact a mixture of both to a certain extent, the opposite tendency being present in the unconscious or "Shadow" personality. An entirely introverted person would be autistic while an entirely extroverted person would be an addict, completely enslaved by the objects of their desire.

Note that we are not using the common definition of Introversion and Extroversion as being asocial or social. Rather they refer to a different flow of energy, a different centre or focus. A person may be Introverted and yet have many friends and talk a great deal, while an Extrovert may be quite the opposite. This depends perhaps on whether the person has done some psychological work and integrated something of the "Shadow", the unconscious counterweight to the conscious personality. People of a relatively high degree of Individuation transcend to a certain extent their inner duality, what one might call "the natural man". But in any case we should avoid confusing the notion of Introversion and Extroversion in their Jungian sense with the popular stereotype, which is a rather shallow way of looking at things.

Now, these two types of focus, one on the Subjective and the other on the Objective, clearly represent a totally different type of relation with the Other, different types of approach to other human individuals, and indeed towards non-humans as we will see. This is to say that each would have a different type of "Love". While the former would focus on the person's "inner-ness", the latter would be focused on their "outer-ness". An Introvert would be interested in the "soul" we might say, with what a person is within themselves, while an Extrovert would be concerned with the "body", or with what a person is socially and in relation to the world.

The Introverted and Extroverted types have their Archetypal human counterparts of higher and lower types, representing the alchemical stages of Nigredo, Albdeo and Rubedo. These correspond to the directions of psychological Integration in males and to the Jungian Animus in females. These are the manifestations of Archetypes, and must be viewed as such, in terms of a Representation or Abstraction of a general type of energy, rather than in terms of the disparity and complexity of different human individuals. When we talk about "the soldier" or "the artist", we are not talking about soldiers or artists so much as about universal psychological factors symbolising and being symbolised by these.

Even the lowest form of these Archetypes, despite representing types of spiritual "slavery", possess some certain virtues which must be comprehended during the Psychological-Alchemical process of Individuation, they are stages on the road of Psychological Integration which leads through the lower to the higher. They can also become traps in the case where a person becomes fixated upon them and overwhelmed by the force of the Archetype, leading to mental and personality problems. Again, we must make clear that the actual people in the world who play the roles of these

Archetypes are in no way necessarily or even primarily Introverts or Extroverts. Furthermore the Archetypes will not necessarily appear clearly, without confusion and admixture, in the psychological process of individuals, for the mind is more complex than Introversion and Extroversion and each individual's pathway to Integration is different, as we are different genetically and in terms of our experiences.

The lowest type in each case is a highly polluted form of the fundamental energy, the intermediate somewhat less so. Freud spoke of Thanatos as the opposite of Eros, as we have mentioned this is not in fact the case, the opposite of the Extroverted Eros energy is the Introverted Will To Power energy. However Thanatos, the Death-Instinct, is present in the lowest type of Extroverted energy, less so in the intermediate type, while in the highest type it is present again but in a transcendent and useful form. The same applies to the Introverted energy, though in this case the Death-Instinct is more towards spiritual death, dissociation and loss of soul, and the power of fascination which that brings over others. In the higher Introverted type, the "Will To Power" is over oneself, and is hardly different from the "Will to Virtue".

In the case of the Introverted type, the lowest Archetypal form would be the "pop star" or popular entertainer. These exert power in a subjective sense, power over the minds, emotions and spirit of the people. Of course generally speaking they are addicts, either of narcotics or simply of fame, and only serve to cause the level of human culture to descend by getting the sleeping masses enmeshed in their melodrama and poor quality artistic creations. The Extroverted, on the other hand, would be the soldier or martial type, that special class of beings who are permitted to kill, which is of course the most extreme type of power over the external world and over others that a human can hold.

The great mass of humanity, are quite fixated on such figures. The masses have a great deal of love for these lowest types, a little less for the intermediate types, and either ignores or detests the highest types. This explains our culture's strange reverence for celebrities, on one hand, and soldiers on the other. In fact these celebrities are often psychologically weak and complicated, possessing no genuine distinguishing qualities apart from sheer vacuousness. Soldiers, though they may not be bloodthirsty killers, are certainly in a sense programmed robots sent to kill for the purposes of the rich, purposes which, in their defence, they generally fail to comprehend.

Nonetheless, these figures appear as Archetypes because they have certain virtues. The "pop star" lives for themselves, for their own happiness. This might not seem to be a virtue, but when we consider how so many people are willing to lead dull and unfulfilling lives simply because "it is the done thing", never considering that they are being used and manipulated by the powers that be, never comprehending that really they deserve more happiness than simply to sit in front of a television each night with some alcohol, we can see that there is some virtue in Epicureanism. To live only for oneself is a vice, but to be afraid to live for oneself is also a vice, one must "*love oneself before loving others*". The soldier, on the other hand, represents discipline, which after all is necessary to any meaningful achievement.

In fact a sort of degeneration is visible in the last few decades as each of these particular roles becomes less dangerous, and hence more sterile. In the 60's popular musicians still had something of the role of the Shaman, exploring the void with psychedelics, Jim Morrison being probably the most pronounced example of this. The rock musicians of that era retained something of the "damned poet" of earlier epochs, a kind of romantic adventurousness. Now this is over, the "stars" are completely under the control of the powerful forces of industry and have ceased to be supporters of the counter-culture, genuine rebels. At the same time we view the danger to those in the military of the Occidental countries has decreased, as nowadays the powers that be can simply send a remote controlled drone to do the horrible work of killing, and protect their armies with the power of vast technological superiority. No longer the brave warrior, rather the well-trained machine protected by

extreme force - or in the case of “the enemy”, bloodthirsty religious fanatics. Life has lost some of its danger, be it the risk of madness or the risk of death, forces have become unbalanced and as a Kabbalistic maxim goes “*unbalanced forces perish in the void*”. This both represents and creates a descent in the general level of human culture, as is seen under any empire in the phase of decadence.

Above these types are the intermediate forms, Archetypes of a higher order corresponding to a greater degree of spiritual autonomy. In the Introverted case we find the genuine poet, or artist, or musician, those in any particular creative domain with some genuine vision, who on occasion create things of lasting cultural value. These are the modern representation of “magicians”, those capable of conjuring deep feelings in their audience (and not relying on the power of the industry to make their point, though sometimes they may attain some popular success). In the Extroverted case we have the Archetype of the reformer, the person who lives for some kind of cause. No longer are they simply well-disciplined machines, as soldiers are, rather they have some passion to make the world better and to lead people to a more enlightened mode of living. Their causes may often be mistaken, and they may in fact be puppets of certain interest groups, however they exert an unmistakable influence over the life of humanity without directly using violence. The Extroverted energy here has renounced the use of the most immediate form of brute force, though it still works through “the system”, which is in itself a construction of violence.

The highest types, the pure manifestations of Introverted and Extroverted energies, are at once the most hidden and the most visible human beings in existence, they are the “Fixed Stars” of Sopenhauer, whose influence subtly transmits itself for generations though their names and faces may be ignored or forgotten. All human beings that one could genuinely classify as great men and women are manifestations of one or both of these Archetypes, people who have transcended “*the world*”.

So far as the Introverted energy is concerned, we have the Mystic, the one whose thoughts are no longer under the dominion of matter, the one who has made direct contact with the Supreme Being, who transmits beauty in its undiluted and pure form. They represent in a sense the Being beyond personality, false ego, designation, all kinds of “inauthenticity”. They represent Eternity, for they may take different roles in the drama of life, be it of the philosopher, the painter, the musician, or any number of other things, but this is only their temporal part, their “disguise”, used to express perennial Truth, the Universal Tradition. They seek only to express timeless transcendent truths in some form which will be useful to humanity, if indeed they take any part in the actual affairs of the world, rather than manifesting their illumination through purely spiritual means.

As for the Extroverted energy, we have the Revolutionary. This type of person devotes their lives to the betterment of humanity’s social situation, fighting for justice and truth. Risking a dark fate, devoted to the cause of shaking off the shackles of oppression, they struggle against the power though victory may seem, or even be, quite impossible. Their methods may differ according to the time and circumstance, they may be the great leader, the subtle subversive, the unconquerable martyr. They could be of the type of Gandhi or of Malcolm X, for while Gandhi had the intelligence to use the system’s own violence against it, Malcolm X was at least certainly not what the Bhagavad Gita calls a “self-deluding hypocrite”. In all cases they are fearless and never submit to the tyranny whatever it may offer them in exchange for their soul. There is something deeply spiritual in this, but it is a spirituality in action, not shrinking from the forces of the material world or trying to escape it through contemplative techniques, but rather seeking to bring into manifestation “the Kingdom of God”. There is an Asceticism in this, but it is not to intentionally subject oneself to austerity but to accept the natural austerity which a struggle for justice brings. The Mystic represents God’s Transcendence, the Revolutionary, His Immanence. The Mystic is the Priest, the Revolutionary the martyr.

Both of these types are driven by Love, but of a different kind in each case. The former is concerned with the Soul, with the Inner Being of Humanity, the Spiritual part, while the latter is concerned with the Body, with the Social Being, the Material part. Each are in their own way liberators of humanity, enemies of human suffering, but while the Mystic saves from the pain of material existence itself, from the pain of separation from the Divine, the Revolutionary saves from injustice and oppression, from the indignity of systems which don't respect human life and enslave the masses in suffering for the gain of the few.

The question is, how does this relate with the subject of this treatise? Without falling into cliché, we can say that culturally speaking it is the East which corresponds with the Introverted pole, while the Western culture – which we will take to be synonymous with the Abrahamic, thus including the Middle East and to a certain extent other places where the Abrahamic religions have taken root - is the Extroverted pole. Jung himself stated this, and it is quite clear if we look at the different directions of development that the Orient and Occident have taken.

It is Western humanity who began to “master” the world, who created the practical scientific or materialist philosophy, the results of which have been a complete alteration in the basic form of human life. No longer do we work the fields, rather we leave that to industrial agriculture, which is to say technology. Indeed Western economies have become service economies, their existence dependent not on raw materials, production or physical labour, but on the complexities of the economic system itself. We have split the atom, and we have made a world abstracted from the actual processes and limitations of nature, for some good and a lot of bad, for in the end it cannot be sustainable.

Of course nowadays the East is catching up in the technological realm, but it is clear that the original impulse is from the West, it is the Extroverted mentality which first sought power over the external, while the Introverted tendency sought power over the interior. Anyway, we live in times of aberration, undergoing a process of the intensification of what Jung called “Enantiodromia”, where everything is mixing quite chaotically and the underlying tendencies are ceasing to be clearly visible. Westerners are becoming Buddhists en masse while in the East more and more are becoming Christians. Materialism is the new universal religion everywhere, the Communist doctrine may have been a Western creation but it's current bastion is in China. Perhaps this is the necessary effect of splitting the atom, anyway it certainly means that we have to look a little further back in history to see the differentiation of the two types clearly.

The Eastern spiritual philosophy is of a mystic and experiential type, including practises which in the West are considered “contemplative” and are a good deal less common outside the circle of monastics. The Christian religious teaching is turned outwards, towards an external source of grace, everything which comes from within man is considered evil, or at least has come to be considered so in the Protestant view – indeed many Protestants forcefully reject contemplative practises and attempts to understand and improve oneself in this way, for what good can come of a being so fundamentally evil as we humans are by our own efforts? Only Christ, an external Christ, a historical Christ present at one time in one place, and His Crucifixion, a literal crucifixion, an external crucifixion, can save us. Jung pointed out that modern translations of the Bible have altered the words “*the Kingdom of God is within you*” to “*is among you*”, which really sums up the whole situation. Yet at the same time such dogmatism is leading people to turn towards the Eastern Philosophy, which is in many ways a very good thing, so long as it goes beyond simple reaction.

The Abrahamic Prophets

Considering the types of the Abrahamic prophets, we see that they are quite different to the religious figures of the East. What they all have in common is their Revolutionary tendency, though this revolution is evidently of a spiritual type. They are leaders of the people who struggle against oppressors and triumph, even if, as in the case of Yeshua, this is through martyrdom.

Moses, in an early episode of his life having killed an Egyptian doing violence to one of his people, came to Pharaoh and demanded: *“Let my people go!”*. When Pharaoh refused, plagues were visited upon Egypt, a veritable uprising not of people fighting against people but God Himself struggling for His people’s liberty. These could symbolise the plagues with which tyrants are destroyed, again and again from age to age. The Jews flee to their Promised Land, far from the oppressor who enslaved them, this Promised Land being analogous to a just society governed by spiritual principles and divine laws. The sea itself opens up to let them pass through, then swallows Pharaoh’s army. Perhaps this is a kind of metaphor for the sea of seething popular discontent below the surface of any tyranny. Moses instructs his people in righteous living, rebuking them for their worship of *“the Golden Calf”*, which is to say materialism and wealth rather than Justice.

Yeshua, the Christ, in His short mission struggled against the religious authorities of His day, the Pharisees and Scribes symbolic of religious reactionaries and blind materialists. His life is the story of a battle against these forces, giving wisdom to the masses of *“publicans and sinners”*, healing the people whether or not it be the Sabbath day. He turns over the tables of the moneychangers in the temple, saying *“my house shall be called an house of prayer, and you have made it a den of thieves”* (a rebuke which could certainly be applied to many of those who have the audacity to believe that they are followers of His teachings). Finally He is crucified at the instigation of the religious reactionaries, for proclaiming himself to be the King of a Spiritual Kingdom which will someday rule the entire earth. Yet He defeats their wicked devices by overcoming death itself. His life is a struggle, and the majority of his disciples also met the common fate of revolutionaries, martyrdom.

The Prophet Mohammed (Peace Be Upon Him) led His people as an army in defence against those who sought to destroy them. The powerful sought to destroy Him for criticising their polytheism, just as the powerful of today seek to destroy those who challenge their own “sacred” dogmas, such as by questioning capitalism. Islam has since its inception been not only a religion but also a means of organising the state, and indeed Islamic countries were for many centuries far more tolerant of the other religions “Of The Book” than were the Christians, who even felt the need to go and attack the Muslims in their homelands. Mohammed was quite literally a warrior leading a revolutionary army, and the duty of defensive fighting against oppressors, such as *“those who drive you from your houses”*, is enshrined in Islam. Of course, as with the rest of the Abrahamic prophets, His message has been distorted and His “followers” engaged in heinous acts and oppression, but the tolerance and love of Islam’s mystical Sufi branch is well-known, and we can hardly blame the ordinary Muslim for the cruelty of Salafism and other yet more extreme variants.

None of the Eastern spiritual teachers were persecuted or oppressed in the same way as the Abrahamic prophets. Yeshua said:

“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.”

to his disciples, indeed spoke much of the persecution which *“the world”* would inflict upon them – nothing comparable is found in the teachings of the Eastern Teachers, beyond some remarks on persecution being a result of past Karma. The history of Buddhism and Hinduism isn’t filled with

the stories of martyrs dying and suffering at the hands of tyrants in order to bring about “*the Kingdom of God*” or defend the Umma.

The Eastern Teachers were sages like Buddha, sought out for their wisdom and learning, or were figures involved in the world like Krishna. If we study the lives of these two Avatars, we see that they were not only *not* persecuted, but were actually widely revered and loved. The Buddha gained vast numbers of followers in his lifetime, while Krishna is considered the “all attractive” and was universally adored. There are no episodes in their lives comparable to the Jews coming out of Egypt, they were not enemies of unjust temporal authorities. Buddha had enemies but they were supernatural beings, the hosts of Mara. Krishna fought in the battle of Kurukshetra, but this was not a struggle against a tyrant or a means of protecting a budding faith against oppressors who would destroy it, it was in no way a revolution. They may have rejected doctrines like the rigid Vedic caste system, but they were certainly not martyred for doing so as Christ was.

Krishna, it is true, killed the tyrant king Kamsa, who had imprisoned Krishna’s parents and killed all their children except Krishna (who was smuggled out of the prison cell) due to a prophecy that their eighth child would kill him. This is comparable to the “Massacre of Innocents”, Herod killing the children in Israel due to a prophecy that one of them would become king. But Krishna, having killed Kamsa, becomes a prince in the court of the restored King who Kamsa had unjustly deposed. Can we imagine Christ being a prince, except for The Prince of Peace? Indeed he rejected “*all the Kingdoms of this world*” when they were offered to Him by Satan. None of the Abrahamic prophets held political office of any kind outside of the circle of their own disciples and people, rather they were at the head of movements of resistance rejecting tyrannical authorities of different varieties. Christ may have said “*render unto Caesar what is Caesar’s*”, but this is only to suggest that attracting unnecessary persecution beyond the natural persecution his disciples would face is not helpful to the spiritual life.

The Sages of the East were not fundamentally Prophets, bringing new doctrines to people and suffering due to fighting against their prejudices, they were not in essence critics of society, rather they generally expressed more abstract doctrines. Because the Eastern mentality was philosophical at the root, new philosophies were not resisted in the same way as the Abrahamic prophets’ criticisms of orthodoxy. There, arguments were generally settled by debate, rather than ostracisation and force, and different schools of philosophy developed without the strife of physical battles against “heretics”. The Eastern Sages attracted spiritual seekers who approached them, the Abrahamic prophets approached the people, criticising their materialism and unrighteousness, rebuking them.

The essence of the matter is this: while the Eastern religions emphasise the battle against the ego or false self through ascetic and yogic practises, the Abrahamic faiths emphasise the battle against “*the world*”. In fact the aim is the same, but the approach is from a different direction. Struggle against the world, that is to say it’s systems and structures of power, is the work of every Revolutionary, including the Spiritual Revolutionary. If we read the Book of Psalms in the Bible, we see that much of it consists of prayers for Divinity to assist in the struggle against the “*ungodly*”, the “*unjust*”, the “*wicked*”.

Construction And Interpretation

The Abrahamic prophets were therefore Religious Revolutionaries rather than Sages or Avatars in the Eastern sense. Therefore none of the three Abrahamic religions possess anything like the philosophical congruity of the Upanishads, the Buddhist Sutras or the philosophies of Vedanta. The mystic words of the Bible and Quran are poetry, and poetry of the highest order. A poem speaks

directly to the soul, and we would not expect to find in it logical principles. These are proper to another type of expression, a more laborious and thorough exposition such as you are presently reading, without the same kind of immediate effect and beauty. Though there is also poetry in the Upanishads, and traces even in the Buddhist Sutras - despite them being essentially philosophical texts - it is not the essence of them.

Spiritual Philosophy in the Occident is a matter of **Interpreting** texts, whether that be the Torah, the New Testament or the Quran. Eastern Spiritual Philosophy does not simply interpret, rather it **Constructs**. The texts themselves upon which the Eastern Religions are founded, including the Sutras and Upanishads among others, themselves contain quite highly developed expositions of philosophy. Eastern religious teaching comes from logical philosophical principles, philosophy comes first and religion derives from it, or we could even say that the philosophy is the religion. The Abrahamic theologians and religious philosophers, however, attempt to derive philosophical principles from shadowy texts filled with parables, and as time passes also from previously prescribed dogmas. The direction is inverted, the religion is the philosophy, it *becomes* the philosophy.

None of the Abrahamic prophets were philosophers in the sense of Buddha, there are no discourses in the Abrahamic religions comparable to the philosophical Sutras. Buddha suggested beginning by studying His teachings and verifying their philosophical coherency, not simply “believing”. In fact though “faith” or “belief” has in our times has come to mean “blind faith” and “unjustified belief”, in essence there is no real difference, the difference arises when we interpret “faith” in the sense of belief in dogma. In fact it is in fact a kind of inner force giving strength in “*fighting the good fight*”, a certainty that all suffering will prove useful, all wounds be healed in the end. “Belief” is to be open, not to reject things due to prejudice, but to open oneself to both the Presence of Divinity everywhere in creation and also not to deny the existence of it’s opposite, the Dark Forces, where their influence is also clearly visible. Nonetheless, the Abrahamic texts do not suggest philosophical investigation of the logical coherency of their contents as a first step in practising their teachings. In any case, in order to make such an investigation it would be necessary to comprehend the parables, which would generally require some kind of spiritual practise as a prerequisite.

This difference between Construction and Interpretation is key. The latter is an Extroverted process, it begins with the Object and creates some kind of view based on that Object. This will never arrive at the same degree of logical consistency as a philosophy Constructed based on Fundamental Principles, because it exists in relation to something else, that is to say the scriptures, and these scriptures are not expositions of Fundamental Principles. They are the teaching of Spiritual Revolutionaries rather than Abstract Philosophers, Sages. Introverted thinking is based on logical relations, logical principles abstracted from physical realities, while Extroverted thinking is based on measurement and the relations between objects.

If one compares this to that and one to the other, one is never really seeking the inner meaning of this or of that. For example, consider the controversy between Christianity and Islam as to the question of whether or not Yeshua was crucified. One side says He was, another otherwise. It is possible to become enmeshed in endless debates about which is the correct position, but this leads nowhere. It is in fact much more productive to ask, what does it mean that He was crucified or not crucified? We could say that the inner meaning of the Christian viewpoint is that one must die in order to be resurrected, that the distorted “life” of the ego is incompatible with the true life of the spirit, and that we must die to the ego and be resurrected in the spirit. The inner meaning of the Islamic viewpoint could be seen to be related with the Islamic notion that martyrs are not in fact killed, that they are alive whatever happens to their physical body. Comparing the two viewpoints does nothing to enhance our understanding of what each actually means. This is an example of the limitation of Extroverted thinking. Evidently it is not the case that the East is free from disputation

between different viewpoints. However these disputes are perhaps less sectarian and the Eastern religions are “big” enough to accept the wisdom of the Abrahamic religions, whereas the latter cannot accept theirs.

Now, we are not saying the Objects from which these attempts at philosophy proceed – be that the Bible or the Quran - are in themselves flawed. If they were viewed without projections they would be useful in establishing doctrine. However this requires that the person interpreting them be free from projections or at the least aware of the deeper symbolic implications through the study of universal mysticism, occult symbology. Of course, as soon as dogma is established, projections become inescapable. Indeed the interpretation of these texts has sunk more and more into subjectivity as time has passed, it has become less and less consistent. Hence we are faced with monstrosities like the Christian “Evangelicals”, unable to grasp any of the symbolic richness of the Bible and convinced that they are the only Elect of their bloodthirsty God, who is also apparently a rabid Zionist.

We are not suggesting that the philosophers of the West were not in their own way remarkable thinkers, though perhaps less so the purely religious philosophers. Anyway, it is far from the case that everybody in the West is an Extrovert, or that Extroverted thinking doesn't also reach valuable conclusions in the domains to which it properly belongs, such as Natural Science. Nobody can dispute that Hegel and Kant created formidable logical systems. However, unlike Plato, they were bottled up in certain ideas which in fact are nothing more than extrapolations from the dogma of the Christian church. In particular, the notion that there is a single earthly life, followed or not by Judgement. Even the non-religious philosophers accept this standpoint without the idea of Divine Judgement – rather the “judgement” is simply how we lived our lives. The transmigration of souls, or rebirth, is a “fringe” idea in the Occident, because it is not found in our tradition. That isn't to say that Christ or Mohammed didn't teach it, simply that at some point it was interpreted out of the teaching.

Understanding this, we can develop some clarity about where to seek guidance upon the matter of religion in the sense of it's philosophical principles. Philosophy is the domain of Introversion, of concepts detached from material facts, and it aims towards an entirely logically consistent interpretation of reality. We could say that it deals with the Objective, that is to say Logic. This would perhaps offend some of the “philosophers” of the present day, for whom philosophy has supposedly “moved past” the idea of a Logos. Indeed this development may be right and proper, the thing which has to be in these times, but clearly schools of philosophy like Existentialism represent a totally different *type* of thinking to that of Kant, Hegel or Plato, and it seems uncertain whether “philosophy” is actually the proper name for ideas.

To take philosophical principles from the Interpretation of sacred texts is a risky business. Interpretation seeks what is not clear, which is not systematically laid out, but the texts which are Interpreted are intended to be obscure to the uninitiated. When we Construct a philosophical system, we can make it coherent, but to create some kind of seemingly coherent order from parables and mystical pronouncements to which we do not possess the keys of understanding, tends to be destructive and misleading. Moses, Christ, Mohammed, were spiritual revolutionaries, and their teachings are intended to communicate that revolutionary spirit of struggle against the forces of darkness and ignorance.

We can see the logical superiority of the Eastern philosophy by looking at some of the problems of Philosophy of Religion which are irresolvable from the Abrahamic standpoint without falling into clear sophistry, but quite simple to resolve from the Eastern perspective:

The Problem Of Hell

The Problem of Hell is not its existence, rather its duration. Retribution and Punishment is an essential element of Justice, though it is certainly difficult to agree what constitutes Justice. Various theories have been propounded to explain how an all-loving God can condemn people to eternal hell, such as Kant's suggestion that one who has broken the Divine law in any point is guilty of breaking it in every point, though we could ask why even that merits eternal damnation.

If we were to condemn someone to prison with no intent of Rehabilitating them, many would think that an act of injustice, something quite as monstrous as whatever crime they may have committed. The Protestants would suggest that human beings are so terribly sinful that perhaps they don't deserve the hope of purification by punishment, that we are such an abomination in the sight of a sinless God that perpetual condemnation is justified. This is an extreme view in that it suggests that we are wholly responsible for our sins - and those of our ancestors, Adam and Eve. In fact human beings are not totally responsible for any of their actions, however our system of "justice" may categorise wrongdoers as being so. We are conditioned beings, we respond to our genetics and our environment, things which we have no control over, unless we admit that there is some Karmic factor, and even in this case it is complex because we are not responsible for the damage done to us by others who will eventually themselves reap the fruit of their actions.

Of course we must also avoid the extreme of suggesting that we humans have no responsibility for our actions. To say that there is eternal punishment for wrongdoing is quite as absurd as suggesting there is no punishment. The proper position would really be something between these two extremes, a "*middle way*". The Eastern teachings resolve this problem quite nicely: There are indeed hellish realms, places of darkness and torment far distant from the light and bliss of Divinity. Those who do wrong go there and spend some time, perhaps a long time, in suffering. This has the result of purifying the negative Karma they have created. It is not eternal, for it is not possible for a finite being to do infinite evil.

The Problem Of Evil

If life is over at the point of death, if we never again return to another body, how can any injustice we experience – whether it be in our favour or against us – be ultimately justified? Clearly every human soul has a dignity, we are all sparks of the radiant Divinity, we cannot simply dismiss human suffering and the injustice which causes. Theologians speak of "Natural Evil", or of "Evil" being a necessary product of "Free Will", in an attempt to reconcile the existence of God with the suffering in the world. Yet if every soul has its dignity, its humanity, then can we really dismiss all the pain people go through, say that it is an unfortunate accident? No, a God who would permit suffering without any remedy for that suffering, would be a tyrant. If He was unable to prevent it due to it being a part of Nature, than He would not be a God in the Monotheistic sense, for He would then be constrained by forces beyond His control.

One argument given against the existence of God is in relation to the case of murder. It is suggested that God could understand someone's intention to commit murder and punish them for it without actually allowing the murder to take place. That He permits such things to happen, the skeptics suggest, is evidence that He is not all-Good or not all-Powerful. This makes a certain amount of sense from the point of view of the Abrahamic religions. If there is one life followed by Judgement, the murderer may take away from a person their opportunity to repent of their sins. So long as Free Will is admitted, it could be the case that a person who is not in a state of repentance but who may enter into repentance later (we are using this terminology in terms of the Abrahamic context), could be deprived by their murderer of the chance of salvation.

Condemning the murderer to hell is not enough. Many people are believed to be going to hell, but the murderer would have to go to a double hell – one for his own failure to attain salvation, another for depriving another of the possibility of salvation. Yet this would not rectify things, for the murdered individual would nonetheless be suffering eternally through the fault of another. Nor does it make sense to suggest that the murdered person goes to some paradise for having been murdered, there would be almost as little justice in this.

From the Eastern perspective, where there is not simply one life followed by Judgement, things make a lot more sense. The person who kills is subject to Karma for having violated the sovereignty of another soul, for having caused them the vast inconvenience of having to reincarnate, grow up, in short rebuild what has been destroyed. As Karma is action, and everything that happens is due to Karma, it is impossible that the person being killed does not have somewhere the seed or potential to experience such a thing. That isn't to say they are a bad person or an evildoer more than others, and it may be that their being killed is vastly unjust. Whatever the circumstances may be, the murderer suffers the result of their actions, perhaps over the course of many lives, while the murdered receives healing for what has befallen, again perhaps over the course of many lives. This resolves the entire philosophical problem, and allows us to reconcile the necessary damages done by the (limited, yet real) Free Will we are given with Cosmic Justice.

Natural Evil is another case which cannot be resolved, what purpose does it serve for people to die in tidal waves and hurricanes? Again, we cannot say that an all-Powerful God would permit such things. From the Abrahamic perspective they serve no purpose except perhaps “Divine Vengeance”, yet it would not be Just for God to punish whole peoples and countries for the sins of a few, whatever certain distorted interpretations of the Old Testament may suggest. But from the Eastern perspective it is easy to comprehend. We are all attached to the material life, and to realise that life in the world is perpetual insecurity. Nothing is guaranteed to last however much we struggle for it, including our own frail lives, and death at the hands of Nature may for some prove a useful spiritual lesson, leading them in the following life to turn away from the material towards the spiritual. This argument could also apply to the former case we spoke of.

Effectively there is no Evil, there is only the appearance of Evil, things which trouble us from our limited perspective. It is human to be upset when a family member dies, but we do not understand the purposes of it all, the mysterious providence behind it. Quite simply, Western Philosophy does not admit the notion that the world is Illusion, therefore those things which seem to us destructive or unpleasant, which we label “Evil”, are taken for realities when in fact they are like dreams. If we open ourselves to the notion that the soul is not only immortal but also reaps the exact fruits of every one of it's actions over the course of time, then we can see that in reality it is just “the Dance of Shiva” and everything works itself out in Time.

The Inner And Outer World

The logic of the East fails when confronted with oppression and poverty. Though there is the dream of “Kalki Avatar” who will come to destroy the unrighteous rulers at the end of the “dark age” of Kali Yuga, often the poor and suffering are considered to be in such a situation due to their Karma, through their own fault. In the Indian caste system, there are hierarchies based on the family one is born into, as if being born into a Brahmin family is evidence of having lived righteously in past lives. It is well known that the “lower” castes are considered to be born simply to serve the higher and carry out menial work, while the Brahmins are revered priests. Many Vedic texts are in favour of this system. Poverty, except when voluntary as in the case of mendicant ascetics, is considered to be the result of negative actions in past lives, while riches are conversely considered to be a sign of previous spiritual merit.

Essentially the Eastern religions are not so strongly inspired with the revolutionary spirit found in the original texts of the Abrahamic religions, which strongly enjoin charity and where the poor are considered to be more righteous than the rich. “*Blessed are the poor... woe to you who are rich...*” the Gospel tells us, and “*it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God*”. The Psalms are full of sayings like “*the wicked in his pride doth persecute the poor*” or “*for the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, says the LORD*”, there are many of a similar type. In modern terms we would say that they have an anti-capitalist tendency, which is a revolutionary position, and indeed in all times in history to question the distribution of wealth and the power of those who possess it has been a kind of revolutionary act.

Though the followers of the Abrahamic religions in general do not have a revolutionary mentality (for after all, they are often the very same religious reactionaries who Yeshua condemned), nonetheless the extroverted Occident has traditionally been more revolutionary than the East. Effectively every radical political system, from Socialism to Anarchism, has its origins in the West. Democracy, which at its founding contained some genuine revolutionary principles, spread from the Occident to the Orient, rather than vice-versa. Of course now there are a lot of rebel groups in the East, often inspired by Marxism, while Europe is politically complacent. As already mentioned we live in aberrant times - in the rich Occidental countries the psychological-scientific control of the population's beliefs, ensuring that they have a favourable mentality towards their oppressors, has become very powerful. However in South America, today perhaps a better example of the extroverted energy, the revolutionary tendency remains a great force and political consciousness is quite elevated.

The trouble for the Eastern philosophy lies in what Jung called the “Shadow”, which is to say the unconscious attitude compensating the conscious attitude. The East being introverted, being based in abstract logic, has the conscious attitude that the situation in which we find ourselves is related with the actions of our past lives, rather than the arbitrary determinations of nature or predestination. This is correct and logical. Yet judgements are made about Karma based on the outer situation, based on the external and visible. For example if someone is visibly poor, it is considered that it is their fault somehow. This attitude arises due to an incomplete integration of the “Shadow”. While the conscious mentality of the East transcends the visible and roots itself in logical principles, its unconscious mentality is rooted in the visible. If we were to make judgements about Karma based on the invisible, on the inner being of persons rather than their outer circumstances, we would see the whole situation quite differently.

Yeshua's saying about the blind man whom he healed, that he was blind “*that the works of God may be manifest in him*”, suggests the principle that adversities are not as such a punishment but rather a means of bringing about a situation of healing. So the suffering of the poor is not that they deserve to suffer, or must continue to suffer for their own good – the counter-revolutionary attitude - but rather that they undergo a situation of tyranny because they are not on the side of the tyrant. This notion is found in the Abrahamic scriptures such as those we have already quoted, whereas in the East it is not so.

A good example of the unconscious “Shadow” personality of the East is found in the predilection for vegetarianism. A great number of Hindus and Buddhists practise vegetarianism, being appalled by the death of animals for food. Without going into the merits or demerits of such a practise, it may serve as an example of placing the visible before the invisible, due to Extroversion of the Subconscious. Logic would in fact suggest that it would be the Abrahamic rather than the Eastern religions who are vegetarian, given the fact that they don't believe in any kind of reincarnation. This is not the case partly due to a few statements made in the Bible, but also is a result of the Subconscious Introversion of the Extroverted Occident.

If an animal is killed, according to the Eastern position it would have to take a new body. For a human this would be a great inconvenience, as the human process of growing up involves all kinds of complexities and potentials for falling into temptations. Yet for an animal, would it really be such a difficulty to be born again as an animal? Indeed one would imagine that the fact of having given it's body for food would be a means of attaining a higher rebirth by it's generosity. Echoes of this notion are found in Indigenous cultures' hunting practises, where the spirit of the animal is revered and it is considered that the animal gives itself willingly to humans. Evidently the East finds itself caught up in the visible situation, the physical death of the animal, despite the Bhagavad Gita telling us: "*Those who are wise lament neither for the living nor the dead*" and "*It is said that the soul is invisible, inconceivable, immutable, and unchangeable. Knowing this, you should not grieve for the body*".

In order to justify this belief in Vegetarianism, Hindu sects have developed philosophies such as suggesting that an animal is destined to live for a fixed time in it's body and has to come back in a similar body to live out that fixed time if it is killed. This is quite the same kind of "Interpretation", trying to make philosophy from dogma, as the Abrahamic religions engage in, illustrating the "Shadow", the Subconscious Extroversion, of the East.

Conclusion

As always it is in the Union of Opposites, Masculine and Feminine, Yang and Yin, and in Integration rather than one-sidedness, that we find coherency and clarity. The Eastern teaching is not superior to the Abrahamic teaching, and vice versa. Because of it's philosophical coherency, the Eastern wisdom is better for understanding purely spiritual matters, such as the question of life after death. The Abrahamic teaching, on the other hand, contains the spirit of revolt against an iniquitous world. It is filled with beautiful and enlightening parables, the meaning of which may be accessed through sincere contemplation. These contain deep insights, the teachings of Christ and Mohammed are truly profound. They are poetry of the highest order, communicating to the soul rather than to the intellect - the intellect which unfortunately has interpreted them in the light of it's own prejudices for thousands of years and created dogmas from those interpretations, enslaving humanity with them.

One side expresses clearly what the other expresses in dark sayings, and each can be understood best in the light of the other. "*Unbalanced forces perish in the void*", in order to make real progress we have to look beyond the doctrines of one teaching or another and grasp that in essence they are all communicating different angles of the same thing. There is the famous parable of "The Blind Men And The Elephant", where each blind man touches the elephant and believes it to be something - the one who touches the trunk says it is a snake, the one who touches the ear says it is a fan, the one who touches it's leg says it is a tree trunk, the one who touches it's side says it is a wall and the one who touches it's tusk says it is like a spear. If they all combined their perceptions and reasoned about how they all fit together, they would be able to understand what it really is.

We are never free from what the Jains call "*Conditioned Viewpoints*", and we can always benefit from what they call "*Many-Sidedness*". The comparative analysis of religions in the universities is not particularly useful from a spiritual viewpoint, as it focuses on historical and cultural differences and outward differences in doctrine and dogma. We should rather approach each teaching in a humble state of mind, recognizing it to be one of the many ways in which Divinity has revealed Himself (and Herself) to humanity, varying according to time and culture but always striving to communicate the same Eternal Truths. People are caught up in endless quibbling over details, as in the aforementioned controversy between Christians and Muslims about the crucifixion, in which

generally speaking neither one side nor the other ever understand the real import of the teachings they believe they are defending.

As I hope to have expressed in this treatise, the Abrahamic Wisdom and the Eastern Wisdom each become complete upon being synthesised. Each side illuminates invisible elements of the other, leading to what in psychoanalytic terms would be called Integration, a perspective of clarity. One may hope that such clarity might open people's minds to different forms of spiritual practise and to open-minded study, which combined with the humility of understanding that our perspectives are always limited may help to put an end to violent dogmatism, and bring a little peace to this conflict-riven world.