

East West Discourse: An Esoteric Comparison of the Western Philosophy and the Eastern Vedanta

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Abstract : The progressive emergence, in the course of the evolution of life, mind and personality, requires us to assume a creative Principle operating timeless Reality in the temporal. The difference between Western philosophy and that of India, concerns the origin and the purpose of the philosophical enquiry. While the former wonders at the external world, the latter is awareness of perennial suffering associated with human existence. The present world suffers from a basic form of rootlessness, reflecting many psychological, philosophical studies. Alienation, a major theme of human condition in the contemporary epoch has emerged as natural consequences of existential predicament. As Edmund Fuller also observes that individuals suffer not only from famine, ruin or even war but also from devastating inner problems, which are that of estrangement, hopelessness and utter despair. This existentialism is thus considered by Jean Wahl as the "Philosophies of existence". The post world war scenario well analyses the chaos, annihilation, frustration and anguished estrangement. In such conditions when the West cries out, "What is there? I know first of all that I am. But who am I?..... I am separated. What I am separated from I cannot name it. But I am separated." (Dostoevsky: The Confession), Vedantic philosophy looks upon the Pilgrim's Progress of Humanity as being essentially one, operating squarely within the bounds of reality, reflecting a basic human experience, outbraving indecorous dictums that have failed to give due honour to human beings, echoing for centuries the Sanskrit slokas with ultimate certitude: *II Esa Atma samaha plusina samo masakena samo nagena sama ebhis tribhir lokaih..... sama nena sarvena II* (The Atman (Divine Soul) is the same in the ant, the same in the gnat, the same in the elephant, the same in these three worlds.... the same in the whole Universe). The present paper aims at a comparative study of cultural and philosophical expression taking into view extensive illustrations from Western Philosophers and The Vedantic, Upanishadic lores of Indian philosophy.

Keywords : existentialism, Vedanta, philosophy, absurdism

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