Panentheism and Theistic Cosmopsychism: God and the Cosmos in the Bhavagad Gītā

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1. Introduction

The *Bhavagad Gītā*, one of the most important and often quoted texts in Indian religious and philosophical traditions, has been traditionally associated with panentheism. Franklin Edgerton (1944, p. 149), for example, says that "the *Gītā's* theism differs from pantheism […] in that it regards God as more than the universe." Rāmānuja also seems to recognize this form of panentheism in the *Gītā* (Buitenen 1968, p. 139). Delmar Langbauer (1972, pp. 25-26) compares the panentheism of Whitehead's process theology with the model of God found in the *Gītā*, which according to him is indisputably panentheistic. Robert Whittemore (1985, p. 354) calls the panentheism of the *Gītā* panauxotheism (from the Greek *auxesis*, expansion, hence, "the all as the expansion of the One"). Besides, the *Gītā* is often mentioned in general philosophical accounts of panentheism that are minimally sensitive to the world's religious traditions (Hartshorne & Reese 1953, p. 30) (Clayton 2013, p. 372) (Lataster & Bilimoria 2018, p. 51) (Culp 2021, p. 9).

Panentheism is the thesis that that the Cosmos is *in* God (or *in* the divine), although God is more than the Cosmos.[1] It has seen a revival over the past two decades in the philosophical literature, which has partially triggered an interest in Indian models of God, which have traditionally been seen as panentheistic (Maharaj 2018) (Bartley 2002) (Barua 2010) (Biernacki 2014). Etymologically, "pan-en-theism" means "all is in God." As Philip Clayton (2013, p. 372) puts it (perhaps suitably mentioning the *Bhavagad Gītā*): "The 'en' of panentheism is almost always a two-fold 'in': the transcendent is in the immanent, and the immanent is in the transcendent. Or, in the beautiful words of the *Bhagavad Gītā*, 'He who sees Me everywhere and sees all in Me; I am not lost to him nor is he lost to Me' (VI, 30)."

Panentheism has been often associated with panpsychism[2], an old ontological view on consciousness that has also enjoyed a renaissance in recent decades.[3] The way in which panentheism is connected with panpsychism largely depends on how panentheism and panpsychism are defined. It also depends on how one sees the connection that exists

[1] Many critics have pointed out the difficulty with defining the "in" in this characterization of panentheism. They complain that the "in" is fuzzy and that there is no widespread agreement on its meaning. See (Mullins 2016a), (Lataster & Bilimoria 2018), (Gasser 2019) and (Culp 2021) for a survey of this debate.

[2] See (Brüntrup; Göcke; Jaskolla 2020).

[3] See (Bruntrup; Jaskolla 2017) and (Seager 2020), for example.

between panpsychism and cosmopsychism. If we define panpsychism as the thesis that consciousness is fundamental and ubiquitous in the natural world, then depending on where one places fundamentality (whether on the micro-level or on the cosmic-level) there will be two types of panpsychism: micropsychism and cosmopsychism. Whereas micropsychism places fundamentality at the micro-level, cosmopsychism places fundamentality at the cosmic level.[4] According to cosmopsychism, the Cosmos has some form of consciousness which ontologically supports not only the macro-consciousness we witness in human beings, but everything else: all facts, be they physical or mental, macro or micro, ontologically depend on consciousness involving facts at the cosmic level. Forms of cosmopsychism have been proposed, for example, in (Mathews 2011), (Jaskolla; Buck 2012), (Shani 2015), (Nagasawa; Wager 2017) and (Goff 2017).

If we agree on this taxonomy and define the Cosmos as all that is, then if we embrace a panentheistic view which contains the idea of God as the ontologically fundamental conscious entity, then panentheism entails a specific form of panpsychism, namely cosmopsychism. As a consequence of that, panentheism will be considered a kind of cosmopsychism, and consequently a kind of panpsychism (we might term this *theistic cosmopsychism*.)[5]

Despite this, recent interest within analytic philosophy on the connections between Indian traditions and panpsychism still seems to be mostly focused on atheistic traditions, such as Advaita Vedānta and Buddhism.[6] For instance, Douglas Duckworth (2017) investigates panpsychism in relation to Yogācāra Buddhism; Luca Gasparri (2017) and Miri Albahari (2020) explore Advaita Vedānta in relation to cosmopsychism. The special issue of *The Monist* dedicated to cosmopsychism and Indian philosophy (Ganeri; Shani 2022) almost exclusively analyses atheistic Indian traditions, though it does contain one paper by Anand Vaidya (2022) that associates Rāmānuja's Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta with cosmopsychism, and another by Swami Medhananda (2022) that examines the views of Aurobindo.[7] Another exception is (Vaidya 2020), which comparatively examines analytic panpsychism in relation to both Advaita Vedānta and Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta.[8]

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[4] Yujin Nagasawa and Khai Wager (2017), for example, restrict panpsychism to micropsychism. That is why they do not see cosmopsychism as a kind of panpsychism. But this is a terminological issue. Others, such as Philip Goff (2017) and Joanna Leidenhag (2020), see cosmopsychism as a kind of panpsychism.

[5] This idea of theistic cosmopsychism has its precedents. On Yujin Nagasawa's (2020) view that pantheism entails cosmopsychism, pantheism could be considered as a theistic form of cosmopsychism. David Chalmers (2020, p. 371) considers that the cosmic entity associated with cosmopsychism might be "a god"; he uses the expression "divine forms of cosmopsychism". And if we accept Chalmers (2020) taxonomy that asserts that idealism is a form of cosmopsychism, classical forms of idealism such as Berkeley's, Schelling's, and Hegel's could also be seen as theistic versions of cosmopsychism. See (Meixner 2016).

[6] I use the term "atheistic tradition" to refer to those traditions which do not accept (what might be taken to be) the central thesis of theism, which is the existence of a personal God.

[7] Another example of the existing imbalance between theistic and atheistic Indian traditions (in the context of the contemporary debate on consciousness) is the recently published Bloomsbury volume on cross-cultural approaches to consciousness (Shani; Beiweis 2023).

[8] The atheistic approach to cosmopsychism might be a reflection of the naturalistic and non-theistic framework within which most of the contemporary debates on consciousness take place. This is evidenced by that fact that even theories that go against or are inconsistent with physicalism such as panpsychism are also mostly seen as materialistic. Talking about Russellian panpsychism, Chalmers

In this paper I want to contribute to the two debates mentioned above—the cross-cultural debate over panentheism and Indian models of God, and the connections between cosmopsychism and Indian traditions—by examining the *Bhavagad Gītā*. My first goal is to offer a panentheistic reconstruction of the *Gītā*'s concept of God. To that, I will partially rely on and develop the analysis of the *Gītā*'s panentheism presented in (Silvestre; Herbert 2023). The second goal is to show how the *Gītā*'s panentheistic model of God entails a form of theistic cosmopsychism, and locate this *Gītā*'s cosmopsychism within a broader map of cosmopsychist views. To that, I will propose a taxonomy of cosmopsychist views partially based on the one presented in (Chalmers 2020). Finally, based on this reconstructive analysis of the Gītā's cosmopsychism, I will outline some few reflections on the philosophical prospects of theistic cosmopsychism.

Before starting though, some terminological remarks are needed. A mental or psychological property (or still a mental or psychological state) is any state of mind; it includes conscious or experiential properties (what-is-it-like conscious states) such as pain, but also other states such as belief, desire and intention (which are traditionally associated with agency.)[9] I will most of the time adopt a property-based discourse; instead, for example, of speaking about consciousness, I will speak about experiential properties.

2. God and the Cosmos

2.1. God

While there is considerable controversy about the nature of God in the *Gītā*, most of its theistic interpreters agree that there is enough textual evidence to support the claim that, according to the *Gītā*, the speaker of the text, Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa, is God.[10] In the *Gītā*, Kṛṣṇa is said to possess attributes such as omnipotence (11.43, 11.40), omniscience (7.26, 13.3), omnipresence (9.4, 11.38), eternity (2.12, 11.18), aseity (9.4-5) and immutability (4.6). Besides, he is the source of all excellences (10.41), the supreme being (10.15, 11.43), the source, origin, and dissolution of the Cosmos (7.6, 10.8) as well as its sustainer and support (7.7, 9.4-6, 9.18, 10.42).

(2002) for example states that "[Russellian panpsychism] can be seen as a sort of materialism. If one holds that physical terms refer not to dispositional properties but the underlying intrinsic properties, then the protophenomenal properties can be seen as physical properties, thus preserving a sort of materialism." Philip Goff (2007) also defends the idea that Russellian versions of cosmopsychism are materialistic: "Some might be tempted to describe cosmopsychism as 'idealism.' But if we can conceive of it as a form of constitutive Russellian monism, then we can equally describe it as a form of materialism." Even contemporary dualistic approaches to consciousness tend to follow a naturalistic standpoint. Brie Gertler (2020), for example, states: "[…] most contemporary philosophical arguments for dualism are entirely naturalistic. And they do not aim to establish the existence of immaterial substances such as souls; rather, they aim to show that the qualitative properties of conscious experience are non-physical."

[9] This use of the terms "mind" and "mental" is not exactly the same as the Sanskrit word "manas", which is traditionally translated as mind. See Section 4 below.

[10] The ones who do not agree on this are ready to concede some kind of divinity to Kṛṣṇa, or, in other words, to assign to Kṛṣṇa some role in the *Gita's* concept of God. For example, according to a traditional view, Śaṅkara (8th century) is said to identify Kṛṣṇa with *saguṇa brahman*, the illusory God of religion.

I will here follow this general theistic approach to the *Gītā* according to which Vāsudeva-Kṛṣṇa is God.[11] While I recognize that "God" might be a problematic term, I will loosely use it to refer to the ultimate, supreme divine being which is the support, source or cause of all reality. I also assume that God is a *complete-in-itself object*: in the case God is mereologically structured, God remains strictly identical to itself even in a contrafactual situation where one of its proper parts did not exist.

In the text, Kṛṣṇa or God undoubtedly plays the role of a person, broadly understood as conscious entity ontologically distinct from other entities. In several places in the *Gītā* Kṛṣṇa is described as a *puruṣa*, a term usually translated as person which fits this general understanding of personhood. He is called the eternal divine (10.12, 11.18), primeval (11.38) and supreme *puruṣa* (13.23, 15.17, 15.19). He is said to be a special *puruṣa* distinct from ordinary *puruṣas* (13.21-24). But despite this, he can enter into loving relationships with other persons, especially with his devotees (*bhaktas*) (7.17, 9.26, 9.29, 12.20, 18.65, 18.69). This has the obvious consequence that God instantiates experiential properties such as feeling affection for others (7.17, 12.20, 18.65, 18.69). God also possesses rationality and agency, and instantiates mental properties such as belief (6.36, 11.18, 18.70) and desire (9.8). And all this is first-personal, perspectival: it is God who feels affection, who believes and wills. Therefore, the following claim can be read from the *Gītā*:

(G1) God is a rational agent able to interact with other agents, and a conscious subject who instantiates, from a first-person perspective, experiential properties as well as other mental properties such as thought, belief, intention and desire.

The *Gītā*'s model of God might be characterized as panentheistic. In the *Gītā*, God has a close relationship with the Cosmos. In verse 7.12, for example, Kṛṣṇa says: "Know that all states of being, be they characterized by *sattva*, *rajas* or *tamas*, have their source in me alone; but I am not in them—rather they are in me." (7.12).[12] All states of being (*bhāva*) come from God and are in God.[13]

The text also depicts God as immanent to the Cosmos. He pervades this world (9.4, 11.38) and encompasses all (11.40). He is present in everyone's heart (10.20, 15.15). God's immanence in the world reaches what *appears* to be a kind of pantheism,[14] where not only is he identified with distinguished items of the world (7.8-11, 10.20-38), but with all that exists (7.19, 11.40). In the often-repeated theological claim: Vāsudeva is everything (7.19).

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[11] For a defense of this see (Resnick 1995).

[12] My *Gītā* translations are mostly based on those of (Theodor 2010) and to a lesser degree of (Sargeant 2009).

[13] Despite the undoubtful connection that is between the words "bhāva" and "guṇa" in this verse, I follow (Theodor 2010) and translate "bhāva" as state of being, leaving the word "guṇa" untranslated ("guṇa" is usually translated as quality, mode of existence and state of being; it is of three kinds: *sattva* or goodness, *rajas* or passion, and *tamas* or darkness). Besides, I am assuming here that the three states of being mentioned in this verse, which are produced by the *guṇas* (7.13), are representative of all states of being, which are similarly produced by the *guṇas* (7.14, 15.2).

[14] Pantheism, the thesis that God and the Cosmos are identical, entails that God is immanent to the Cosmos (immanence: from Latin immanere, "to dwell in, remain").

But the *Gītā* also portrays God as transcendent to the Cosmos. Kṛṣṇa does not stand in beings, and beings do not stand in him (9.4-5). Verse 7.12 quoted above says that although all states are in God, God is not in them; he is different from them. The *Gītā* also describes Kṛṣṇa's supreme and separate abode: Sun does not light it, nor moon, nor fire; going there, one never returns (15.6).

Thus, from a pre-philosophical and deliberatively naïve perspective[15], the following three claims can be read from the *Gītā*:

(G2) God is identical with the Cosmos.
(G3) God is different from the Cosmos.
(G4) The Cosmos is in God.

G3 (and G1) has to do with the transcendence side of the *Gītā*'s concept of God. G2 is a statement of the *Gītā*'s pseudo-pantheistic side, as I call it (the reason for this will be clear below). And G4 is a half-statement of the *Gītā*'s panentheism; the other half is G3.

G1 and G2 seem to entail the following claim:

(G5) The Cosmos instantiates mental properties.

They also seem to entail, possibly along with G4 (one might say that as the Cosmos is in God and God is divine, it is likely that the Cosmos is also divine), the following:

(G6) The Cosmos is divine.

I deliberately leave the term "divine" undefined. For my purposes, it suffices to understand it in a broad sense, somewhat close to terms such as "Godly", "godly" and "holy". From a sociological viewpoint, the divine might be seen as that which is set apart from the everyday or profane. From a theological viewpoint, it might be connected with some key theological attributes (Kant famously identified the holy with the morally good.) From the believer's phenomenological viewpoint, it might be seen as that which produces feelings of awe and complete 'otherness', possibly being beyond conceptualization and rationality.[16]

Although the *Gītā* does provide textual support to these claims, as mentioned, G1-G6 are in a very important sense pre-philosophical. How are we to understand the claim that the Cosmos is in God (G4)? How to make sense of the contradictory claim that God is at the same time identical with (G2) and different from (G3) the Cosmos? As one might suspect, answering these questions depends not only on the *Gītā's* concept of God, but also on how the Cosmos is conceived.

*2.2. The **C**osmos*

The word "Cosmos" is usually used to mean the same as "world" and "universe": the totality of entities, the whole of reality, everything that is. In accordance with this, and generalizing from a definition given by Jonathan Schaffer (2010, pp. 33-35), I define the

[15] This applies particularly to verses 7.19 and 11.40, which assert that Kṛṣṇa is everything (*vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti; sarvaṁ samāpnoṣi tato 'si sarvaḥ*) and which are being read in terms of identity.
[16] As in Rudolf Otto (1923), for example.

***C**osmos* (with bold capital "**C**") as the totality of all actual concrete objects.[17] By X's being the totality of objects of a domain D I mean that (1) X is a maximal object of which all members of D, and only members of D, are proper parts and (2) X is not identical with any plurality of members of D. (2) is based on the thesis that composition is not the same as identity (Schaffer 2010, p. 35). A proper part of X is a part of X which is not identical with X. Following Chalmers (2020, p. 353), I take concreteness as involving both physicality and mentality (but excluding abstract domains, such as mathematics): a *concrete object* is a non-complete-in-itself object which instantiates physical or mental properties.[18]

The concept of proper parthood is crucial in this definition of **C**osmos. Although parthood in this case is traditionally interpreted spatially (as in "the handle is part of the mug" or "that area is part of the living room"), I want to leave that open. "**C**osmos" here means the totality of all actual concrete objects based on whatever interpretation of proper parthood is considered. If proper parthood is interpreted spatially, then **C**osmos is the concrete object of which all actual concrete objects are (spatial) proper parts (and which is not identical with any plurality of actual concrete objects.) I call this the concrete cosmos, or simply *cosmos*, with lower case "c". Trivially in this case the **C**osmos is identical with the cosmos. It is also a non-complete-in-itself object: here the **C**osmos does not remain strictly identical to itself in a contrafactual situation where one of its proper parts did not exist.

But proper parthood can be interpreted differently. If it is interpreted from Rāmānuja's viewpoint, for example, who defines (proper) parthood in terms of ontological dependence and control—he says that the world is part (*aṁśa*) of God because it is controlled and supported by God (Barua 2010, pp. 15-17)—, then the **C**osmos is whatever entity ontologically supports and controls all actual concrete objects.[19] In this case, the **C**osmos is not identical with the cosmos. More than that: the cosmos is a proper part of the **C**osmos (for it is also ontologically dependent and controlled by God, or the **C**osmos.) See that even being mereologically structured, the **C**osmos here remains strictly identical to itself in a contrafactual situation where one of its proper parts did not exist: it is a complete-in-itself object.

The reference to Rāmānuja here is merely pedagogical. As far as the *Gītā* is concerned, the issue of proper parthood in the definition of **C**osmos will be properly

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[17] The bold capital "**C**" is there to ensure that this is not confused with a narrower sense of Cosmos to be defined below.

[18] The requirement that a concrete object be non-complete-in-itself is there to exclude God from the definition of the **C**osmos (by definition, God is complete-in-itself.) If God exists, he is not part of the **C**osmos.

[19] The basic definition of proper parthood suggested by Rāmānuja seems to be this: if X ontologically depends on Y, then X is a proper part of Y. Although my analysis will not rely on this definition of proper parthood (although I will mention it later), the following objection is worth considering: although the set {1, 2, 3} ontologically depends on 1, it is 1 that is a proper part of {1, 2, 3}, not the other way round. The problem with this counterexample is that it presupposes a pluralist view according to which the parts are prior to the whole, whereas Rāmānuja and the definition of proper parthood implicit in his writings presuppose a priority monist view according to which the whole is prior to its parts. See (Schaffer 2010, 2013). I deal with priority monism in Section 5.

addressed in Section 4. Nevertheless, some conclusions can be achieved here. Considering G1, a trivial way out of the contradiction between G2 and G3 is to suppose that there is an ambiguity in the use of the word "Cosmos" there. While G2 is about the **C**osmos, G3 and G4 are about the cosmos:

(G2) God is identical with the **C**osmos.
(G3) God is different from the cosmos.
(G4) The cosmos is in God.

G5 and G6 are about the **C**osmos. However, due to a possible role played by G4 in the inferential move leading to G6, it might also refer to the cosmos:

(G5) The **C**osmos instantiates mental properties.
(G6) The **C**osmos (and possibly all its proper parts, including the cosmos) are divine.

From G2 and G3, it follows that the cosmos is different from the **C**osmos, which entitles us to call G2 "pseudo-pantheistic": since pantheism refers to the cosmos, G2 is not really pantheistic in the strictest sense of the term. It also entitles us to say that the *Gītā* requires a non-spatial interpretation of parthood in the definition of **C**osmos. In Section 4 I elaborate more on that, providing independent textual evidences for the thesis that, in the *Gītā*, proper parthood in the definition of the **C**osmos should be understood non-spatially. While this interpretation of proper parthood, as I will argue, should not be defined in terms of ontological dependence, in a very important sense it does involve a notion of ontological dependence between God and everything else. I turn to this now.

3. Ontological Dependence

The *Gītā* depicts an unequivocal relation of ontological dependence between beings and God. In verses 9.4-6, for example, Kṛṣṇa says as follows:

> […] all beings stand in me, but I do not stand in them. And yet all beings do not stand in me; see my mystic splendour! I sustain beings but rely not on them; my very self is the cause of their being. As the great wind that goes everywhere is eternally situated in space, know that similarly all beings stand in me. (9.4-6)

The key term here is "*stha*", which means amongst other things "to abide in; be situated in; rest in; stand in." In verse 9.4, for example, Kṛṣṇa says *matsthāni sarvabhūtāni*, "all beings abide, are situated, or stand in me." It seems uncontroversial among commentators, both traditional and contemporary, that statements like this mean (at least partially) the following: all beings *ontologically depend* on God.[20] Notice that the dependence relation here is clearly asymmetric: although beings stand in God, God does not stand in them.

The idea of ontological dependence also appears in other verses of the *Gītā*, some of which have already been mentioned. It appears, for example, when Kṛṣṇa says that all states of being are in him, but he is not in them (7.12), or when he is said to be the supporter (*bhartā*), foundation (*sthānam*) (9.18) and the supreme resting place of the

[20] See (Theodor 2010, p. 82) and (Malinar 2007, p. 148), for example. See also (Chari 2005, pp. 97-99) for Śaṅkara's, Rāmānuja's and Madhva's views on these verses.

world (*viśva*) (11.38), or still when he says that with a single fragment (*aṁśa*) of himself, he sustains this entire universe (*jagat*) (10.42). It also seems to be behind the beautiful analogy found in the seventh chapter where Kṛṣṇa says that all that exists rests on him like pearls on a thread (7.7).

But there is an important qualification in the *Gītā* on the way things ontologically depend on God. Right after saying in 9.4 that all beings stand in him, Kṛṣṇa paradoxically says that beings do not stand in him. Then he offers a way out of the paradox. It is an analogy. As the wind stands in space (*ākāśa*), all beings stand in him. Here "space" seems to be used more or less in accordance with what some call metaphysical space: the medium that holds, contains within it and allows physical things to exist, but which does not depend on them to exist.[21] Space exists permanently and independently of whether there is any physical object in it. And while space contains physical things within it, it does not touch nor interact with them; it remains the same, aloof, distant and transcendent, we might say, to physical things. Thus, it seems that the *Gītā* supports the following thesis:

> (T1) All beings ontologically depend on God (like physical things depend on space), who does not depend on anything; he is prior to everything else, being the fundamental entity that supports reality.

T1 is at the heart of the *Gītā*'s panentheism. As a first approach, T1 can be said to explain G4. All beings and states of being are in God in the sense of ontologically depending on God. Second, T1 can also be said to explain G2: God is the **C**osmos in the sense that everything that exists ontologically depends on God. In this case, proper parthood would be defined in terms of ontological dependence. Third, T1 contains a kind of aseity: according to the *Gītā*, God is *a se*, completely independent, self-sufficient. He does not depend on anything to be. T1 might be seen also as portraying a kind of transcendence: since God depends on nothing (he is absolutely independent, we might say), he is transcendent to everything. Thus, T1 might be said to explain G3. See that the dependence that all beings have on God does not affect his transcendence: beings depend on God analogously to how physical things depend on space.

But T1 can also be arrived at through another route, one which more satisfactorily explains G2-G4. In verses 4 to 6 of chapter 7 Kṛṣṇa says as follows:

> Earth, water, fire, air, space, mind, intellect and egotism—these eight comprise my separated (*bhinnā*) *prakṛti* (nature). But you should know that beside this inferior (*aparā*) nature, O mighty-armed one, there is another superior (*parā*) *prakṛti* (nature) of mine, comprised of conscious living beings (*jīvabhūta*), by which this world is sustained. Realize that all entities have their source in this [the two kinds of *prakṛti*]. I am the origin of this entire world and of its dissolution too. (7.4-6)[22]

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[21] See (Mullins 2016b).

[22] There are interpretations to the expressions "parā prakṛti" and "aparā prakṛti" different from the one I am going to give here. For some of them, including Śaṅkara's, Rāmānuja's and Madhva's, see (Jacobsen, 1999, p. 69-71). There are also other ways to understand the reference of the word "*etad*" (this) in verse 7.6; I am here following Śaṅkara, Rāmānuja and others and understanding it as referring to both kinds of prakṛti. See (Edgerton, 1944, pp. 95-96).

By saying that Kṛṣṇa is the origin and dissolution of the world, once more it is claimed, it seems, that all things ontologically depend on him. But this is structured. God has two kinds of *prakṛti* (or nature, as it is usually translated). There is God's separated and inferior *prakṛti*, composed by the eight 'material' elements[23] (earth, water, fire, air, space, mind, intelligence and egotism), and there is God's superior *prakṛti*, composed by conscious living beings, the macro-subjects that instantiate experiential macro-properties and other mental states. As I will argue below, these two kinds of *prakṛti* ontologically depend on God.

Translators disagree on the correct meaning of "*jīvabhūta*" in these verses. Although it means "living being" (or, more literally, "become alive"), many translators translate it with the help of terms like "individual self", "embodied self", "spirit" and "soul" so to emphasize a supposed 'non-material' or 'spiritual' connotation.[24] Furthermore, "*jīvabhūta*" is often identified with terms like "ātmā" and "*puruṣa*", which have a similar 'non-material' connotation. Verse 13.22, for example, states *puruṣaḥ prakṛtistho hi bhuṅkte prakṛti-jān guṇān*: "indeed, the *puruṣa*, abiding in material nature (*prakṛti*), experiences the *guṇas* born of material nature." That a *puruṣa* can experience something shows that it is conscious in the sense of being able to experience pain and joy, cold and heat, happiness and distress, which are phenomenological states with a distinctive qualitative experiential aspect of what-is-it-like to be in those states.

I therefore translate "*jīvabhūta*" as conscious living being, the macro-subject that instantiate experiential macro-properties and other mental states. The capacity of experiencing "what-is-it-like" states is, for my purposes here, the distinctive, 'non-material' feature of the *jīvabhūta*.[25] Moreover, at least some of those conscious living beings can enter into personal relationships with other conscious living beings, and with God himself (4.3, 7.17, 9.26, 9.29, 12.20, 18.65). Thus, they are Kṛṣṇa's superior *prakṛti*. The eight 'material' elements are not conscious in this sense. Therefore, they are Kṛṣṇa's inferior and separated (*bhinnā*) *prakṛti*.

Together, these two kinds of *prakṛti* are the source of all: all beings have their origin (*yoni*) in them (7.6). I then claim that the following thesis is also supported by the *Gītā*:

(T2) All concrete objects are God's *prakṛti*.

To justify this, as well as to justify the claim made earlier that T1 can be arrived at through verses 7.4-6, I will elaborate more on the term "prakṛti" and the peculiar way it is used in these verses.

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[23] The reason I am using the word "material" in quotes will become clear shortly.

[24] For a discussion on the translation of the term "jīvabhūta" in these verses, as well as a justification for attributing a 'non-material' or 'spiritual' aspect to it, see (Malinar, 2007, pp. 130-131).

[25] See that by doing that I am not denying that the term "*jīvabhūta*" might have a stronger 'non-material' component, referring to some kind of 'spiritual' aspect, whatever that might be.

4. Prakṛti

4.1. Prakṛti in Sāṃkhya

According to its earliest recorded use, "prakṛti" means "that which was first" or "the original."[26] It is best known as a technical term referring to the ultimate 'material' principle of Sāṃkhya system, although this is late in appearing.[27] In fact, the term has a wide variety of meanings (Jacobsen 1999, p. 25). Knut Jacobsen has identified three clusters of meaning of the term "*prakṛti*" in Indian traditions:

> (1) *Prakṛti* is 'that which precedes,' the 'first,' 'that which is in its own form.' This is the 'basis,' the 'original state,' therefore the 'natural,' the 'archetype,' one's 'character,' and 'normal.' […] (2) *Prakṛti* is the 'material cause,' the 'producer of effects,' the 'innate power of transformation and manifestation,' the 'generative principle' and the 'ultimate material principle.' […] (3) *Prakṛti*-s in the plural are the 'principles,' 'constituents,' 'parts,' or 'components of a whole' [...]. (Jacobsen 1999, p. 25).

The second cluster of meaning relates to Sāṃkhya's traditional use of the term, which in turn is traditionally related to the *Gītā*'s inferior *prakṛti*, that is, the eight 'material' elements (earth, water, fire, air, space, mind, intelligence and egotism).

In Sāṃkhya, *prakṛti* is the subtle material power within phenomena that produces their manifest forms: it is the producer, the *natura naturans*, the productive aspect of nature, the inner principle which causes things into being (Jacobsen 1999, p. 52). Earth (*bhūmi*), water (*jala*), fire (*āgni*), air (*vāyu*) and space or ether (*ākāśa*) are called the five gross elements (*mahābhūta*).[28] They are the products of *prakṛti* from which all objects are made or 'emerge'. But from *prakṛti* there also 'emerge' subtler material elements: *manas* (mind), *buddhi* (intelligence) and *ahaṃkāra* (egotism). Although 'material', these elements are intrinsically psychological.

Paul Schweizer (1993, p. 848) explains the psychological aspect of *Sāṃkhya's manas*, *buddhi* and *ahaṃkāra* as follows:

> *Manas* […] is viewed essentially as an organ, the special organ of cognition, just as the eyes are the special organs of sight. Indeed, *manas* is held to be intimately connected with perception, since the raw data supplied by the senses must be ordered and categorized with respect to a conceptual scheme before various objects can be perceived as members of their respective categories […] This imposition of conceptual structure on the chaotic field of raw sensation is one of the basal activities of *manas* […]. Hence ordinary perceptual experience is already heavily conditioned by the activities of *manas*, and *manas* is thus sometimes referred to as the sixth organ of sensation. In addition to its perceptual activities, *manas* is held to be responsible for the cognitive functions of analysis, deliberation and decision. It is closely allied to *buddhi*, which is somewhat roughly translated as the faculty of 'intellect' or 'reason.' *Buddhi* is a subtler and more powerful faculty than *manas*, and is responsible for the higher level intellectual functions, which require intuition, insight and reflection. […] The combination of *manas* and *buddhi* roughly correspond to what is meant by the objective or 'impersonal' mental faculties in western philosophical discourse. In addition, [Sāṃkhya] recognizes a third component of mind, *ahaṃkāra*, which is the ego or

[26] Its root √*kṛ* means to make, cause, create, produce, or perform. The prefix *pra-* shows that it precedes, it has the sense of forward movement, and it indicates a creative force, the urge to create, a biological and natural process.

[27] Sāṃkhya is one of the six schools of so-called orthodox Indian philosophy. The *Gītā* contains strong Sāṃkhya (or proto-Sāṃkhya, as some call it) elements.

[28] Other words such as "pruṭhavī" (earth), "āpa" (water) and "teja" (fire) are also used.

phenomenal self. *Ahaṃkāra* appropriates all mental experiences to itself, and thus 'personalizes' the objective activities of *manas* and *buddhi* by assuming possession of them.

Schweizer continues and says that the "combination of these three faculties […] approximately comprises the individual mind-self of the western philosophical tradition" (Schweizer 1993, p. 848). This is correct, but with a caveat: the complex *manas-buddhi-ahaṃkāra* does not encompass conscious, phenomenological or what-is-it-like states. In Sāṃkhya, the realm of *prakṛti* is held to be inherently unconscious. Consciousness belongs to the realm of *puruṣa*, a different ontological category altogether which relates to the *jīvabhūta*, the *Gītā*'s superior *prakṛti*. Sāṃkhya's *puruṣa* is the absolute, unconditioned self, and the metaphysical principle underlying the individual person. It is described as pure and undifferentiated awareness, and is in some respects comparable to Kant's noumenal self (Schweizer 1993, p. 849). The *puruṣa* is often compared to a light which 'illuminates' the mental processes and states produced by *manas*, *buddhi* and *ahaṃkāra*; these are conscious only to the extent that they receive external 'illumination' from *puruṣa*.

Notice that I am not equating the *Gītā*'s inferior *prakṛti* with Sāṃkhya's *prakṛti*, or the *Gītā*'s superior *prakṛti* with Sāṃkhya's *puruṣa*.[29] All I claim is that these pairs of concepts are close enough for me to make the following (hopefully noncontroversial) claims. First, the *Gītā*'s inferior *prakṛti* (and Sāṃkhya's *prakṛti*) can be minimally seen as the stuff from which all *non-conscious concrete objects* are made. This allows me to drop reference to the term "material" altogether. As defined earlier, a concrete object is a non-complete-in-itself object which instantiates physical or mental properties; a conscious object is a concrete object which instantiates experiential mental properties. Thus, a non-conscious concrete object is a concrete object which does not instantiate experiential properties.

Second, as long as it is connected with the *Gītā*'s superior *prakṛti*, the *Gītā*'s inferior *prakṛti* instantiates mental properties in general, be then experiential or not (the same holding for the Sāṃkhya complex *prakṛti-puruṣa*). Third, the *Gītā*'s inferior and superior kinds of *prakṛti* encompass all concrete objects. While the inferior *prakṛti* encompasses the stuff from which non-conscious concrete objects are made, the superior *prakṛti* encompasses conscious concrete objects, that is to say, macro-subjects that instantiate experiential macro-properties and other mental states. It therefore seems reasonable to claim that all concrete objects are God's *prakṛti* (T2).

[29] The extent to which the *Gītā* supports Sāṃkhya's ontology is debatable. First, as it will be seen below, the *Gītā*'s use of the term "prakṛti" is different from Sāṃkhya's use. Traditional Sāṃkhya's account of *prakṛti* is much more nuanced and detailed. Sāṃkhya speaks for example of twenty-four elements (*tattva*) that emerge from *prakṛti* while these *Gītā* verses mention only eight (although verse 13.5 mentions a more comprehensive list). There is also in Sāṃkhya a 'pseudo-causal' relation between these elements, which is ignited by *puruṣa*: when associated with *puruṣa*, *prakṛti* produces *buddhi*, from which *ahaṃkāra* is produced, from which the other elements are produced. Second, Sāṃkhya is dualist: *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* belong to different ontological realms. On the other hand, the *Gītā* very strongly points to a kind of monism. In verses 7.4-6 in particular, both the inferior *prakṛti* and the superior *prakṛti*, conscious beings and the non-conscious-stuff, are *prakṛti* of the same thing, namely God.

4.1. Prakṛti in the Gītā

Although the *Gītā*'s inferior *prakṛti* can be understood, as it is generally so, according to Jacobsen's second cluster of meaning—approaching thus the traditional meaning of "prakṛti" associated with Sāṃkhya—, there is a distinctive uniqueness about how the term "prakṛti" is used in verses 7.4-6. It is used in a relational way. The verses speak about *prakṛti of* God, meaning what seems to be an intimate relation between God and something else. "Prakṛti" in this sense is an incomplete or unsaturated term: to be *prakṛti* is to be *prakṛti of* something.[30]

This sense of "prakṛti" can be further understood according to Jacobsen's first and third clusters of meaning. It involves Jacobsen's first cluster of meaning in that God's two kinds of *prakṛti* precede God in the sense of being or belonging to his character, his original state, his nature, which conveys a sense of intimacy. And it involves Jacobsen's third cluster of meaning in that God's two kinds of *prakṛti* are principles, parts or components of a whole (in this case God himself), which also conveys a sense of intimacy. This is partially corroborated by verse 15.7, which says that the *jīvabhūta* is part (*aṁśa*) of Kṛṣṇa.

This has some important philosophical implications. First, if for example we take a person X's character or original state as something unique to X, then it makes sense to say that X's character, which in some sense precedes X, ontologically depends on X (like physical things depend on space, we might add). Therefore, in this relational sense of "prakṛti", if Y is *prakṛti* of God, then Y ontologically depends on God. Second, assuming, as I think we should, that X's *prakṛti* is different from X, in this relational sense of the word, if Y is *prakṛti* of God, then Y is a proper part of God. Or, to put it better: this relational use of "prakṛti" expresses a proper parthood concept.

If I were to offer an analogy to clarify the meaning of the proposition "X is a *prakṛti* of God" I would mention trope theory. Trope theory is the view that reality is wholly or partly made up from tropes. Tropes are the particular qualities of objects.[31] Socrates' charisma is a trope. As such, it is a particular, a thing if you will. Second, it is ontologically dependent on Socrates. The existence of Socrates' charisma depends on Socrates. Third, it is something intimately related to Socrates. And finally, Socrates' charisma is in a very important sense a part of Socrates.

Another way to help us grasp this *Gītā*'s concept of *prakṛti* is to refer to Philip Goff's (2017) concept of aspect. Aspects are constituents of structured wholes that can be considered in isolation from the wholes but which are (at least contingently) ontologically dependent on the whole of which they are constituents. Goff takes aspect to be a primitive not admitting of more fundamental analysis. As with other primitives, the best way to get a grip on it is through examples. Take one's current conscious experience. It might be seen as having 'parts', involving, for example, visual experience of colors, auditory experiences of sounds, and emotional experiences of joy, etc. One way to make

[30] Jacobsen (1999, p. 69-71) recognizes this as a particular meaning the *Gītā* attaches to the word "prakṛti".

[31] An object might be seen as possessing universals like the property of redness, but it might also be seen as the bearer of a particular and unique quality, a trope, which is that particular redness, that object's redness. See (Maurin, 2018).

sense of this is to see the total experience as fundamental, as a unity of which the experiential parts are aspects. Naturally these aspects are unsaturated beings: we cannot capture the essence of the aspect without reference to the whole of which it is an aspect. All this seems to be true of the *Gītā*'s concept of *prakṛti*, especially as it is understood in accordance with Jacobsen's third cluster of meaning.

I propose here to understand *prakṛti* as a metaphysical primitive denoting this intimate relation that exists between non-conscious concrete objects and living conscious beings on one hand, and God on the other. It is a primitive proper parthood concept. As a primitive, it cannot be explained or defined in terms of simpler concepts. Despite this, it does involve ontological dependence: if Y is *prakṛti* of God, then Y ontologically depends on God.

I also propose that in the definition of the **C**osmos, proper parthood be understood in terms of *prakṛti*. In other words, I propose that the *Gītā*'s concept of **C**osmos be defined as the maximal object of which all actual concrete objects are *prakṛti* (and which is not identical with any plurality of actual concrete objects.) As a consequence of this, there is an intimate relation between all actual concrete objects and the **C**osmos: they ontologically depend on it. Notice that, unlike Rāmānuja, I am not defining proper parthood in terms of ontological dependence. Instead, I am using a specific proper parthood notion in the definition of **C**osmos which involves, but is not defined from, ontological dependence.

Here we have a final explanation for the *Gītā*'s panentheism. First, along with T2, this definition of the **C**osmos in terms of *prakṛti* entails and explains G2. By definition, the **C**osmos is identical with God. It also explains G3: by definition the **C**osmos, which is identical with God, is different from the cosmos. And, finally, it explains G4. The cosmos is in God in the sense of being a *prakṛti* of God (the cosmos is a concrete object).

5. Cosmopsychism

*5.1. The **C**osmos*

From a minimal point of view, cosmopsychism is the thesis that the **C**osmos instantiates mental properties.[32] I call this *minimal cosmopsychism*. Insofar as G5 is supported by the *Gītā* and its panentheistic model of God, the *Gītā* can be said to support minimal cosmopsychism. But what more can be said about the *Gītā*'s cosmopsychism? To answer this question, I need to distinguish other types of cosmopsychism.

To the extent that one might posit non-spatial views of proper parthood in the definition of the **C**osmos, we can distinguish between *ontologically narrow* cosmopsychism (minimal cosmopsychism plus the thesis that the cosmos and the **C**osmos are identical) and *ontologically broad* cosmopsychism (minimal cosmopsychism plus the thesis that the cosmos and the **C**osmos are not identical.) Insofar as the *Gītā* postulates

[32] Chalmers (2020, p. 359, 371) defines cosmopsychism as the thesis that the **C**osmos has mental states. Elsewhere (2015, p. 247) he presents the narrower view that cosmopsychism is the view that the **C**osmos as a whole is conscious, that is to say, that it instantiates experiential mental properties, which is the same definition given by Philip Goff (2017, p. 234). We address this distinction (between the **C**osmos having mental states and it having only conscious or experiential states) a bit later in this section.

that the **C**osmos is different from the cosmos (G2 and G3), it supports ontologically broad cosmopsychism.

Second, since the **C**osmos might be seen as either divine or not, we can distinguish between *theistic cosmopsychism* (minimal cosmopsychism plus the thesis that the **C**osmos is divine) and *non-theistic cosmopsychism* (minimal cosmopsychism plus the thesis that the **C**osmos is not divine.) Theistic ontologically narrow cosmopsychism is called *pantheistic cosmopsychism*; theistic ontologically broad cosmopsychism is called *panentheistic cosmopsychism*. It seems clear that the *Gītā* supports panentheistic cosmopsychism (entailed by G2, G3 and G6).

Third, we can distinguish between *psychologically narrow cosmopsychism* (minimal cosmopsychism plus the thesis that experiential properties are the only kind of mental properties that the **C**osmos instantiates) and *psychologically broad cosmopsychism* (minimal cosmopsychism plus the thesis that the **C**osmos instantiates experiential properties as well as other mental properties such as thought, belief, desire and intention.) Due to G1 and G2, the *Gītā* seems to support psychologically broad cosmopsychism.

Finally, we can distinguish between *personal* or *perspectival cosmopsychism* (minimal cosmopsychism plus the thesis that the **C**osmos is itself an individual subject, owner of its mental states and with its own unique first-personal point of view) and *impersonal* or *aperspectival cosmopsychism* (minimal cosmopsychism plus the denial of the thesis that the **C**osmos is an individual subject with its own unique first-personal point of view.)[33] Once again, due to G1 and G2, the *Gītā* seems to support personal or perspectival cosmopsychism.

5.2. Fundamentality

These kinds of cosmopsychism are minimal in the sense that they abstract from the fact that the **C**osmos is a metaphysically structured entity. As Schaffer (2010, p. 35) points out, the **C**osmos is supposed to have a metaphysical structure of ontological priority and posteriority, which reflects what depends on what and supposedly reveals the fundamental kind of entities that support reality. I turn to this now.

The thesis that the **C**osmos is ontologically prior to its proper parts, even though they are entities on their own, is known as *priority monism* (Schaffer 2010). Everything ontologically depends on the **C**osmos, except the **C**osmos itself, which does not depend on anything. The **C**osmos is the only fundamental entity. Combining this with the thesis that the **C**osmos instantiates mental properties gives us *priority cosmopsychism* (minimal cosmopsychism plus priority monism.)[34] G2 and T1 entail that the *Gītā* supports priority

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[33] This terminology is due to Jonardon Ganeri and Itay Shani (2022, p. 3). Chalmers (2020, p. 367) uses the terms "subject-involving" and "non-subject involving". Because of this distinction, Chalmers avoids saying that the **C**osmos has mental states; instead, he speaks about the *mentality associated with* the **C**osmos (Chalmers 2020, p. 370). Although I did not follow him in that, it should be clear that minimal cosmopsychism, as I defined it, is not inconsistent with aperspectival cosmopsychism (instantiation does not entail ownership as required by subjecthood).

[34] The term "priority cosmopsychism" is from Yujin Nagasawa and Khai Wager (2017). Although they refer and elaborate on priority monism, they do not define priority cosmopsychism in terms of priority

monism. Along with G5, this in turn entails that the *Gītā* supports priority cosmopsychism.

Due to the way I defined the **C**osmos, my definition of priority monism differs from Schaffer's—priority monism's main defender[35]—in two ways: it is open to non-spatial interpretations of proper parthood, and it includes mentality in the definition of concreteness. It also differs from Schaffer's in that while Schaffer takes the priority relation of ontological dependence as a grounding, constitutive relation, I take it more broadly so to allow emergentist relations as well.[36] Either way, a priority relation of dependence must be a well-founded partial ordering: irreflexive, asymmetric, and transitive (partial ordering) such that all chains terminate (well-foundedness).[37] It also must be such that if X depends on Y, then X is actual *because* Y is actual. Facts about X obtain (at least partially) *in virtue of* facts about Y.

The main difference between a grounding or constitutive dependence relation and an emergentist dependence relation has to do with what David Armstrong famously termed "ontological free lunch": the idea that an entity is *nothing over and above* other entities, or already postulated facts. In the case X ontologically depends on Y in a constitutive way, Y does not causally bring X into being. X is nothing over and above Y. X is *constituted* by, or *grounded* in Y. Consequently, all facts about X are grounded in, constituted, or necessitated by facts about Y. In the case X ontologically depends on Y in an emergentist way, Y causally brings X into being. X is an autonomous entity over and above Y. Consequently, it is not true that facts about X are necessitated by facts about Y.[38]

Depending on the kind of ontological relation at hand, we can distinguish between *constitutive* priority cosmopsychism (priority cosmopsychism plus the thesis that the ontological relation between the **C**osmos and its parts is a constitutive one) and *non-constitutive* priority cosmopsychism (priority cosmopsychism plus the thesis that the ontological relation between the **C**osmos and some of its parts is a non-constitutive one.) *Emergent* priority cosmopsychism is a special kind of non-constitutive priority cosmopsychism which claims that some mental macro-facts are emergent from **C**osmic

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monism. Chalmers (2020, p. 371) roughly equates priority monism with what he calls constitutive cosmopsychism (see below).

35 See (Schaffer 2010) and (Schaffer 2013), for example.

36 I am also most of the time taking the relation of ontological dependence as holding between entities. But it can be thought as holding between facts as well.

37 See Schaffer (2010, p. 37).

38 Philip Goff (2017, p. 42) gives the following example. Suppose Rod, Jane and Freddy are dancing, drinking and generally having fun one evening at Jane's. It follows from that that there is a party at Jane's. The party ontologically depends on the reveling—there is a party at Jane's because Rod, Jane, and Freddy are dancing, drinking, and so on at Jane's—, but the reveling does not causally bring into being the party. There is no autonomous entity that emerges from the reveling. The party is nothing over and above Rod, Jane and Freddy dancing, drinking, and so on. It is *constituted* by, or *grounded* in Rod, Jane, and Freddy dancing, drinking, and so on. Contrast this with the case of a recently born infant. There is a clear relation of ontological dependence between the infant and her parents: the infant exists because her parents had sexual intercourse in the appropriate conditions. But in this case the there is an autonomous entity that emerged from the sexual intercourse, namely the infant. The parents causally brought into being an entity which is something over and above the parents.

facts.[39] It its perspectival version, for example, emergent priority cosmopsychism might claim that macro-subjects themselves are emergent from the **C**osmic subject. Although ontologically dependent on the **C**osmos, macro-subjects are autonomous entities, something over and above the **C**osmos. Facts about macro-subjects are not necessitated by **C**osmic facts.[40] In contrast to that, in constitutive priority cosmopsychism all facts, in particular all macro-facts, be them physical or mental, are grounded in, constituted, or necessitated by **C**osmic facts.[41]

Whether the *Gītā* supports constitutive priority cosmopsychism or emergentist priority cosmopsychism is an open matter. It might be seen to favor both.[42] One might say that the autonomy the *Gītā* seems to attribute to macro-subjects might favor an emergentist perspective. At the end of the dialogue, for example, Kṛṣṇa advises his student Arjuna to reflect on what has been taught and do as he wants (18.63), entailing that macro-subjects have freedom of will and freedom of action, which seems to be incompatible with the idea that mental facts about macro-subjects are necessitated by **C**osmic facts. On the other hand, verses such as 5.8-9, 3.27 and 18.60—3.27 for example says that all actions are performed by nature's modes, and that one who is bewildered by egotism (*ahaṃkāra*) mistakenly believes that one is the doer—seem to imply that macro-subjects do not have freedom of action, which might favor a constitutive perspective (although some of them, such as 18.60, still seem to corroborate free-will.)

One might point out that besides saying that the non-conscious stuff and the macro-subjects are both *prakṛti* of the same entity, namely God or the **C**osmos, the *Gītā* does not say much about how the interaction between these two kinds of *prakṛti* take place. This is true. But the fact the *Gītā* presents a clear monist view allows us to speculate on the ways the *Gītā*'s view might be extended so to explain the relation between these two kinds of *prakṛti*. One can, for example, try to see to what extent the *Gītā*'s cosmopsychism might be extended into a Russellian kind of cosmopsychism.[43] This is

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[39] The example given earlier to explain Goff's notion of aspect—that of one's current mental experiential state involving visual, auditory and emotional experiences—can be used to make sense of a constitutive dependence relation between the whole and its parts. Despite being in one sense entities on their own, these are nothing over and above one's total experience. In other words, one's total experience might be seen as a fundamental unity of which the visual experience of colors, the auditory experiences of sounds, etc. are parts or aspects. As a consequence of that, all facts about one's visual experience of colors, auditory experiences of sounds, etc., are grounded in or constituted by facts about one's total experience. Examples of emergentist dependence relation are harder to find.

[40] In addition to emergent cosmopsychism, Chalmers (2020, pp. 363-364) also mentions autonomous cosmopsychism as a second subcategory of non-constitutive cosmopsychism. (Chalmer's autonomous cosmopsychism does not seem to be a subcategory of priority cosmopsychism as I have defined it.)

[41] Usually, constitutive cosmopsychism sees experiential **C**osmic facts as fundamental, so that all other facts, macro and micro, psychological and non-psychological, experiential and non-experiential, are seen as grounded in experiential **C**osmic facts.

[42] For space reasons, I will give here just two reasons why this so. It should be clear, however, that there are other issues involved in the question of whether the Gita supports constitutive priority cosmopsychism or emergent priority cosmopsychism which are being neglected here, and which may perhaps tip the balance in favor of one of these two options.

[43] Russellian monism is a view based on Bertrand Russell's insight (contained mainly in his *The Analysis of Matter*) that physics reveals only the relational causal structure and dispositional properties of basic physical entities, but not their intrinsic nature. All properties physics ascribes to fundamental entities are characterized in terms of behavioral dispositions and causal relations. What mass does? It resists

where the psychological elements of God's inferior *prakṛti* might play a role. For space reasons, however, I will not elaborate on this further.

6. On Theistic Cosmopsychism or "So What?"

From the viewpoint of the **C**osmos alone, the *Bhavagad Gītā*'s cosmopsychism is theistic and ontologically broad (or equivalently: panentheistic), psychologically broad and perspectival. From the viewpoint of the metaphysical structure of ontological priority and posteriority, it is a kind of priority cosmopsychism which might be understood either from a constitutive or emergentist perspective. In a very important sense, the *Gītā*'s cosmopsychism follows from its panentheism. We therefore have a case of a 'native' panentheistic model of God entailing a cosmopsychist model that, to a certain extent, coincides with current cosmopsychist views.

Now one might say: So, what? Besides being a somewhat valuable contribution to the debate over the relationship between panentheism and panpsychism and to the cross-cultural debate over the connections between cosmopsychism and Indian traditions, does the *Gītā*'s cosmopsychism have something to offer to the philosophical debate about the nature of consciousness? More generally, is theistic cosmopsychism philosophically defensible? Or is it a mere theoretical curiosity? While I do not have the space to adequately address these questions, using my analysis of the *Gītā* as a case study, I would like to offer some very brief reflections on the philosophical perspectives of theistic cosmopsychism.

I would first point out the following: as far as my analysis of the *Gītā*'s cosmopsychism is concerned, theistic cosmopsychism need not differ much from more orthodox forms of cosmopsychism.[44] Being theistic as well as ontologically and psychologically broad seem to be the most unorthodox features of the *Gītā*'s cosmopsychism.

For ontological broadness, the whole thing has to do with how one defines the **C**osmos, or to be more specific, how one understands proper parthood in the definition. At first glance, this might seem a mere terminological issue, but it is not. As far as priority cosmopsychism is concerned, the **C**osmos is the fundamental entity: everything ontologically depends on it, and it is does not depend on anything. Thus, the **C**osmos should be defined in such a way as not to conflict with this fundamentality claim. But if God does exist and is the ontological support of all that is, then the cosmos cannot be that fundamental entity; in other words, the cosmos cannot be the **C**osmos. Instead, God must be the **C**osmos.

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acceleration, attracts other masses, and so on and so forth. But physics says nothing about what mass intrinsically is, about its categorical properties. More generally, physics describes the causal structure of the world but is silent on what has the structure in itself. Russellian monism then proposes that these hidden categorical/intrinsic properties are experiential or proto-experiential properties, or something else of which experiential properties are an aspect. In my taxonomy, Russellian cosmopsychism would (roughly) be Russellian monism plus priority cosmopsychism.

[44] See the taxonomy presented in (Chalmers 2020).

For psychological broadness, most philosophers seem reluctant to attribute to the **C**osmos a mental life similar to that which we experience in ourselves. Goff, William Seager and Sean Allen-Hermanson (2022) for example say as follows:

> Cosmopsychism is not to be confused with pantheism: the view that the universe is God. Just as the micropsychist holds that electrons have experience but not thought, so the cosmopsychist holds that the universe has some kind of experience, but may refrain from attributing thought or agency to the universe. It could be that the consciousness of the universe is a gigantic mess that doesn't add up to anything coherent enough to ground cognition.

Although undoubtedly simpler, the assumption that the **C**osmos only instantiates unstructured, messy experiential properties gives rise to some problems. Chalmers (2020, p. 368) describes what he calls the *austerity problem* as follows:

> The issue here is that the cosmic mind in the present picture (whether relational or nonrelational) looks extremely austere, and very much unlike a mind as we normally think of it. Its basic experiential structure and dynamics is tied to the structure and dynamics of physics. There seems to be little or no rationality in this structure. There seems to be very little thinking, valuing, or reasoning. It is not really clear why, if there is to be a cosmic mind, it should be as austere as this.

An obvious possible solution to this problem is psychologically broad cosmopsychism. Chalmers, for example, proposes a version of Russellian cosmopsychism which he calls enriched Russellian cosmopsychism. According to enriched Russellian cosmopsychism, the **C**osmic subject has experiential states, but also other mental states with further structure and dynamics. According to some kind of enriched Russellian cosmopsychism, "the cosmic subject is a rational being somewhat like you and me, except vastly more intelligent and with enormously greater cognitive resources." (Chalmers 2020, p. 369). Chalmers further argues that this extra mental structure might play a role in sustaining physical dynamics. Thus, as with ontological broadness, it is not that trivial that psychological broadness is a useless violation of Ockham's razor.

But the real distinguishing feature of theistic cosmopsychism is that the **C**osmos is divine. Even pantheistic cosmopsychism, which is ontologically narrow (the **C**osmos is identical with the cosmos), claims that the **C**osmos is divine. We then might ask: Are there positive reasons for defending theistic cosmopsychism against the charge that it is just excessive and problematic baggage for cosmopsychism? That of course depends on how one understands divineness.

Considering a panentheistic cosmopsychism in which something like G1 holds, divineness can be connected with the divine attributes that God supposedly possess. One might say, for example, that *because* God is divine, it is maximally perfect; and *because* God is maximally perfect, it is omnipotent, omniscient, wholly good, perfectly free, etc. It is reasonable to suppose that a conscious maximally perfect being will have a maximally perfect conscious mental life, in some sense of the term. A maximally perfect conscious mental life might be, for example, a maximally varied, perfectly structured and transparent one in which the 'pure' qualitative experiential aspect of phenomenal states are clearly and distinctively experienced. It also seems reasonable that the **C**osmic consciousness on which everything ontologically depends must be at least as varied, structured, transparent, etc. as the macro-consciousness we witness in human beings, for

example. This criterion is automatically satisfied if the **C**osmos is divine and thus has a maximally perfect conscious mental life.[45]

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[45] Going a bit beyond the scope of a theory of consciousness, divineness might be shown to be a philosophically fruitful concept. Richard Swinburne, for example, has forcefully argued that a concept of God similar to the one described above might be fruitful to explain not only the existence of conscious objects themselves, but the very fact that the world we live in is an orderly world, with scientific laws operating within it, and regularities in the behavior of medium sized objects. He argues that the fact that the world we live in is an orderly world is exactly what we would expect in the case God, understood as an essentially all-powerful, all-knowing and perfectly free person, exists: "God being omnipotent is able to produce a world orderly in these respects. And he has good reason to choose to do so: a world containing human persons is a good thing. […] God, being perfectly good, is generous. With a body humans have a limited chunk of matter under our control, and, if we so choose, we can choose to learn how the world works and so learn which bodily actions will have more remote effects. We can learn quickly when rocks are likely to fall, predators to pounce, and plants to grow. Thereby God allows us to share in his creative activity of choosing." (Swinburne 2010, p. 48)

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