

## ABSTRACT

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### *Ākāśa and ether*

The study of Indian and Western systems of Philosophy reveals many points of *thematic* and *methodological* coincidences between them. We have collected a good number of these coincidences in our books: *On the Myth of the Opposition between Indian Thought and Western Philosophy* published by Olms Verlag in 2004 (and reviewed by E. Steinkellner in *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd-Asiens*, 2004); *Filosofía Yoga: Un Camino Místico Universal*, Barcelona: Editorial Kairós, 2006; *Filosofía de la India: Del Veda al Vedānta. El sistema Sāṃkhya*, Barcelona: Editorial Kairós, 2008, where we have included many philosophical texts in Sanskrit and in European languages which contain the expression of astonishing similar ideas and theses. In the present paper we add a new instance of coincidence between Indian and Western thought in relation to *ākāśa* in India and *ether* in the *Opus postumum* of Kant. Both *ākāśa* and *ether* are considered by several Indian philosophical systems and by Kant as existing *substances*, and are provided with *exceptional qualities and functions*.

It is a notorious example of the logical defect of *āśrayāsiddhi*, the well-known logical defect considered by Indian Logic: two theories constructed on the admission of the existence of a thing that has not been proved to exist. The inexistence of both *ākāśa* and *ether* has been established by Modern Science. The paper ends with a brief reference to the problem of the explanation of these coincidences. Are they to be explained as instances of influence of Indian on the West or *vice versa*, or as a remote consequence of the common Indo-European origin of Indians and Europeans? The authors of this paper think that these coincidences are to be explained by the fact that peoples that have reached a similar level of culture and intellectual development are destined to pose to themselves the same problems on many subjects of different nature and to give to them similar answers.