

HEGEL AND INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

The principle of dialectical evolution as laid down in Hegel's *philosophy of history*, and applied to the *history of philosophy*, requires of the philosopher to "conceive the diversity of philosophical systems as the progressive evolution of truth", as "stages which are not merely differentiated, but supplant one another as being incompatible with one another. But the ceaseless activity of their own inherent nature makes them at the same time moments of an organic unity, where they not merely do not contradict one another, but where one is as necessary as the other, and this equal necessity of all moments constitutes alone and thereby the life of the whole."¹

Hegel expounds this organic emergence and concrescence of philosophical systems by a metaphor analogous, at the first glance, to the *biological principle of causality* in Indian philosophy—*karma-vipākam*, or the ripening fruit : "The bud disappears when the blossom breaks through, and we might say that the former is refuted by the latter; in the same way when the fruit comes, the blossom may be explained to be a false form of the plant's existence, for the fruit appears as its true nature in place of the blossom."²

Yet, at a closer scrutiny, this analogy with the Indian conception of *karma* reveals essential differences in its own contexts, first of all in the historical compass of its application. An implicit explanation of this diversity can be found in modern Indian philosophy in Aurobindo Ghose's criticism of the European theory of evolution.

From the viewpoint of the Indian doctrine of cyclic development, "mental life, far from being a recent appearance in man, is the repetition in him of a previous achievement from which the Energy in the race had undergone one of her *deplorable recoils*" due to which "the savage is perhaps not so much the first forefather of civilized man as the degenerate descendent of a previous civilization", and "barbarism is an intermediate sleep, not an original darkness."³

Hegel's philosophy of history emerged, in the first half of the 19th century, from the overshadowing authority of a much more

primitive, optimistically superficial world-view of the Bible, where the whole development of God's benevolent creation of all Being out of Nothing was contracted to a straight ascending line of rapid evolution within the span of a few millenia. There was neither space nor time enough left for such retrospective recoils as envisaged by the incomparably larger Indian tradition, not only in the negative direction, singled out for the purpose of Aurobindo's specific comparison, but also in positive aspects of cultural rebirths, personified in the idea of *avatārs*. Modern criticism of Hegel, as I shall try to show in the sequel, could not oversee this shortcoming in its various aspects.

The same Biblical authority remained the basis for chronological orientation of the classicist belief in "the Greek wonder" of a high culture arising with equal rapidity out of nothing—a belief predestined to confirm the pre-established harmony/at least in the synchronization/of the Homeric with the Biblical myth. In the middle of the 19th century, "the dispeller of the phantom of the East", E. Zeller, the highest German authority for Greek philosophy, "was successful in silencing, for a longer time, the voices of those who were looking for the origin of the Greek philosophical thought in the East." He could proclaim that "sober historians have looked in vain among eastern nations for traces of a higher culture which allegedly should have adorned the early period of the human race", so that "the spectre of the East began to reappear only in the second half of the 'seventies'."⁴

Hegel's dialectical speculation was an analogous endeavour to show how the entire historical process of world-cultures was drifted by the "Absolute Spirit" in one direction only, and whatever was overtaken once in the dialectical process of its "moments", was forever exiled in the past.

In connection with our subject it was observed recently by P. Tillich⁵ that "e.g. Buddhism is considered by Hegelian dialectic as an early stage of religious development already completely superseded by history"—while today we have still/or again/to consider it as a living religion of considerable relevance for the western world/as strongly emphasized already by Nietzsche⁶/.

In his lectures on the history of philosophy⁷ Hegel decided that "Eastern philosophy has to be excluded, because the East has not

yet attained to the knowledge of freedom of the subject, a knowledge indispensable for philosophizing", while specifically "in the Indian philosophy the Idea has not yet attained objectification. Therefore the outward objectivity is not understood in accordance with the Idea. This is the shortcoming of orientalism". As a consequence Hegel summed up his poor view on Indian religion on two pages of "The Phenomenology of Mind" as a cult of "plants and animals":

"The actual self-consciousness at work in this dispersed and disintegrated spirit takes the form of a multitude of individualized mutually antipathetic folk-spirits, who fight and hate each other to the death, and consciously accept certain specific forms of animals as their essential being and nature/footnote : Sacred animals in Indian religion/ : for they are nothing else than spirits of animals, or animal lives separated and cut off from one another, and with *no universality consciously present* in them. "Thus it is a religion, or rather a state of mind, of a "self-consuming self, i.e. the self that becomes a "thing"...self-existence put forth in the form of an object."

Hegel's picture of Indian philosophies and religions remained until a few years before his death limited to such inadequate information about popular cults representing in the Indian Pantheon a medieval revival of degenerate remains of proto-historic religious traditions, which never could be thoroughly suppressed by Vedic culture of the later Aryans. Though since 1822 he had to dedicate more attention to "The Eastern World" in his "Lectures on the Philosophy of world History"⁸, his Europocentric judgment on the racially inferior value of the Indian and Chinese cultures was not changed until 1827, when the acquaintance with the Bhagavad-gītā provoked a dialectical turning of his own position and brought him to the opposite extreme.

Bhagavad-gītā in the light of Hegel's philosophy

Hegel died in 1831, at the age of 61, of cholera in Berlin. Only four years before his death his depreciation of the spiritual world of ancient India was changed under the influence of the first German translation of the Bhagavad-gītā. The translation was introduced by a comprehensive essay on the religious and philosophical heritage of India by W. von Humboldt. Hegel

dedicated to this event an extensive and enthusiastic comment, covering 75 densely printed pages in the "Jahrbuch für wissenschaftliche Kritik", Vol. XVI, 1827⁹. The change in his attitude was affirmed in statements as the following :

"The difference of the aim peculiar to both sām̐khya and yoga, and especially of the path leading to that aim, from any religious formation has been elicited by thought and for thought to such an extent that it deserves, beyond any doubt, to be called philosophy."—Hegel further recognizes to Indian philosophy "a higher ascent" and even the attainment of "the most exalted depth" [*die erhabenste Tiefe*]... where activity is absorbed by knowledge, or, more precisely, by abstract penetration of the consciousness in itself. —"Praiseworthy is the sublimity of the event that Indians have attained such detachment of the non-sensuous from the sensuous, of universality from empirical multiplicity... and thus risen to the consciousness of the sublimity of thought."

An enthusiastic student of Indian philosophy, trained in a western neo-Hegelian school, asked me once what repercussions might this belated pro-Indian turning have caused in the revision of Hegel's system, considering that at the time of his death he had just commenced to prepare a new edition of his main work, "The Phenomenology of Mind", written 25 years earlier. I would not have expected any surprising change in the basic work of this most spectacular of all modern European philosophers. Most probably, in the part dedicated to the dialectical development of religions, Indian religions would have been honored with a better place at a more advanced stage of the development of the Idea, after, and not any longer before, the attainments of the Egyptian "artificers"¹⁰. This would also correspond better to modern archaeological theories. He might even have realized that some of his romanticist praises of "the abstract work of art" in Greek religion might more adequately be applied to typical attributes of the Vedic *gāyatri*, e.g. :

"This principle of the Cult is essentially contained and present already in the flow of the melody of the Hymn. These hymns of devotion are the way the self obtains immediate pure satisfaction through and within itself. It is the soul purified, which, in the purity it thus attains, is immediately and only absolute Being, and is one with absolute Being."¹¹

The reader who approaches Hegel's *Phenomenology* from an Indian bias would hardly overlook another "moment" where Indian Philosophy could have been better inserted, in the chapter on "Conscience"¹², suggesting an astonishing coincidence of an essential motive of Hegel's moral philosophy with the central theme of *Bhagavad-gītā*. It is the motive of "renouncing all semblances and dissemblances characteristic of the moral point of view, when it gives up thinking that there is a contradiction between duty and actual reality. According to this latter state of mind, I act morally when I am conscious of performing merely pure duty and nothing else but that."

Considering Hegel's references to the "national spirit"¹³ re-emerging on salient points of the whole range along the dialectical periple described in his philosophy of history, the exposition of the moral problem in this historical "moment" could be exemplified most adequately by Arjuna's episode and the place of *Bhagavad-gītā* in the course of events related in the *Mahābhārata*. What follows could consequently be understood as a modern commentary to the basic text :

" Looking more closely at the unity and the significance of the moments of this stage, we find that moral consciousness conceived itself merely in the form of the inherent principle, or as ultimate essence [*Kṛṣṇa*]; *qua* conscience, however, it lays hold of its explicit individual self-existence, or its self [*Arjuna*]. The contradiction involved in the moral point of view is resolved i.e., the distinction, which lay at the basis of its peculiar attitude, proves to be no distinction, and melts into the pure negativity. This process of negativity is, however, just the self : a single simple self which is at once pure knowledge and knowledge of itself as this individual conscious life,...for it is something actual and concrete, which no longer has the significance of being a nature alien to the ultimate essence, a nature independent and with laws of its own....Further, this self is, *qua* pure self-identical knowledge, the universal without qualifications, so that just this knowledge, being its very own knowledge, being conviction, constitutes *duty*. Duty is no longer the universal appearing over against and opposed to the self."¹⁴

Thus, we might say, in Hegelian terms, *Kṛṣṇa* raises Arjuna's consciousness to the level of a higher conscience. In Hegel's

words this difference of level, or the vantage-ground, in facing the dramatic event, is defined as following: "While the 'honest consciousness' is for ever grasping merely the bare and empty 'fact itself', conscience, on the other hand, secures the 'fact itself' in its fullness, a fullness which conscience of itself supplies."¹⁵

I hardly could resist the impression that a post-Hegelian western interpretation of the Gītā, by G. Santayana in his "Apologia pro mente sua"¹⁶, were not unaware of the same Hegelian analogy:

"Another version of the relation between rational and post-rational morality may be found in the Mahābhārata, in the well known scene where two armies face each other with drawn swords, awaiting the signal for battle. But the prince commanding one of the armies has pacifist scruples, which he confesses to his spiritual mentor—a god in disguise—in the most eloquent words I have ever read on that theme. The tender prince must live the life appointed to him, he must fight this battle, but with detachment. The version has the advantage of not separating natural virtue and spiritual insight into two different lives or two standards of action or interest: *the two may be lived together and in the same moment.*"

Whatever importance we may attribute to such possibilities of better synchronization of some specific "moments" in the history of world cultures, I doubt that Hegel's discovery of Bhagavad-gītā could have caused any essential change in the basic structure of his philosophy of history. Hegel was the first modern philosopher who envisaged world evolution as an integrated *historical* process, and for that reason the first philosopher of culture, since culture is the exclusive prerogative of spiritually informed consciousness/in the historical meaning attributed to the term "Spirit" by Hegel, later more and more frequently substituted by the term "Culture". Yet, later criticism is almost unanimous in rejecting/at least in its ultimate consequences/the absolutist claim of Hegel's system to encompass the historical event of manifestation of the "Absolute Spirit" within its one-dimensional structure, closed both in time and space into one a teleological unit. Absolutist tendencies in earlier philosophies/which again might have been discussed on amore adequate level with the Advaita-Vedānta than alleged in the earliest phases of Greek cosmological speculations/were dismissed by Hegel as premature

abstractions of a primitive understanding, which "just because they are the first, have least in them," as, e.g. "the initial definition, the most abstract and sterile, . . . given by the Eleatics"; who "enunciate Being as a predicate of the Absolute"; or in the case of Pythagoras, whose "fault in the language of modern times would be described as an excess of idealism"; or "as the abstract independence of Stoicism", before its "principle of the sphere of right—an independence devoid of the qualities of spirit"—was developed into "an explicit concrete world"¹⁷, etc.

It is noteworthy also to single out, as a characteristic reference to the "Orient", that essentially the same reproach is implied/ at the end of Phenomenology¹⁸/in Hegel's objection against Spinoza for having "expressed in an abstract way the immediate unity of thought and existence, of abstract Essential Reality and Self", and thus "expressed the primal principle of 'Light' in a purer form, viz. as unity of extension and existence—for 'existence' is an ultimate simple term more adequate to thought than 'Light'—and in this way has revived again in thought the substance of the Orient; thereupon spirit at once recoils in *horror from this abstract unity*, from this selfless substantiality, and maintains as against it the principle of Individuality". What horrifies Hegel here is still better expressed in his Logic with reference to the "limitation" of Spinoza's abstract notion of God: "That God is the absolute Person however is a point which the philosophy of Spinoza never perceived; and on that side it falls short of *the true notion of God* which forms the content of religious consciousness in Christianity." Therefore his "Oriental view of the unity of substance . . . is still not the final idea. It is marked by the *absence of the principle of the Western World* . . .", a principle by which Hegelian philosophy remains culturally limited still today¹⁹.

From the same historical bias Hegel considered it to be the advantage of his closed system to finalise also the "concrete Idea" of the ultimate attainment allowed to be reached by the "Absolute Spirit" in the "Absolute Notion" of his "Absolute Knowledge". The access to "Absolute Knowledge" is allowed only to "the Spirit manifested in revealed religion"²⁰, in absolute exclusiveness of Hegel's concretising interpretation of his own Christian creed—an idea foreign not only to pre-Hegelian criticist philosophy/the Kantian intention rejected by Hegel/, but also to the deeper Indian

conception of Brahman/even when interpreted, more or less uncritically, with the Hegelian analogon of "Absolute" by modern Indian exegets/.

Though Hegel's dialectical interpretation of Christianity has not been brandmarked as heresy but rather favourably received by several Protestant theologians still in the 20th century/K. Barth/, it could by no means and now here satisfy the requirements for a new "method of dynamic typology"/Tillich/, postulated by our existential interest in dialogues between religions on the actual point of intersection of their common lot within desintegrating world cultures. The vantage ground wherefrom they have to face now their specific responsibilities for failures of their exclusiveness in establishing historical *ends* to their cultural perspectives; ends imaginable almost as engulfments in the abyss of The Absolute—this is the meeting place of their actual dialogues, where they are all ultimately aware of being "on the same level".

It should appear obvious by now that on this dialectical turning point in the history of world-cultures Hegel's Europocentric absolutism/as elicited in the Phenomenology/can serve only as a model of the fatal error of applying indiscriminately the principle of dialectical 'sublating' and 'superseding' on divergent types of cultural actuality in useless efforts to congeal the authentic dialectical dynamics/even in the process of one's own cultural history/through absolutization, instead of considering the luminous points of such other constellations as focuses of the same 'eternal now', and phenomena of the same *sanātana dharma* or 'perennial philosophy'. In view of this basic mistake in the direction of Hegel's dialectical thought, pruning 'flaws' in the bad manner of English logical empiricism/concerning, e.g., the position of rank to be recognized to single "moments" of historically superseded curiosities, such as *was* the Indian share in the responsibility of the "Orient" for the "horror" which drove the European "spirit at once to recoil from this abstract unity" of an impersonal Absolute—all this could be of no avail for a constructive dialogue in the actual encounter of world religions. The same criterion of existential actuality has been recognized as valid in comparative philosophy in the post-Hegelian era ever since Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Deussen in European philosophy, and Aurobindo and Radhakrishnan on the Indian side of the same universalist movement.

The inadequacy of dialectical absolutism in Hegel's closed system to the spirit of Indian philosophy will be pointed out in the sequel in a few critical and symptomatic examples.

Hegel's interpretation of the Buddhist theory of nothingness
/ *śūnya-vādaḥ* /

Hegel's Logic, in the "Encyclopaedia of the Philosophical Sciences", published in 1817 / ten years after the "Phenomenology" /, contains a very characteristic direct reference to Buddhism, considered still today to form the central conception of Buddhist philosophy : its theory of nothingness/*śūnyā-vādo* in basic Pāli texts, *śūnya-vādaḥ* in later Sanskrit literature/. In sections 87–88/ Ch. VIII, "First sub-division of Logic—The doctrine of Being"/, at the beginning of his discussion on the dialectical aspects of two antithetic definitions of the Absolute : "The Absolute is Being", and "The Absolute is Nothing", Hegel finds in the latter definition first a Kantian aspect : "In fact this definition is implied in saying that the thing-in-itself is indeterminate, and so without either form or matter." But, in its ultimate consequence, Hegel realizes that it means "making, as the Buddhists do, Nothing the principle of all things, the final aim and end of everything". At the end of the same section /87/, Hegel reverts to another aspect discussed in the same context, concerning "those who define God to be mere Being; a definition not a whit better than that of the Buddhists, who make God to be Nought, and who from that principle draw the further conclusion that annihilation is the means by which man becomes God". The following section /88/ begins with the synthesis containing the dialectical solution : "The truth of Being and Nothing is accordingly the unity of the two : and this unity is *Becoming*."

In Buddhist philosophy the principle of becoming is recognized and elicited within the wider frame of Buddha's teaching on impermanence [*aniccam*], the first of three primeval characteristics [*lakkhaṇam*] of all existence.²¹ The agreement with Hegel on this point can be formulated from the Buddhist stand-point in following terms :

Being and Non-Being are sublated, or synthetized, in the relativity of *Becoming*, and thus *de-absolutized*. In this formulation

the accent is laid on two terms, in which the basic Buddhist doctrine of impermanence differs from Hegel's doctrine of becoming:

/1/ Hegel's designation of "nothing" is replaced by "non-being".

/2/ The sublation in the synthesis is considered as the *ultimate negation of the Absolute*, in any whatsoever dialectical or trans-dialectical involvement or ontological status. The dialectical process ends with the negation of the Absolute. The Buddhist, though admitting the level of rational synthesis in dialectic, does not agree that, by the same logical necessity, to the admitted relativity of being and non-being there should correspond the postulate of an absolute counterpart/not even a "negative-Absolute", as we shall see in the sequel.

The importance of our first difference in terms /1/ consists in the thesis that 'nothing' /*suññam* or *sūnyam*/ in Buddhism is the opposite of the Hegelian Absolute, and *not* applicable to the mere polarity of being : non-being. As to this latter, its existential import is eliminated by the basic principle of Buddhist logic, the principle of *catu-koṭi* (tetralemma), according to which "neither being, nor non-being, nor both being-and-non-being, nor neither being-nor-non-being" can express the existential purport and content of human reality. No derivative from the verb 'to be' can adequately express the immediate intuition /*vipassana*/ of existence, or the essence of actuality /as *paramattho* or ultimate purpose/.

On the transcendental level /*āyatanaṃ*/ ²² where the term *sūnyatā* has to be properly applied, *Nothingness is not the opposite of Being*. The opposite of Being is simply Non-Being/though implicitly only within the relativistic frame of *catu-koṭi*/ . The distinction between nothingness and non-being has been very carefully expounded already in the earliest Pali texts. It is the distinction between the principle of *sūnyatā*, accepted by Buddhists and elaborated by later Buddhist philosophers since Nāgārjuna /not in their capacity of followers of popular Mahāyāna religions/, and, on the other hand, the *uccheda-vādo* theory of 'destruction' or destructibility of the world substance, a *materialistic* belief in Being, in extreme opposition to the ontological nihilism in the *idealistic* philosophy of *sūnya-vādaḥ*. This antithesis, emphasized

in several discourses of Buddha in the Pāli Sutta-piṭakam, is worthwhile being quoted here in order to dispell both later "commentarial developments" under the influence of misunderstood Indian heterogenous traditions and modern philosophical attempts of interpreting *śūnya-vādaḥ* /especially with reference to Nāgārjuna's basic work, *Mādhyamaka-kārikā*/ in more or less explicitly Hegelian terms.

In the *Yamaka-suttaṃ* /S.XXII, 85/²³, Yamako, who has misunderstood the teaching of Buddha on the nothingness of "the world in itself and for itself" /*attena vā attaniyena vā suñño loko*; S.XXXV, 85, *Suññata-loka-suttaṃ*/, is refuted and converted to the *suñña-vādo* in its proper meaning, as follows :

Yamako's wrong view : "Thus do I understand the doctrine taught by The Blessed One, that on the dissolution of the body a bhikkhu by whom corrupting influences /*āsavā*/ have been exhausted, is destroyed, perishes, and does not exist after death."

Commentary on this statement : "His understanding of the teaching would have been correct if he had thought that all *formations* arise and pass away, so that their is only a continuation or discontinuation of such formative activity. But his statement is false in so far as he thought that a *being* was destroyed and had perished."

In the continuation of the discourse Sāriputto explains to Yamako the proper meaning in the same terms as in Buddha's instruction to Anurādhā on the same subject /in S.XXII, 86/ :

—Do you regard body as the *tathāgato*/the "thus come", the attribute of a *buddho*, understood in such connections as designating a human being in the widest sense/ ?

—Surely not, venerable sir.

—Do you regard the feeling, the perception, the activities, the consciousness as the *tathāgato* ?

—Surely not, venerable sir.

—Do you regard the *tathāgato* as being in the body/or in feeling, perception, activities, consciousness/ ?

—Surely not, venerable sir.

—Do you regard the *tathāgato* as being *apart* from the body/feeling, perception, activities, consciousness/ ?

—Surely not, venerable sir.

—Do you regard the *tathāgato* as being *different* from the body/feeling, perception, activities, consciousness/ ?

—Surely not, venerable sir.

—Do you regard the body, the feeling, the perception, the activities and the consciousness—taken together as a whole—as the *tathāgato* ?

—Surely not, venerable sir.

—Do you regard the *tathāgato* as being *without* body, feeling, perception, activities and consciousness ?

—Surely not, venerable sir.

—Then, Yamako, since in this very life a *tathāgato* cannot be identified as existing in truth, in reality, is it proper for you to state that a *tathāgato* is a superman, the most excellent man who has attained the highest aim, and that a *tathāgato*, if he has to be designated, should be designated in other than these four terms : ‘The *tathāgato* exists after death’; or ‘he does not exist after death’; or ‘he both does and does not exist after death’; or ‘he neither does nor does not exist after death’ ” ?

—Surely not, venerable sir.

In the *Anurādha-suttam* Buddhho concludes the same dialogue with the statement : “ Both formerly and now, it is just suffering that I proclaim and the ceding of suffering.”

In another pattern of standardized texts, *uccheda-vādo materialism* is rejected together with its dialectical antithesis called *sassata-vādo* or the “ eternalist ” belief in indestructible stability of the Absolute Being : “ This is the world, This is the Self. Permanent, abiding, eternal and immutable shall I be after death, in eternal identity shall I persist . . . a perfectly foolish point of view.” /M.22, “ The Simile of the Serpent ”/.

Due to this dialectical connection with the actual Brahmanic belief in such an Absolute, the Buddhist exegesis has attributed an exaggerated importance to the *uccheda-vādo* by selecting it for its scholastic example among many more or less artificially constructed or isolated aspects of the materialistic “ world-lore ” [*lokāyatam*]

or natural science to which Pali texts refer in patternized formulae /Cf. D.1-2/.

The basic Pāli formulation of the nihilist thesis */suññā-vādo/* in the above mentioned texts was further elicited in the *prajñā-pāramitā-sūtras* of the early Sanskrit *mahāyāna* literature. Its philosophical formulation attained its scholastic accomplishment in Nāgārjuna's *Mādhyamaka-kārikā*.

Modern interpreters of Nāgārjuna's *sūnya-vadaḥ* have often attempted to apply the pattern of Hegel's dialectic more or less directly to Nagarjuna's logical argumentation, or, better to say, to approach it from a Hegelian bias. An apparent analogy of Hegel's idea of the Absolute to the Vedāntic idea of Brahman may have misguided them to this further inadequate analogy of two methods of dialectical logics dealing both with the relation of Being to Nothingness. The ultimate intention in following this false pointer appears to be the re-absorption /"sublation" in the meaning of Hegel's untranslatable German term *Aufhebung*/ of the primeval /ontological and not epistemological/ nihilism of the Buddhist *sūnya-vādaḥ* into a quasi-Vedāntic absolutism, interpreted as the principle of a wider ontological and cosmological synthesis²⁴. The basic differential element neglected at the outset of this reductionist tendency was the specific structure of the dialectical 'triangle' in the Buddhist formulation, as singled above, where 'nothing' stands in dialectical opposition to both 'being' and 'non-being' /within their *catu-koṭi* extension/.

Th. Stcherbatsky, in *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāṇa*, was misled to some extent, in his interpretation of Nāgārjuna's *sūnya-vādaḥ*, by the uncritical tendency of the pre-Kantian philosophy and the anti-critical Hegelian reaction to perpetrate the classical error exposed by Kant, whose transcendental criticism revealed the absurdity of the naive ontological hypothesis that all negation of /relative/ 'being' by 'non-being' should necessarily imply a /dialectical/ affirmation of The Absolute Being on its back-stage. /In the meantime we have been cautioned again by Nietzsche and still more explicitly by Sartre's criticism, against the eristic origin of such dialectical absolutism in the inborn character of 'bad faith'. The same illusion had been recognized by all Indian philosophies in the basic structure of our karmically condi-

tioned mind as its transcendental limitation by *avidyā* and *mohaḥ*, nescience and delusion./

Candrakīrti, in his commentary [*Prasanna-pādaṃ*] to the chapter on *nirvāṇaṃ* [XXV, 15] in Nāgārjuna's *Mādhyamaka-kārikā*²⁵ states : " The judgment that *nirvāṇaṃ* is not an Ens would be possible if /we knew/ that there is a real Ens, then by its negation /*nirvāṇaṃ* would be determined/. If /we knew/ that there is a real non-Ens, then by its negation we would also understand what /the judgment means/ that *nirvāṇaṃ* is not an Ens." Consequently, the aim of Candrakīrti's argument is to preclude the uncritical inference implying either a 'positive' or a 'negative' Absolute. To Stcherbatsky, however, it appears "evident that *transcendental or absolute existence*...can be nothing but the simultaneous negation of "Ens" and "non-Ens". Thus the Hegelian idea of synthesis as the absolute ontological and cosmological condition and *limit* of meaningful dialectical thinking has been read in the Buddhist *anti*-ontological intention. In order to justify this reduction to the inadequate cosmological conception of Hegel's historically predetermined ontology, Stcherbatsky extends, not only in his interpretation but also in his translation, the vague meaning of the un-Buddhist designation "Absolute" to an indetermined range of terms which in Buddhist Sanskrit were specified by clear connotations in their particular contexts. Thus for instance he speaks of "absolute reality in itself /*kaścit svabhavaḥ*/, translates *nirvāṇaṃ* as "the Absolute", interprets both *tathatā* and *dharmatā* as "Absolute"; *Nirupādhi-śeṣe nirvāṇa dhātāu* is translated as "the Final Reality of Nirvāṇa", *nirvṛtti* as "the Absolute", etc.²⁶

Stcherbatsky's indiscriminate use of the term "Absolute" in its implicitly Hegelian meaning, as well as his translation and interpretation of *śūnyatā* as "the principle of relativity" has often been criticised by later authors²⁷. Yet in his explicit references to modern interpretations of dialectical antinomies Stcherbatsky refers mainly to Kant. I can agree with most of these specific analogies as long as they do not overstep the limits of the Kantian transcendental dialectic, whose basic framework of the four antinomies of pure reason correspond to the analogous structure elicited by Buddhō in the *Brahma-jāla-suttaṃ* [D.1]²⁸. The adequacy of Stcherbatsky's insight into the Kantian philosophy was

reaffirmed in his later masterpiece, the *Buddhist Logic*, where his interpretation of Dharmakīrti's *Nyāya-bindu* from the standpoint of modern comparative philosophy was influenced also by Sigwart's *Logic*, a standard textbook of transcendental logic of the Kantian school at the beginning of the twentieth century. Hegel is mentioned only in a few indirect references.

Stcherbatsky's uncritical and mostly implicit analogies with Hegel's absolutistic monism in the interpretation of Nāgārjuna's *śūnya-vādaḥ*, in his earlier work seem to have been influenced primarily by a heterogenous suggestion: a superficial analogy between Hegel's terminology and the monistic, *advaitaḥ*, interpretation of the traditional Vedāntic teaching. This analogy, representing a typical trend of neo-hinduistic thought at the beginning of the twentieth century, influenced most probably also Stcherbatsky's interpretation of Nāgārjuna's philosophy. Speaking of "the interrelations between Buddhism and Vedānta" in his *Buddhist Logic*²⁹ he first singled out the fact that "in the first period Buddhist philosophy represents the contradictorily opposed part to the philosophy of the Upanishads. Though in the course of its historical development this "Spirit of a revolt against Monism... did not survive, it could not destroy Indian Monism which remained unshaken, so deeply was it rooted in its brahmanical strongholds. On the contrary, Monism took the offensive and finally established itself triumphantly in the very heart of a new Buddhism. On the background of these presuppositions Stcherbatsky undertook to explain how the school of Nāgārjuna "received a dialectical foundation", and how the later schools of Buddhist philosophy became established "as a system of Idealism".

The relative priority granted to the *advaita vedāntaḥ* by Stcherbatsky reappeared later in T.R.V. Murti's *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism* in an exaggerated extension of the emphasis on the Hegelian analogy as a criterion of his comparative interpretation of Nāgārjuna. It had to serve his intention to reduce ultimately "the central philosophy of Buddhism" to a pseudo-Nāgārjunian idea of a Negative Absolute, and thus to reabsorb it into the wider absolutist conception of the Neo-Hinduist school. Murti found his exegetical thesis "unerringly indicated" in the works of his teacher Radhakrishnan, and took it over uncritically

as the basic tenet of his apologetic work : “ Buddha did not doubt the reality of Nirvāṇa /Absolute/ ”³⁰. Nāgārjuna’s *śūnya-vādaḥ* had consequently to be brought down to this orthodox dogma and thus interpreted away.

A different more sober approach to the problem of inter-relations between Buddhism and the Advaita-Vedānta can be found in the study on Gaudapāda by T. M. P. Mahadevan. This book contains also a justified criticism of some earlier attempts in the 20th century to reduce Buddhism and Advaita-Vedānta to a common denominator and thus to adulterate both. The idea of a “ negative absolute ” has been critically rejected in later European works on this subject particularly by E. Lamotte.³²

Hegel’s absolute idealism and advaita-vedānta

This view of things..in contradistinction to the subjective idealism of Kant’s critical philosophy may be termed absolute idealism. Absolute idealism..is by no means merely restricted to philosophy. The truth which it expresses lies at the root of all religion.³³

A comparative analysis of the basic tenets of Hegel’s absolute idealism from the standpoint of advaita-veāḍanta can easily sort out three kinds of relevant statements :

/1/ Statements which at the first glance seem to confirm the analogy of these two absolutist and idealist standpoints.

/2/ Statements not less convincing in the initial affirmation of analogous tenets which then immediately are overturned into a dialectical negation of the quasi-vedāntic doctrine.

/3/ Statements which at the first glance exclude any possibility of comparison between the two absolutist approaches to the problems under discussion.

In the first category the statement quoted in the motto seems to encompass the widest range of philosophical interest in its universal finality. As a touch-stone for the universal validity of this abstract principle we can use a simple statement of historical fact/such as Hegel’s philosophy of history with all its dialectical ambiguity could not produce/ in the formulation of the Indian

standpoint in T. M. P. Mahadevan's presentation of "The Religio-Philosophic Culture of India"³⁴ :

It has puzzled many a western student of Indian thought how and why there has been maintained in India a close alliance between religion and philosophy. Generally speaking, the preacher and the philosopher alike in the West deplore this alliance for quite opposite reasons. . . That the western preacher and philosopher hold Indian culture to be defective for diametrically opposite reasons is an unconscious compliment to that culture.

Hegel can be considered as an exception here in so far as he *thinks* that there should be what the Indian, on his side, states *to be a fact*.

Though under an un-vedāntic heading of "absolute notion" which is "bare and simple infinity" Hegel describes "the ultimate nature of life, the soul of the world, the universal life-blood", as being "itself every distinction that arises, as well as that into which all distinctions are dissolved, pulsating within itself, but ever motionless, shaken to its depths, but still at rest"—just as in the famous verses of Īśa upaniṣad.

The suggestion of an analogy to Uddālaka Aruṇi's *tat tvam asi* is expressed in more concrete terms in Hegel's visualizing "the free unity with others in such wise that just as this unity exists through me, so it exists through the others too—I see them as myself, myself as them";—or in the statement that "the thing simply 'found' enters consciousness as the self-existence of the ego—ego, which now knows itself in the objective reality, and knows itself there as *the self*". Hence the conclusion that "the process we have is rather this, that a distinction is certainly made, but because it is no distinction, it is again suspended"³⁵.

In another context the Buddhist theory of *anātmā* seems to be explained away in typically vedāntic terms : "Consciousness of life, of its existence and action, is merely pain and sorrow over this existence and activity; for therein consciousness finds only consciousness of its opposite as its essence—and of its own nothingness. Elevating itself beyond this, it passes to the unchangeable."³⁶

Going over to *the second category* of statements the reader should be aware of the structural premise of Hegel's closed system

where all philosophical theses stated on one point of the historical development of his "Absolute Spirit" are necessarily superseded and denied, also in their total ethico-religious value, in the very next moment of this linear process of evolution, so utterly non-Indian, and not less absurd to many European philosophers, since Kierkegaard's and Schopenhauer's first revolts against Hegel's abolishment of all criticism both in metaphysics and in ethics.

It is exactly for this pseudo-rational preconception that Hegel fritters away the vedāntic idea of *ānandaḥ* by an astonishing turning of the torture-wheel of his dialectical process of history, in letting even the penultimate "moment of enlightenment" be "super-seded" by the next and best attainment of his own Christian "Revealed Religion":

"In the completed act consciousness realizes itself as a given individual consciousness, or sees existence returned into itself and in this consists the nature of enjoyment."

Yet, the proposition "The Self is Absolute Being" gives expression to a "light-hearted folly" alone. From the ultimate standpoint of Hegel's Christian "Revealed Religion" this proposition, 'The Self is Absolute Being', belongs, as is evident on the face of it, to the non-religious, the concrete actual spirit. What should be "evident on the face of it" is Hegel's patriotic belief that "in ethical life the self is absorbed in the spirit of its nation".³⁷

I do not consider it proper for a Buddhist bhikkhu to discuss any further the authenticity of such unexpected exegesis of the Christian doctrine. Many protestant theologians, still in the 20th century, have accepted it.

A simpler condensed example of statements characteristic for our second category is the following:

Away remote from the changing vanishing present lies the permanent beyond: an immanent inherent Self-Being [*ein Ansich*], which is *the first and therefore imperfect manifestation of Reason*... It is empty, for it is merely the nothingness of appearance and positively *the naked universal*... The super-sensible is then *appearance qua appearance*.³⁸

This dialectical turning implies also the essential reason for which the continuation of a comparative analysis of Hegel's Absolute, on the one hand, and the vedantic Brahma, which is Paramātmā, on the other, cannot reach any deeper below the

illusory appearance of the suggestive surface-effects pointed out in our first two categories. This essential reason has to be sought in Hegel's rationalist conception of the Absolute as pure Reason.

Thus, in the third category, we can investigate only the reason of "sublation" [*Aufhebung*] of the *tertium comparationis* of the presumed analogy.

It has been observed that Hegel's Absolute is merely "the whole of finitude" of the "logical idea", and as such "a result" or product of thought. In this sense only "the truth is the whole. The whole, however, is merely the essential nature reaching its completeness through the process of its own development. Of the Absolute it must be said that it is essentially a result."³⁹

Prof. Mahadevan, in analysing the difference of the "upaniṣadic acosmism" [*niṣprapañca*] from European conceptions of pantheism and idealism, or "idealistic pantheism" (though not going back to Hegel, but quoting his less authentic English epigones), points out the unquestionable essential contradistinction of the vedāntic standpoint from Bradley's/ Hegelian idea of the Absolute :

The non-dual and distinctionless Brahman is not a synthesis of differences or a whole of parts; it is not an identity in-difference. It is not to be identified with psychical existence either.⁴⁰

From the same standpoint the difference from the pantheistic equation of the Absolute /God/ with the world is explicated on the example of the *Puruṣa-sūktam* [R.V., X, 90] :

Brahman is not equated with the universe, though the universe has Brahman for its sole cause. Being immanent in the universe, Brahman is also transcendent. The *Puruṣa-sūktam* declares that all beings are only a fourth of the supreme Spirit, while the three other fourths remain immortal in heaven.⁴¹

Though the characteristics of acosmism in upaniṣadic contexts, as singled out by Prof. Mahadevan, could be interpreted also as trans-cosmism (in order to distinguish it from the absolute a-cosmism of the Buddhist *śūnya-vādaḥ*)—the whole problem certainly cannot be interpreted, on the Indian side, in terms of Hegelian dogmatic rationalism. Though all-comprising, the Hegelian

Absolute remains *immanent*, or better to say imprisoned, in the totality-chamber of his historical world-process. There, brought "out of the flux of the actual world" /of appearance or *māyā*/, the being of Hegel's "changeless eternal spirit lies in thinking the unity which they constitute". Reason as "Spirit" /cf. *Puruṣaḥ*/ "is consciously aware of itself as its own world, and of the world as itself". Thus Hegel's Absolute is reduced to an "absolute notion" of his dogmatic Reason. "The Absolute Idea", whose self-sufficient unity is "the absolute and all truth", is the "Logical Idea".⁴²

Concerning *avidyā*, or metaphysical nescience as the ultimate root of human quest of truth, we find in Hegel's *Logic*⁴³ another apparent analogy, obviously of no deeper consequence for the determination of his "absolute notion" of the world process :

The true knowledge of God begins when we know that things, as they immediately are, have no truth.

Regardless of such dogmatic statements, it was Paul Deussen who, at the beginning of the 20th century, tried to draw the attention of his contemporary Indian philosophers to a much deeper and essentially more adequate basis for comparative studies on this critical point. It is the point of the *primordial transcendental turning* of Indian thought, which in European philosophy was reached only with Kant's "Copernican turning" to the question of transcendental structure of the cognizing mind, question originating in the discovery of the principle of all metaphysics. This root-principle cannot be found in the nature of the proto-substance [*arché*] of the material world where the Ionian "first philosophers" looked for it, but only in the nature of *avidyā* as formulated in *Īśa* and *Kena upaniṣads* :

Into a blind darkness enter those who follow nescience and into a still greater darkness those who delight in science.

Here the term "science" is most suggestive of its modern "positive" meaning. Wisdom, which already the old Greeks distinguished from mere "views" and theories [*doxa*, *dṛṣṭi*], begins with the critical question :

By whom directed does the mind attain its mark ?

What is

the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, and the speech of the speech, the breath of the breath, the eye of the eye ?

In marking out this meaning of Kant's Copernican turning, Deussen considered it at the same time as the first proper and adequate basis for comparative studies of Indian philosophies, and of *advaita-vedānta* in the first place, in the light of modern European philosophy.

Though the only part of Deussen's General History of Philosophy⁴⁴ translated in English was the volume dealing with the philosophy of the upaniṣads, it has been widely recognized by Indian philosophers, and even considered by some as authoritative.⁴⁵ Yet the neo-Kantian trend of the European philosophy remained overshadowed in England by a neo-Hegelian trend, which since the middle of the 19th century was developing in a strange ignorance of Kant's criticism, though on the "Continent" Kant's Critique has been generally recognized /even by Hegel/ as the "Prolegomena to any future Metaphysic", and as such also as a precondition for the understanding of Hegel's anti-criticist reaction. The first competent translator of Kant in England, F.M.D. Meiklejohn, considers that "Kant's fate in this country has been a very hard one. Misunderstood by the ablest philosophers of the time, illustrated, explained, or translated by the most incompetent—it has been his lot to be either unappreciated, misapprehended, or entirely neglected."⁴⁶ Since the time when this statement was made, the situation can be considered only as further deteriorated. The loss of Kant for India, due to the colonial dependence in cultural relations /felt still in our generation/, may be considered inestimable in the present situation.

It may have been just Hegel's stronger accent on an apparent rationality, that attracted Indian philosopher, at the beginning of the 20th century, to his dogmatically closed system.

I do not feel competent to judge on Hegel's more or less implicit influence on modern Indian philosophers. One outstanding reference seems, however, to be significant for the historical situation under review :

K. C. Bhattacharyya

During the first half of the 20th century the import of K. C. Bhattacharyya to modern Indian philosophy has been recognized as the most ingenious and original in his generation.¹ For a student of Hegel's philosophy it would be hardly possible to doubt

of Hegel's influence on the formulation of Bhattacharyya's basic thesis on *The Subject as Freedom* [1930/], considered in Indian philosophy as his "masterpiece of analytic thought, metaphysical insight and speculative originality".⁴⁷ Yet, what from our comparative standpoint seems more significant for the originality of his conception, is a peculiar Indian motive at the outset of the trend of thought which determined his later critical attitude to Hegel. It was *The Jaina Theory of Anekānta* [1925/]. Already his investigation of *Some Aspects of Negation* [1914/] have brought him in the orbit of Hegel's logic and to a critical attitude to the dialectical theory of the negation of the negation which will bring him beyond the Hegelian pattern of dialectics. Ultimately his critical approach to European philosophy predominantly in its neo-Hegelian aspects [I could not consult his *Studies in Kant*, probably of a later date and of a lesser, post-Hegelian import/ determined the way of his return to a stricter vedāntic absolutism in his *Concept of Philosophy* [1936/]. Considered as a critical revision of the dogmatic shortcomings of Hegel's dialectics, Bhattacharyya's *Concept of the Absolute in its alternative forms* [1934/] in its ultimate phase seems to be most valuable for a comparison with contemporary and later European critique of Hegel's dialectical criteria [e.g. Jaspers, Tillich/]. Considering the development of K. C. Bhattacharyya's thought, as I have tried to trace it here in its broad lines, as a whole, it is my impression that his progress from the initial position of *anekānta-vādaḥ* to a neo-vedāntic absolutism was essentially and positively influenced by the implicit development of his critical attitude to Hegel.

Here are a few pointers which appear significant for this whole proces of [ideally conceived/ development and its results :

The noetic aspect of the subject as freedom in the constitution of "the object of consciousness undergoing a transformation..by the act of reflection and meditation" is described by Hegel, in the "Preliminary Notion" of his Logic⁴⁸, as follows :

The real nature of the object is brought to life in reflection but it is no less true that this exertion of thought is *my act*.. *our Freedom is thus the source of this real nature*.. Freedom is obviously and intimately associated with thought.

In *The Jaina Theory of Anekānta*⁴⁹ Bhattacharyya investigates the relation of knowing and its content, the knowing or assertive function which is sometimes identified with the function of meaning. .and is intelligible only by the concept of *freedom that can neither be said to be nor not to be*. This freedom, stripped of its subjective associations, is but the category of indetermination.

In *The Subject as Freedom* Bhattacharyya proposes to elicit the "subjective function" of the same noetic structure "after Vedānta as conscious freedom or felt detachment from the object". "The subjectively knowable 'I'" is described as having "a feeling of relating itself to the object. .This felt relating is the positive freedom of the subject having different felt modes like knowing, feeling"—and other functions corresponding /implicitly/ to the Cartesian *Cogito* as elicited specifically in the phenomenological analysis of Husserl's Cartesian Meditations. All these "subjective functions" in Bhattacharyya's analysis "represent the modes of freedom"⁵⁰.

In a later context, *The Concept of Philosophy*⁵¹ :

The Hegelian absolute may be taken to represent the indetermination, mis-called *identity*, of truth and freedom which is value.

On this point not only the agreement on the *noetic value of freedom* is singled out, but also the explicit difference of the structure of transcendental logics based on this concept.

On his way towards a neo-vedāntic formulation of the idea of the Absolute, Bhattacharyya observed also that Hegel's meta-logical concept of this entity was "intrinsically irreligious"⁵².

From the same standpoint it was essential first of all to avoid the dogmatic tendency of pseudo-rationality in Hegel's dialectical logic. As summarized by D. M. Datta⁵³ :

The recognition of the indefinite would cure logic of the dogmatic tendency to treat the definite, the rational, the knowable as the sole content of thought, and would change its general outlook.

The "category of indetermination" by which Bhattacharyya's understanding of "the subject as freedom" is informed, and his

criticism of the Hegelian idea of "pure being" can be summarized in the following terms :

Hegel's conception of the indeterminate, the pure being, is another possible approach to the indefinite. The pure being is emptied of all determinate qualities by Hegel; but he still conceives it as a positive object of thought; and to this extent being is not yet fully indeterminate. In fact the opposition between the two definite contents of thought, being and non-being, cannot be understood at all without something which is neither and can yet make their relation possible. Recognition of the indefinite corrects this dogmatic bias of each, and yet gives to each a new light and reformed character. As against the dialectical principle that regards reason as the sole reality, "it indicates an alternative—*unreason*—beyond reason", and suggests that position and negation, being and non-being, need not necessarily be conceived as the moments of the *positive absolute*, but rather of the Indefinite which is beyond both.

It is not possible in the present sketch to enter in a comparative analysis of differences determining the structure of Bhattacharyya's transcendental logic. What is essential for the suggested approach to contemporary European criticism of Hegel's closed system in this field can be pointed out in some implications of Bhattacharyya's basic principle⁵⁴ :

Every system of philosophical thought or religion has its own logic and is bound up with one or other of the fundamental views of negation.

The advantage of this logic of the indefinite is that it "finds categories for widely different metaphysical notions of reality" which are not reducible to common denominators.⁵⁵ Husserl's "categorical regions" had the same initial aim.

Yet Bhattacharyya's typological attempts to classify philosophies in four different types corresponding to types of theoretic consciousness /which "may be roughly called empirical thought, pure objective thought, spiritual thought and transcendental thought"⁵⁶/, and his distinction of a "triple absolute" which "is apparently the prototype of the three subjective functions, knowing, willing and feeling"⁵⁷, may remind us rather of N. Harmann's further developed classifications of spheres and levels of real and ideal being, where, e.g., the four levels of real being are : matter,

life, consciousness and spirit, while the spirit, on its own level of being, comprises a triple aspect of personal, objective and objectified spirit.

Bhattacharyya's thesis : " All philosophy is systematic symbolism and symbolism necessarily admits of alternatives " ⁵⁸, may remind us first of all of E. Cassirer's extensive *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*. The speculative tendency in applying symbolism as a method of philosophical investigation could perhaps, in some of its aspects be compared with " cypher reading " suggested by Jaspers as a method of existential ontology.

For the critique of Hegel's tendency to drift the whole historical process of world-cultures in one single direction, and to sacrifice each dialectically overtaken and outwitted " moment " to an unrevertibly devaluated past, it is significant that Bhattacharyya, in *The Concept of Philosophy* ⁵⁹, ultimately concentrates his attention on the field of religious experience which " by its self-deepening gets opposed to or synthetised with other experiences. One experience may enjoy another as a stage outgrown or as in absolute conflict with it, where a third experience may emerge as adjusting them to one another ". And yet :

There is no possibility of systematising them by secular reason, and so far as they systematise themselves, they present themselves in many alternative systems. . . Extensive internally coherent *systems with indefinite boundaries* are actually revealed, though this is no *a priori* necessity of a system, and still less of a system admitting no alternative system. . . The theoretic form of a religious system is a philosophy of religion, there being as many forms of this philosophy as there are religious systems.

It was the same religious motive, and in a specifically Indian context, which brought Paul Tillich to the following anti-Hegelian explication of his " dynamic typology " ⁶⁰. Like Bhattacharyya, Tillich considers the dialectical structure of interdependently constituted events to be essential for the dynamics of cultural life. In his typological investigations he describes the dialectical tension as a process of polarisation within one structural unit. Such tension provokes conflicts, but it also breaks open a way out of the contradiction towards a possible unity of polarised elements. In this way their static stiffness gets loosed, so that individual

things and persons may transcend the type to which they pertain, *without being bereft of their character*. Tillich exemplifies this advantage of his dynamic typology over the dialectic of the Hegelian school "whose movement is restricted to one direction only, so that it relegates to the past whatever has been dialectically superseded", with reference to his dialogues with Buddhists in Japan on the following presupposition :

The Hegelian dialectic [e.g. in K. Barth's "theology of the crisis"] considers Buddhism as an early stage of religious development which has already been totally overcome by history. Buddhism still exists, but the "world-spirit" is not any longer creative in it.

Dynamical Typology, on the contrary, describes Buddhism as a living religion in which specific polar elements are dominant, so that it stands in polar tension to religions dominated by different elements. According to this method, says Tillich, it is not possible "to contemplate Christianity as the absolute religion, as Hegel did".

Karl Jaspers in his discussion of the religious crisis of our post-war civilization⁶¹ formulated the ideal of a perennial philosophy as "three thousand years of history of philosophy comprehended in a unique actuality". The philosophical thought in manifold aspects of its creation conceals one truth. In modern philosophy Hegel made the first attempt to understand the unity of this thought. Still, in his proceeding, all that was earlier is placed as partial truth on a lower grade of the ascent to Hegel's own philosophy. According to Jaspers, the central theme of our actual philosophical endeavour should be understood as "the elucidation of communication from its multiple sources in the modes of the Comprehensive".⁶² In a ceaseless renewal of this communication the outstanding attainments of the past should not be considered as superseded but as actually present. Only when all philosophy is thus present, its sources will be revealed, too, as "being now". In its temporal transitoriness the essential truth of the "at each time time-annulling *philosophia perennis*" will be simultaneously present. In another formulation⁶³ :

Philosophy does not leave the area of the Comprehensive, does not forget the process of transcending that is inseparable from it, remains open to the being that cuts across time, the being that thought apprehends as the actual presence of eternity in historicity.

Conclusion

In comparing K. C. Bhattacharyya's thesis on "alternative systems with indefinite boundaries", in its opposition against the absolutism of Hegel's "system admitting no alternative system", with the later, still more explicit, endeavours of Jaspers and Tillich in the same direction, and characteristically arising also on the ground of the philosophy of religion,—from the standpoint of comparative philosophy we are confronted with the same tendency to break the narrow frame of Hegel's dialectical absolutism.

Since more than hundred years Hegel's anti-criticist /i.e. anti-Kantian/ dogmatic Reason has served, far beyond the academic ground of its origin, as a successful *ideological* tool for imposing a *europo-centric attitude* supported by the authority of political and social forces involved in a dialectical tension with ruinous effects for the dignity and the very existence of all extent world-cultures.

If the Hegelian "theology of crisis" has to be supplanted by a comprehensive comparative philosophy, as visualized in statements quoted above, then first of all *the Hegelian dialectical structure should be eliminated as a method of comparative philosophy.*

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Bhikkhu Nāṇajīvako

NOTES

1. *Phenomenology of Mind, Preface.* Transal. J. B. Baillie, London, Allen and Unwin, 2nd ed., 1949, p. 68 / *Phen.* in the following notes.
2. *Ibid.*—Cf. my essay on the need of the category of Karma in modern European philosophy, *Karma-the Ripening Fruit*, in *Main Currents in Modern Thought*, Vol. 29, No. 1, 1972.
3. *On Yoga*, Vol. I, Pondicherry, 1957, p. 13 f.
4. E. Zeller, *Die Philosophie der Griechen*, Introd. by F. Lorzinger and W. Nestle to the 6th edit., 1919.
5. *Das Christentum und die Begegnung der Weltreligionen* / German transl. of *Christianity and the encounter of the world religions*, / Stuttgart 1964, p. 36.

6. Cf. F. Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, First Book/“European Nihilism”, section 55 and 64 : “This is the European form of Buddhism, that *active negation*, after all existence has lost its meaning.” “*The second appearance of Buddhism*.—Its precursory signs : the increase of pity. . The fact that it is impossible for religion to carry on its work any longer with dogma and fables. . .”

7. *Vorlesungen ueber die Geschichte der Philosophie*, in *Werke*, Berlin 1840, Vol. XIII, pp. 112 and 164.

8. *Die orientalische welt*, in *Vorlesungen ueber die Philosophie der Weltgeschichte*, Vol. II. Edit. G. Lassen, Philosophieche Bibliothek 171 b, Leipzig 1923.

9. *Rezension der Schrift ‘Ueber die unter dem Namen Bhagawad-Gītā bekannte Episode des Mahābhārata’ von wilhelm von Humboldt*.

10. “The artificer/Egyptian religion /” is the third and highest stage of “Natural Religion” in Hegel’s classification. It is preceded by “Plants and animals as objects of religion” in the “Primary religions of India”. “The parsee religion”, under the heading “God as light” is dealt with on a still lower level.

11. *Phen.*, p. 720.

12. *Id.*, p. 648.

13. Cf. “Religion in the form of Art / Greek religion /”, where “spirit is a free nation, in which custom and order constitute the common substance of all”/p. 709/

14. *Id.*, p. 649/Names in brackets are my addition./

15. *Id.*, p. 652.

16. *The Philosophy of George Santayna*, Edited by F. A. Schilpp, Chicago 1914 p. 571.

17. *The Logic of Hegel* translated from the Encyclopaedia of the philosophical sciences with prolegomena by W. Wallace, Oxford, Clarendon 1874. L. in the following notes./—pp. 134,135, 169.—*Phen.*, p. 502.

18. P. 802.

19. L., section 151, p. 236.—Cf. P. Tillich’s criticism of Karl Barth’ “theology of the crisis”, op. cit. p. 31.

20. Cf. the concluding chapter of *Phen.* on “Absolute Knowledge” p. 789 ff.

21. The remaining two are *dukkhaṃ*, suffering, arising from the realization of impermanence, and *anattā*, the negation of the Self-principle or a permanent soul. See on this subject my article *Aniccaṃ—The Buddhist Theory of Impermanence*, in *The Basic Facts of Existence I*, The Wheel Publication No. 186/187, Kandy, Buddhist Publication Society. 1973.

22. Under this designation levels of noematically reduced consciousness are described in the scheme of *arūpa-jñānaṃ* in Pāli texts. The correspondence of the third and fourth *arūpaṃ* level with the notion of *śūnnatā* is phenomenologically described in Buddha’s discourse *Cūḷa-sunnata-suttaṃ*, M. 121. This aspect of the Buddhist theory of nothingness is explained in my forthcoming essays on *jhānaṃ*, structures of Buddhist contemplation.

23. The collections of Pāli text in the present paper are abridged as follows : S. = Saṃyutta-nikāya, M. = Majjhima-nikāya, D. = Dīgha-nikāya. Serial numbers refer to the titles of the *suttas*.

24. For the acosmic aspect of Buddha's attitude to the world see my article "Why is Buddhism a Religion?" in *Indian Philosophical Annual*, Vol. VI, Madras 1970. For the antiontological aspect see my article on *Aniccam*, quoted in n. 21 above.

25. In Stecherbatsky's translation, op. cit., p. 201.

26. Op. cit., pp. 207, 205 n., 33, 133, 188 n.

27. Cf. op. cit., p. 90.—For recent criticism see also the Introductory Essay to Kenneth K. Inada *Nāgārjuna—A Translation of his Mūlamādhyama-kakārikā*, Tokyo, The Hokuseido Press, 1970.

28. Cf. my paper, C. Veljacic, *Dependence of Punar-bhava on Karma in Buddhist Philosophy* in *Indian Philosophical Annual*, Vol. I (1965).

29. Vol. I, p. 21 f.—Ed. Dover Publications, New York 1962.

30. T. R. V. Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism*. 2nd ed., London, Allen and Unwin, 1960. p. 48.

31. T. M. P. Mahadevan *Gauḍaāda, A Study in Early Advaita*, 3rd ed. University of Madras, 1960.

32. See, also for further references, his book, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de la Sagesse de Nāgārjuna*, Tome III, p. 1227. Institut Orientaliste de Louvain, 1970.— Cf. also H. V. Guenther, *Buddhist Philosophy in Theory and Practice*, Penguin Books 1972, where the authentic Buddhist standpoint is stated in a footnote p. 224 : "The rejection of the translation of the Tibetan term *stongpa-nyid śūnyatā* by 'emptiness' or 'void' is based on the following consideration : *Śūnyatā* is not a container that can be emptied nor is there anything that could be taken out of *Śūnyatā*. The choice of the term 'emptiness' dates back to the time when under the influence of idealism mind was conceived as a container of ideas, and when the ideal seemed to be to leave an empty blankness!"

33. L., p. 79.

34. In *The Cultural Heritage of India*, Vol. I, p. 164. Calcutta 1958.

35. Phen., p. 208, 378, 202.

36. Phen., p. 252.

37. Phen. 630, 750f.

38. Phen., p. 191, 193.

39. Phen., p. 37, 81.

40. Op. cit., p. 175.

41. Id., p. 172.

42. Phen., pp. 555, 457, 208, - L. 323.

43. L., p. 181.

44. *Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie*, in 6 vols., 1894-1917. *The Philosophy of the Upaniṣads* | 2nd vol. of the Gen. Hist./ Engl. transl. Edinburgh Clark, 1919. Deussen's basic comparative thesis : *Vedānta, Plato-*

Kant / Vienna 1917, was expounded earlier in his lecture, *On the Philosophy of the vedānta in its relations to Occidental Metaphysics*, delivered at the Royal Asiatic Society in Bombay, in 1893.

45. Cf. the chapter on the upaniṣads in M. Hiriyanna, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*.

46. Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Translator's Preface/(1856). Already 25 years earlier, Schopenhauer / among whose most faithful followers was Paul Deussen/had the intention to translate Kant into English. Looking for a prospective publisher, Schopenhauer, in a letter to Thomas Campbell in 1831, pointed out among other reasons that Kant's philosophy "throws a light upon some tenets of the Hindoo and Buddhistic faith now generally known in England".

47. D. M. Datta, *The Chief Currents of Contemporary Philosophy*, The University of Calcutta, 1961. P. 129.

48. L., p. 37, section 23/d/. Underlinings are in part mine.

49. *Studies in Philosophy*. First vol. Calcutta, Progressive Publishers, 1956. P. 340.

50. Cf. *The Subject as Freedom*, Amalner/Bombay 1930, Preface, pp. 27, 25, 30.—E. Husserl, *Cartesian Meditations*, transl. by D. Cairns, M. Nijhoff, The Hague, 1970. First Meditation, p. 21/60/; Second Meditation, p. 36 f./74 f/; § 8 and 15.—K. K. Bagchi, *The Philosophy of K. C. Bhattacharyya in the Light of Edmund Husserl's Phenomenology* / II./. Reprint from *Philosophical Quarterly*, Amalner 1964.

51. *Contemporary Indian Philosophy*, London, Allen-Unwin, 1952., p. 124.

52. Ibid., p. 122.

53. This and the following quotations are from *Contemporary Philosophy*, pp. 119–121.

54. *Some Aspects of Negation* / Cf. Datta, op. cit., p. 122/.

55. *Place of the Indefinite in Logic*, op. cit., p. 121.

56. *The Concept of Philosophy*, op. cit., p. 107.

57. Id. 124.

58. Id. 123.

59. Id. 122.

60. *Das Christentum und die Begegnung der Weltreligionen*, Stuttgart, Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1964, p. 36. / German transl. of *Christianity and the encounter of the world religions*, New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 1962. Retranslated by N. /

61. *Der philosophische Glaube*, München, Piper, 1951. The following is my free translation of two passages on pp. 130–131, with two additions quoted from the English transl., *The Perennial Scope of Philosophy*, London 1950, as stated below.

62. *The Perennial Scope of Philosophy*, p. 175.

63. Ibid., p. 143.