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„THEISTIC“ AND „ATHEISTIC“ INDIAN SYSTEMS

It is generally known that in works on Indian philosophy some Indian systems are called theistic and others atheistic. These terms are not only applied to the systems considered as philosophical but even to the religions to which the respective systems pertain: thus we have not only „atheistic“ Indian philosophies, but also „ytheistic“ Indian religions.

As is known, there are three old Indian religions: 1) Hinduism (called Brahminism in its former stage of development), 2) Buddhism (with its main division in *hīnayāna* and *mahāyāna*), 3) Jainism. In each of these three religions we distinguish what according to us pertains to philosophy from what pertains to religion, although in India there was no such strict demarcation. Each of these three religions has its own philosophical system or systems. The philosophical systems of Hinduism are usually called brahminical systems, because they, as systems, were crystallizing during the brahminical period of this religion. Buddhism (both *Hīnayāna* and *Mahāyāna*) has its own various philosophical systems. Jainism, notwithstanding differences in religion and worship, has no important differences in philosophy. Therefore we speak about one system of the Jaina philosophy.

In India such notions as we express by the words „religion“, „religious“ seem to begin where the eternal moral Law (*Dharma*; in this case transcribed with a capital letter) and moral activity (*kriyā*) are admitted. Religiousness will be the acceptance of the eternal moral Law and of moral activity, in brief: religiousness = *kriyāvāda*, the speaking (*vād*, to speak, to assert), the acceptance of moral activity. A man or a system acknowledging the doctrine

of moral activity will be *kriyāvādin*. These three Indian religions and their philosophical systems — in spite of their differences — agree in this that they all acknowledge eternal *Dharma* dominating over the world and expressing itself in revolving cycles of rebirths (*saṃsāra*) conditioned by the voluntary moral deeds of living creature. This *Dharma* to the believers of Hinduism is contained in the Vedas (*Veda*), to the Buddhists and Jains in their respective holy Scriptures.

The present treatise is concerned with the terms „theistic“ and „atheistic“ with reference to these three religions and their philosophical systems. If some other Indian systems do not admit the eternal moral Law, if they are *akriyāvādin* (a privativum + *kriyāvādin*), for instance Indian agnostics, Indian materialists otherwise called Cārvākas (*cārvāka*), or Indian fatalists otherwise called Ājīvikas (*ājīvika*), the question whether they are theistic or atheistic is of no consequence. They contain nothing which might authorize us to call them theistic: all these systems *akriyāvādin* are entirely atheistic.

The expression „theistic“, „atheistic“ applied to the Indian systems are, of course, western expressions. The whole of Buddhism and Jainism, and among the brahminical systems Mīmāṃsā and the classic Sāṃkhya are regarded as atheistic. Among the brahminical systems only Vedānta, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika and Yoga are called theistic. Eastern authors who write in European languages have followed this terminology. For instance, the wellknown Japanese scholar, I. Takakusu, writes about Buddhism: „Buddhism is atheistic — there is no doubt about it“. (*Essentials of Buddhist Philosophy*, Honolulu 1949, p. 45.)

What is the basis of this terminology, „theistic“ and „atheistic“ with reference to the Indian systems?

There is no basis for the fact that an Indian religion or a philosophical system of an Indian religion admits or does not admit heavenly beings, gods, devas (*deva*), i. e. beings in some respect superior to men. The word „*deva*“ radically corresponds, to be sure, to the Latin „divus“, „deus“ (written with a small letter). This word „*deva*“ referred to superior persons, to kings, to deities, and also to the personified Supreme Being. But the conception

of *deva* does not correspond to our conception of God, Deus (written with a capital letter). Moreover, all these three old Indian religions and their philosophical systems admit devas (*deva*), therefore there would be no basis for calling some of them „atheistic“.

The basis of this terminology is the acceptance or non-acceptance of *īśvara*. If an Indian system admits *īśvara*, it is called by the authors „theistic“; if it does not accept *īśvara*, it is called „atheistic“. The word *īśvara* is derived from the Sanscrit $\sqrt{\text{īś}}$, to won, to be master of, *zu eigen haben*. *Īśvarā* as a. = able to do, capable of; as s. = master, lord. If this word *īśvara* refers in Indian sources to the Supreme Lord, the Supreme Being, it is translated into European languages as „God“, „Deus“ (with a capital). Consequently the Sanscrit term *seśvara* (*sa-īśvara* > *seśvara*; the prefix *sa* expresses junction, possession; accordingly, *seśvara* as a *bahuvrīhi* compound means: who is possessing *īśvara*) is translated as „theistic“ and *nirīśvara* (*nis* + *īśvara* > *nivīśvara*; the prefix *nis*, before the vowels *nir*, expresses privation) is translated as „atheistic“.

I do not intend to remove or to erase the terminology „theistic“ „atheistic“ with reference to the Indian systems. I only want to take this into consideration: If one applies these terms to Indian systems, one should oneself understand them well and explain them properly to others, lest they give rise to various misunderstandings. And really we frequently meet with various misunderstandings and even with false opinions, injurious to Indian systems, brought about just owing to this terminology. Because, on the one hand, the Indian conception of *īśvara* does not fully cover our western conception of God, Deus, hence an Indian system, though accepting *īśvara*, will not be fully theistic in our understanding. On the other hand, if an Indian system, though not accepting *īśvara*, has e. g. an elaborate doctrine concerning absolute being (that, considered in itself, is really all that is God considered in himself) and gives a better and a purer idea of it than does a system accepting *īśvara*, to call such a system „atheistic“ would lead to other misunderstandings and be injurious to this system.

One kind of misunderstanding arises from the identification of the Indian conception of *īśvara* with our western conception of God, Deus, consequently of the term *śeśvara* with our term „theistic“.

How do we understand the notion „God“, „Deus“? The western conception of God — not only the conception of Christian philosophy expressed e. g. in the *Summa Theologica* of Saint Thomas, but also of other philosophies agreeing upon this point with Christian philosophy — is this: The self-existent being (without any other reason beyond itself for its existing), consequently possessing the entireness of being, unchangeable, eternal, not bound to time, space or to other limitations, *ens* truly *absolutum*, the being that cannot be *univoce* (but only *analogice*) defined with our notions derived from these contingent things. In this way we conceive of God in himself. With reference to the world, God, according to us, is the efficient cause of the world by means of creation (*creatio ex nihilo sui et subiecti*) without any change of himself. We say in philosophical language: The world really exists, on the part of the world to God there is a real relation (*relatio realis*), but on the part of God to the world there is only a relation of reason (*relatio rationis*). To this absolute being we refer as to a person, calling this Supreme Being God, Deus.

The conception of *īśvara* in Indian systems is of two kinds:

1. Some Indian systems (e. g. the Vedāntic systems of Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, Vallabha) accept *īśvara* in the PANENTHEISTIC meaning: The Absolute Being (*brahman*) personified as e. g. *īśvara* Viṣṇu brings forth the world by means of his transformation, real alteration (*pariṇāma*), consequently he is not only the efficient, but also the substantial, material cause (*causa materialis*) of this world. We cannot here take into consideration the differences of particular systems. As a comparison of this conception may serve a spider bringing forth a cobweb. The spider brings forth the cobweb as an efficient cause and also takes the material for this cobweb out of itself. *īśvara* who is subtle transcendentally, through his transformation into the world changed from subtle to thick, like liquid milk changed into curds. Of course, according to these

systems, the absolute having brought forth the world and remaining in it (all is in the absolute, $\pi\acute{\alpha}\nu \acute{\epsilon}\nu \theta\epsilon\acute{\omega}$) is not exhausted, has not entirely passed into the world: notwithstanding its transformation into the world it is still infinite in its transcendency (hence we call these systems panentheistic, not pantheistic). The world really exists, because it has issued from *īśvara* through his real transformation, and makes with *īśvara* a certain unity. There is a real relation not only between the world and *īśvara*, but also between *īśvara* and the world. The inanimate world and the souls are identical with *īśvara*, as the parts are identical with the whole (Vallabha), the world and the souls are *īśvara*s qualities (Rāmānuja). As we see, these systems admit the absolute having in itself the entireness of being and excluding all other real being existing beyond the absolute independently of its efficient and material causality. These systems are called theistic and their conception of *īśvara* is similar to our conception of God. But it is evident that their conception of *īśvara* does not entirely coincide with our conception of God. Our conception excludes all real transformation in God and his material causality with reference to the world. These systems admitting *īśvara* in the panentheistic signification may be called *śeśvara*, they may be called *īśvaravādin*, asserting *īśvara*, but one cannot say they are strictly theistic in our western meaning. In brief: What have the panentheistic systems in common with us?

- The absolute in itself possessing the wholeness of being.
- The absolute, efficient cause of the universe.
- The real, not fancied, world.
- The real relation between the world and the absolute.
- The absolute personified and referred to as the Supreme Lord. In what do these systems differ from our conception of God?
- They state a real change in the absolute, that, according to us and also according to the greatest Indian philosophers (such as Nāgārjuna, Śāṅkara) cannot change.
- The absolute, material cause of the world.
- A real relation between the absolute and the world.

As far as these panentheistic systems consider the absolute in itself, they agree with us. They agree too in asserting the fact that the world has issued from the absolute. The difference begins

when these systems try to investigate how the world has issued from the absolute. The root of the differences lies in the assumption of the real change on the part of the absolute producing the world.

Whence is taken, in the Vedāntic systems, this conception of the real change on the part of the absolute (*brahman*) producing the world? The main basis of the Vedāntic systems are the Upaniṣads (*Upaniṣat*) Brahmasūtras (*Brahmasūtra*), and Bhagavadgītā. The old Vedānta has understood these sources as evidently teaching a real transformation of *brahman* (This is also the opinion of the generality of scholars). This view of the old Vedānta is followed by the previously mentioned later Vedāntists, Rāmānuja, Nimbārka, and Vallabha. Śāṅkara, who is regarded as the greatest Vedāntic teacher (he lived earlier than the three Vedāntic authorities mentioned), excludes the real change on the part of the absolute. He understands and interprets the basis of Vedānta as teaching an unreal, illusory change (*vivarta*). His system does not belong to the panentheistic systems.

Thus the question is presented on the plane of philosophy. But in the realm of action, in religious practice, when one does not know philosophy or forgets it, the referring of a pious Hindu to Īśvara does not differ from the referring of a pious western theist to God. In religious practice one may more truly identify the believer in Īśvara with our believer in God.

2. Other Indian systems to which the term „theistic“ is applied admit Īśvara in the sense called by authors „theistic“, but which I would prefer to call „so-called theistic“. Īśvara accepted in this sense did not bring forth the world. The world has not issued from Īśvara, but is eternally existing together with the eternally existing Īśvara. Īśvara is not the cause of the world, either efficient or material. He is rather an efficient cause in the world, as he is superior to the world, has power over it and the direction of it. Īśvara accepted in this sense is the Supreme Being, Supreme Soul, powerful, omniscient (*sarvajña*, as stated in relevant texts), always free, never liable to *samsāra*.

In this so-called theistic sense Īśvara is admitted by the brahminical non-Vedāntic systems of Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, classic Yoga (in classic Yoga, Īśvara has only a religious and ascetic importance and has nothing to do with the direction of the world), and the

system of Madhva, who is accounted a Vedāntist, as he also comments on the sources of Vedānta, although he does so in the so-called theistic sense.

It is evident that Īśvara conceived in this so-called theistic sense does not entirely correspond to our conception of God. He is not truly the absolute having in itself the wholeness of being. There is something existing beyond him, namely the inanimate world and the souls that did not issue from him. Concerning such an Īśvara as this one is justified in asking whence he is, from whom does he proceed. The systems accepting Īśvara in this so-called theistic sense can be named and really are named *śeṣvara*, but they are not strictly theistic in the western sense. In these so-called theistic systems Īśvara is, to be sure, the Supreme Being; He is referred to as to a person, the Supreme Lord; the world really exists. But Īśvara not being truly the absolute is still less similar to God in our sense than he is in the panentheistic systems. The systems accepting Īśvara in this so-called theistic sense are in an incomparably lower degree theistic in our meaning than are the systems called panentheistic.

Only those Indian systems that accept *īśvara* in the panentheistic or in the so-called theistic sense are regarded as and named „theistic“, all other Indian systems are regarded and named „atheistic“.

II

From the expression „atheistic“ applied to these Indian systems that do not accept *īśvara*, there arise other misunderstandings. When one hears or reads the expression „atheistic“ applied to an Indian system, one becomes persuaded that in India there are or there were not only philosophical, but also religious atheistic systems i. e. the systems not teaching what is God and even not admitting the existence of this Supreme Being. What kind of philosophy, what kind of religion is this, that in its inquiries has not even arrived at the existence of this Supreme Being! And the western man (especially a Christian) believing in God is at the same time persuaded that one can arrive from these visible things at least to the existence of the supreme Being (that it exists, *quod sit*).

It is generally known that *mahāyāna* Buddhism, besides Vedānta, includes the best philosophically elaborated systems, the greatest and the best known of which are those of Nāgārjuna and Aśaṅga. Even Śaṅkara is said to have been influenced by Mahāyāna. Mahāyāna has gained ground in very many countries of the East. This Mahāyāna Buddhism is called atheistic.

In spite of this, it is the „atheistic“ Mahāyāna which has acquired a purer notion of the Absolute Being (that in reality is God in himself) than have the systems accepting Īśvara and for that reason called „theistic“.

The main basis of Mahāyāna is the Mahāyānasūtras (*Mahāyānasūtra*), e. g. the sūtras called *Prajñāpāramitā*. In these sūtras the doctrine of the Supreme Being occupies the central place. Moreover, this doctrine does not appear to have been simply taken from the Upaniṣads, but has been meditated upon anew and amended. The Mahāyānasūtras do not describe the emerging of the world from the absolute nor do they reveal the order of this emerging. Buddhism avoids even the Vedāntic expressions *ātman*, *brahman*, *ātman-brahman* denoting the absolute, perhaps because these expressions may suggest the emerging of the world from the absolute through its real mutation. The Mahāyānasūtras are more moderate in their utterances on the Supreme Being and employ new names to denote it. In general, these sūtras assert that no expression is well fitted to denote the absolute. They define it for the most part in a negative, rarely in a positive way. The absolute Being is not made (*akṛta*), it is unchanging (*avikāra*), not subject (*vivikta*) to any limitation, has not passed into this empirical existence (*anabhinirvṛtta*). The absolute is not merely an abstract idea. It is the highest reality, the summit of reality (*bhūtakoti*), *tathatā*: „thatness“, „suchness“, *Soheit*, true nature, *prabhāsvara citta*: brightly shining thought, intelligence.

And from whom or from what has the world arisen? It has not issued from the absolute by means of its real transformation as had taught the old Vedānta, well known to the Mahāyānists. It cannot exist as a real thing beside the absolute without having issued from the absolute (The Mahāyānists were sound philosophers). Concerning this abstruse question Mahāyāna found itself

in a tragical situation — and at the expense of the reality of the world it preferred to preserve a pure conception of the unchangeable absolute: The world has not reality of its own distinct from the reality of the absolute, the world conceived as having its own reality, its own nature, *svabhāva*, is a mere illusion; the very same absolute, considered erroneously, represents the illusory world. It is commonly said that the persuasion of the unreality of the world has arisen among the Mahāyāna mystics *a posteriori*, from the consideration of the perishableness of fleeting empirical elements, dharmas (*dharma*, written with a small letter), of which the world, according to Buddhism, ultimately consists. However, this persuasion may also have risen *a priori* from the consideration of the unchangeable absolute that cannot bring forth the world through its real mutation. These mystics have not arrived at any other conception, nor heard of one.

Nāgārjuna is not, properly speaking, the originator of the Mahāyāna system *śūnyavāda* (voidness of all empirical dharmas), but a codifier; he has codified the doctrine already current in the Mahāyānasūtras. The Absolute Being exists, or rather only the absolute Being really (according to the superior knowledge) exists, since only the Absolute Being has its own existence (*svabhāva*); nothing beyond the absolute really exists, nothing has its own peculiar existence (*svabhāva*); the absolute considered erroneously, represents the illusory world with all illusory *samsāra*, illusory Buddhas (*buddha*) and their illusory teachings; what matters in this painfully experienced and illusory world is how to get rid of one illusion by means of another illusion, how to get rid of the illusory *samsāra* by means of the illusory Buddhist teaching, till all illusion disappears and the genuine *nirvāṇa* begins to dawn that is the pure absolute being, the only true reality. Nāgārjuna (like Mahāyāna) does not tend toward nothingness, but towards the only reality which, *de facto*, is God in himself. According to Nāgārjuna the absolute is not a merely mental idea, but the reality that can be experienced during mystic contemplation. Nāgārjuna remarks, to be sure — like the Mahāyānasūtras — that this true being cannot be positively defined by anything, but besides negative he also employs positive terms, such as *paramārthatattva*, the supreme reality, the supreme truth,

tathatā, „suchness“, „thatness“, *dharmatā*, the (true) essence of the empirical elements-dharmas, *bodhi*, the (supreme) consciousness, awakening, *nirvāṇa*, the (true) Nirvāṇa. Nāgārjuna was educated in the brahminical religion and was well acquainted with the teaching of the old Vedānta concerning the emerging of the world from the absolute through its real mutation. After his conversion to Buddhism, taking the Mahāyānasūtras as a basis, he rejected this doctrine of the old Vedānta as deforming the pure conception of the Supreme Being. This ineffable reality — he warns — is not to be meditated upon as the cause of the world: if one misuses it and applies it to an improper object, it may become dangerous, like a serpent managed unskilfully. At this point Nāgārjuna shows his philosophical greatness and honesty. He prefers rather to tell less about this Supreme Being than to indulge in fancies and tell something untrue. („With regard to) the supreme reality — the honourable (keep) silence“, *paramārtho hy āryāṇām tūṣṇīm bhāvah*, says Nāgārjuna's commentator, Candrakīrti (ad Madhyamakakārikā, 1). Nāgārjuna tells us but little about the supreme Being, not because he does not admit it, but because he devotes all his attention to this illusory world with which we have to do and of which we have to be rid. Buddhism is a practical system, it is wholly directed towards emancipation. Buddhism — according to Buddha — is to be a boat by the help of which we come through this ocean of *saṃsāra* to the real *nirvāṇa*. When illusion is over — the true *nirvāṇa* begins *eo ipso* to dawn.

Asaṅga conceives of the absolute reality ultimately as of pure consciousness, pure intelligence (*viññaptimātratā*). The world is likewise unreal. However, Asaṅga puts something intermediate between absolute being and the illusory world. He introduces basic consciousness, literally a store-consciousness (*ālaya-viññāna*; hence Asaṅga's system is called *viññānavāda*). This *ālayaviññāna* is found in us; it is not a substance (Buddhism rejects all empirical substance), because it is incessantly changing; it has not an absolute, but a dependent (*paratantra*) existence which is intermediate between the absolute and purely illusory existence — it has, as it were, a semi-real existence. This *ālayaviññāna* casts out the external world, as a mere illusion. The *ālayaviññāna* itself is annihilated in consequence of a superior cognition that there

exists only one absolute reality which is absolute consciousness, *viññaptimātratā* wherein there is no distinction between the subject and the object. Asaṅga tries to add to Nāgārjuna's system an explanation of the bottomless abyss existing between the only real absolute and the illusory world, but, if we go to the root of the matter, both systems contain the same statement. In reality there exists only the absolute; the visible world is illusory and has not issued from the absolute by means of its real mutation.

Not only the Mahāyānists were reluctant to admit the absolute bringing forth the universe by means of its real mutation. Likewise among the Vedāntists were found philosophers (influenced — it is said — by the Mahāyānists) who in this regard have rejected the conception of the old Vedānta. Śaṅkara, who is accepted as the greatest philosopher among the Vedāntists, was neither the first nor the last in this respect. Śaṅkara also accepts the tenet of the twofold knowledge. According to the superior knowledge there exists only the Absolute Being (*brahman*) identical with the deepest principle found in man (*ātman*); what we call a soul (*jīva*), or the eternal world is only an illusory display (*vivarta*) of the absolute being, a delusion (*māyā*), and does not really issue from the absolute through its real mutation. A comparison: there is a rope lying on a path. Somebody is going that way at dark and instead of this rope he perceives „a snake“. The „snake“ is an illusory display of the rope. Śaṅkara tries, to be sure, to save a kind of non-illusoriness of the world: the world is not illusory to the same degree as the Mahāyānists state, it is not a mere illusion; the world is neither a reality nor a non-reality, it is something unutterable (*anirvacanīya*). However, on Śaṅkara's part, this was only a means of defending himself against the objections directed against him by other Vedāntists holding fast to the reality of the world. As a matter of fact in Śaṅkara's system the world according to the superior truth (*paramārthataḥ*) is unreal. In this sense of illusory transformation of the absolute Śaṅkara explains the sources of Vedānta. But for all that we ought to do justice to Śaṅkara's system. We may not place it on the same level as Mahāyāna. Śaṅkara himself did not wish this. We call Śaṅkara's system theopantism.

All Buddhism, both Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna, is called atheistic. However this term „atheistic“ ought not to prevent us from seeing that Mahāyāna admits what in fact is God in himself. Mahāyāna indisputably admits the Absolute Being. This Absolute Being viewed in itself differs in nothing from our conception of the absolute in itself or of God in himself. The absolute is the true Nirvāṇa, the final aim, *Summum Bonum* for a believer in Mahāyāna religion as God is the final aim to be reached for a believer in Christianity. What is the difference between the conception of the absolute in Mahāyāna and our conception of God? The Mahāyāna absolute considered in relation to the world is not at all the cause, not even the efficient cause of the world, because the world in reality does not exist. Accordingly between the absolute and the world there is only a relation of mind (*relatio rationis*). In Mahāyāna the absolute is not the cause of the world; it is only the support, the substratum (*ādhāra*), as it were a white wall on the ground of which various delusive images appear to the diseased eyes. Because the world is not real, therefore between it and the absolute there is also only a mental relation. On the one hand the panentheistic Indian systems were under the necessity of considering the absolute to be not only the efficient, but also the material cause of the universe (violating through it the immutability of the absolute). And why so? Because — they argued — if to bring forth the universe the absolute did not take the material out of itself, but from outside itself, there is something really existing beyond the absolute and independent of it. If it be so, the absolute is not truly the absolute. On the other hand, to save the immutability of the absolute Mahāyāna was under the necessity of accepting the unreality of the world. Therefore, philosophically, it states: The world does not really exist.

Why do we take it amiss? Why are we not willing to forgive Mahāyāna for it? Nevertheless we express ourselves in a similar way: The world by itself is a mere nothing; it cannot exist by itself; it exists owing to the existing God; if God did not maintain the world every moment, it would instantly turn into nothingness. If we go on dividing a very small particle of matter, an atom, we come to more and more minute particles, we draw near, as it were, to voidness — to empirical voidness, and at the same

time we draw near to metaphysical voidness, the absolute devoid of every empirical element. The visible world is composed just of such minute and mysterious particles. Beyond the realm of philosophy, in the realm of action the world is as real for a Mahāyānist as it is real for us.

The philosophy of Mahāyāna does not personify the absolute, it does not refer to the absolute as to a person. I mean the Mahāyāna philosophy of Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga. I do not enter into the sphere of Mahāyāna as a religion. Yet it is known that in the Mahāyāna religions the absolute is personified, to be sure, not under the name of *īśvara* (Buddhism avoids such brahminical terms) but under the name of *buddha*. There are some names of individual Buddhas under which the absolute (the absolute *buddha*) is personified, e. g. Buddha Amitābha (in Japan Amida) reigning in the heaven situated in the western sky. A pious Mahāyānist refers to such a Buddha in the same way as does a pious Hindu (with the panentheistic Bhagavadgītā in his hand) to the *Īśvara Viṣṇu*: he invokes him, he calls on him for help, he tries to attain him by love (*bhakti*). Cf. The influence of Bhagavadgītā upon the rise of *bhakti* in Mahāyāna.

In Śaṅkara's system one can personify the absolute and refer to it as *Īśvara* — according to the inferior, empirical cognition.

Practically, the Mahāyānists, like the followers of Śaṅkara's theopantism, are guided by the inferior, empirical cognition.

III

And what are we to think of the Indian systems that do not accept *Īśvara* nor have elaborated the doctrine concerning the absolute in the metaphysical sense. Are they entirely atheistic? Do they accept nothing of what is God? What are we to think of Mīmāṃsā, classic Sāṃkhya, Jainism and *hīnayāna* Buddhism?

We should remember that these systems as being also *kriyāvādin* accept the eternal moral Law (*Dharma*) ruling over the world. This eternal moral Law or Doctrine (*Dharma*) exists eternally; it originates from nobody; it has obligatory force from itself. For example, the Buddhist Dharma is not to be conceived of as proceeding from the historical Gautama Buddha nor the Jaina Dharma as proceeding from the historical Jina Mahāvīra. Both

Gautama Buddha and Jina Mahāvīra have only rediscovered Dharma, existing eternally, and proclaimed it publicly. Dharma itself is everlasting, it is as it were the absolute in the moral sense. Let us suppose that Dharma is the absolute in the moral sense only: is it not an aspect of God, a way of looking at God? Let us recollect these two generally known and fundamental truths: 1. There is one God — this statement regards God in the metaphysical sense; 2. God is the Just Judge rewarding good and punishing evil — this statement regards God in the moral sense as eternal Law to be followed. Considering all together I make bold to say that in some religions of the East the absolute taken metaphysically is at the same time the supreme moral Law, whereas in other religions of the East less attention is paid to the „metaphysicality“ of the Supreme Being and more attention is paid to the Supreme Being as the Supreme Moral Law. Therefore, at least in my opinion, no Indian system *kriyāvādin* ought to be considered atheistic in the full sense. Here a difficulty may be raised: If Dharma, e. g. the Buddhist or the Jaina Dharma, is to be considered as an aspect of God, why do we find in them what seems not to be in conformity with the Supreme Intellect? To that I reply: What in those Dharmas is unreasonable is all human admixture: one has not in all drawn near the Supreme Intellect and one has simply added something from oneself. Therefore we find human additions in the framings of Dharmas.

We could not in equity overlook the fact that in Mīmāṃsā the eternal Law (Dharma) appears to be something more than the moral entity only. The moral Law for Mīmāṃsā is the Vedas (*Veda*) consisting of words; the words consist of sounds (*śabda*) and sound — according to Mīmāṃsā — is eternal. Therefore the Vedas for Mīmāṃsā exist *realiter* above the things, they exist eternally (we would say: as Eternal Harmony) above the world; they exist as metaphysical Universal Being, because the words — according to the Mīmāṃsists — denote the species, not the individuals; they are considered to be moral entities, because they express the law to be followed. In short, the Vedas in Mīmāṃsā are both the metaphysical and moral entity at the same time; they have not issued from any principle; they exist by themselves; their obligatory force results from themselves. Furthermore, did

it happen by chance that the expression *brahman* denoting in the former parts of the Vedas (Mīmāṃsā investigates just those former parts) the sacred word of the Vedas, the Vedas themselves, became in the latter part of the Vedas in the Upaniṣads (consequently in the Vedāntic systems), the expression denoting the absolute in the metaphysical sense? In the pronouncements of Mīmāṃsā the *brahman* — Vedas differ from the *brahman* — absolute of Vedānta only in this that Mīmāṃsā does not consider the *brahman* — Vedas to be the cause of the universe nor does it personify them.

As for Jainism it should be added that Jainism as a whole passes for atheistic, because it does not admit Īśvara; it has not elaborated the doctrine concerning the absolute in the metaphysical sense; all that prevents Jainism from being regarded as entirely atheistic in our sense, is that it admits the eternal moral Law (Dharma); nevertheless this Jaina Dharma when considered more profoundly seems to be something more than only a moral entity. I do not intend to persuade the Jains that their Dharma is something more than a mere moral entity, that it is at the same time the metaphysical Supreme Being extending its protection and providence over the world. I only want to ask them this question (let them answer it themselves): „whence and how comes it, under whose direction does it occur that at the proper time (when the Jaina Dharma is on the decline in the world) a new *jina tīrthāṅkara* (a Jaina prophet) comes into the world to preach anew the Jaina Dharma — and he comes as regularly as if it were planned beforehand, he comes as punctually as the sound of an alarm clock set for a certain hour — is it from Dharma as only a moral entity“?

Hīnayāna is called atheistic, because it does not admit what would correspond to *īśvara*; the name *īśvara* itself does not matter (Buddhism avoids such brahminical terms), it is the being which matters. Hīnayāna as a system *kriyāvādin* admits too the eternal moral Law (Buddhist Dharma).

Perhaps the Law (Dharma) in Hīnayāna is also something more than a mere moral entity? Is it at the same time a metaphysical entity? We can not assert this for a certainty, because Hīnayāna is not as philosophically elaborated as Mahāyāna. We can only conjecture from certain suggesting of Hīnayāna that the Hīnayāna Dharma

seems also now and then to pass into a metaphysical entity (which, however, is not personified nor considered to be the cause of the world). In all *kriyāvādin* Indian systems there prevails a similar conviction; if Buddhist Dharma is on the decline, a new Buddha comes into the world (in Buddhism), if Jaina Dharma is on the decline, a new *jina tīrthaṅkara* appears in the world (in Jainism), if Hindu eternal (*sanātana*) Dharma is on the decline, a new incarnation, lit. descent (*avatāra*) of the Supreme Being takes place (in Hinduism). Although in *hīnayāna* Buddhism Dharma is not the cause of the world (the world in *Hīnayāna* really exists), was it not conceived of as displaying its protection over the world, like *Īśvara* in the so-called theistic sense who though not the cause of the world is superior to the world and directs it? (Cf. *Īśvara* in *nyāya-vaiśeṣika* and in the system of Madhva). In the philosophically wrought out *mahāyāna* Buddhism Dharma is simultaneously the metaphysical entity. The absolute in Mahāyāna is called *inter alia* *Dharmakāya*, „Law-body“, which can be understood in the sense that the absolute has the law as its essence. The Mahāyānist Śāntideva calls the Buddha (Buddhas) *Dharmaja*, produced by Dharma. Of course, in Mahāyāna it is not to be understood as relating to the real, but to the illusory production, because in Mahāyāna the world is illusory. Did *Hīnayāna* not conceive of the Buddhas as being (to be sure, not produced, but) sent by Dharma?

In Mahāyāna the absolute is also called *tathatā*, „thatness“, *Soheit*, true state of things, true nature. In *Hīnayāna* the Buddhas coming into the world and preaching the Buddhist Dharma are called *Tathāgata* (in the same manner in Pāli and in Sanscrit). This term *Tathāgata* is also employed in Mahāyāna. What does this term mean? Usually this compound is divided into *tathā* (thus, so) + *āgata* (arrived, having come) or in *tathā* + *gata* (gone). This „mysterious“ term is interpreted in a different manner (this subject has been treated elsewhere). This term *Tathāgata* may also be regarded as an abbreviation of Sanscrit *tathatā-āgata* of Pāli *tathatta-āgata*

Tathāgata, having come from *tathatā* { = *tathatāyā* (abl.) *āgataḥ* } or simply: having come (having been sent) from the Supreme Being. *Tathāgata* may be an abbreviation of *tathatā-āgata*, as *sarvāsti-*

vādin is said to be a compound of *sarva-asti-vādin*, but in reality is an abbreviation of *sarvadā-asti-vādin* (Cf. the philosophical systems of *Hīnayāna*). These are my personal suppositions (pray let them be regarded as suppositions!). In some religions we have many mysterious, concealed, subconscious, unspoken data that can only be unriddled by divining. These data should prevent us from applying without distinction and without hesitation the term „atheistic“ to such religions systems.

In Mahāyāna the true *nirvāṇa* is the absolute being. Is *nirvāṇa* the absolute also according to *Hīnayāna*? The ultimate goal of the entirely practical *Hīnayāna* is *Nirvāṇa*, to be obtained at the earliest possible moment. The follower of *Hīnayāna* should try to become *arhat* (*arhant*) in this life, i.e. he ought to try to become a saint who never and nowhere will be liable to a new reincarnation, who immediately after this life will obtain *Nirvāṇa*. What is *nirvāṇa* according to *Hīnayāna*? It is known that Buddhism, both *Hīnayāna* and Mahāyāna, does not accept any substance either in physical things or the substance of the soul. All physical and psychical phenomena consist ultimately of fleeting elements, dharmas (*dharma*; in this sense we transcribe this term with a small letter). These dharmas in their origination depend on each other, they are conditioned by one another. In *Hīnayāna* these ultimate momentary elements, dharmas, really exist (consequently the world really exists); in Mahāyāna — according to the superior knowledge — they are unreal (consequently the world is unreal). The systems of *Hīnayāna* — besides the empirical, causally conditioned, contingent dharmas — mention also the unconditioned, uncontingent dharmas. The Sautrāntikas (*Sautrāntika* — one of the *Hīnayāna* schools) consider, to be sure, these unconditioned dharmas to be only names without reality; however the other *Hīnayāna* schools regard these unconditioned dharmas as realities existing *a parte rei*. Some *Hīnayāna* schools accept several unconditioned and real dharmas (e.g. *nirvāṇa*, space...) and others accept only one — *nirvāṇa*. Is *nirvāṇa* — at least in those systems that accept only one unconditioned *dharma* — the absolute metaphysical being? It is true that the Pāli canon, on which relies the only still living *Hīnayāna* school of Theravādins (*Theravādin*), declares (*Udāna*, 8, 1-4) *nirvāṇa* (in Pāli:

nibbāna) to be without beginning, origination, or passing away, to be unborn (*ajāta*), not having become (*abhūta*), not made (*akata*), causally unconditioned (*asamkhata*). However this single unconditioned *dharma* — *nirvāṇa* (not personified) is not considered to be the cause of the really existing world. Therefore we cannot maintain that it is truly absolute metaphysical being. Thus only the acknowledgement of the eternal moral Law (*Dharma*, in Pāli: *Dhamma*) prevents Hinayāna from being regarded as a wholly atheistic system.

We must say the same with regard to the classic Sāṃkhya. Sāṃkhya as a system *kriyāvādin* admits the eternal moral Law (*Dharma*). In the classic Sāṃkhya there is no room for the absolute metaphysical being. The classic Sāṃkhya is throughout dualistic. It admits two eternally existing principles, *puruṣa* (the inactive spiritual principles or souls) and *prakṛti* (the primordial matter-energy) which do not originate from anything. The fundamental text-book of this system, Sāṃkhyakārikā, does not mention *īśvara*. *Īśvara* is mentioned or affixed to this system by some commentators (of course in the so-called theistic sense). We ought not to demand of Sāṃkhya that it should give us lessons on *īśvara*. Sāṃkhya is rather a method of accomplishing emancipation than a system in a strict sense taking into consideration all philosophical problems. Of Müller's system of gymnastics we do not demand that it should give us lessons on God. In the classic Sāṃkhya *īśvara* is regarded as unnecessary, because the moral Law operates automatically (is self-acting). One must exert oneself to obtain one's emancipation without looking for easier ways and means (a formula, a ceremony). We are under the impression that the systems *nirīśvaravādin* consider the acceptance of *īśvara* to be an obstacle in the way of emancipation.

The non-classic Sāṃkhya (we find it e.g. in the Bhagavadgītā) is mixed with the conceptions of Vedānta: *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* issue from one absolute principle (*brahman*). In this non-classic Sāṃkhya *īśvara* is accepted in the panentheistic sense.

From these remarks on Indian systems it follows: — If one applies the terms „theistic“ or „atheistic“ to any Indian system, one should remember the proper meaning of these terms in order

to avoid misunderstanding. With us, the people of the West, „theistic“ means accepting God, „atheistic“ means not accepting God.

It would be best not to apply these terms to the Indian *kriyāvādin* systems; we can safely apply the term „atheistic“ only to the *akriyāvādin* systems.

— Of the *kriyāvādin* Indian systems we should say that some of them accept *īśvara* (are *seśvara*), others do not accept *īśvara* (are *nirīśvara*); then we ought to explain what is the meaning of the conception of *īśvara* (the twofold meaning of the conception of *īśvara*).

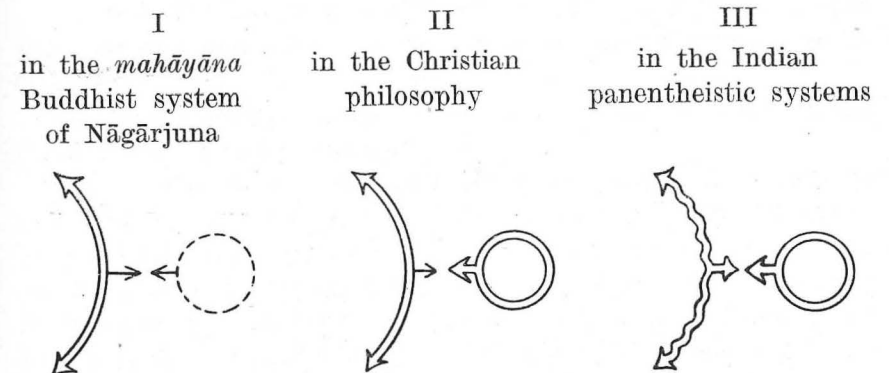
— If we want to convey an idea of what a particular Indian system teaches concerning God, we ought to state expressly what this system admits of our conception of God.

— It is evident that no Indian system corresponds fully to our conception of God; some Indian systems give a more, some a less approximate conception of God.

— However, in every *kriyāvādin* system we shall find some element corresponding to what we call God. Therefore no Indian religious (*kriyāvādin*) system ought to be called simply atheistic.

— It is not allowable to say — as is often heard — that all Indian systems are atheistic or pantheistic, that they have nothing in common with us, that with Indian systems DIALOGUE is impossible.

Additional note: The absolute and the world



Explanation:

The smooth hyperbola: the really existing absolute.

The twisted hyperbola: the absolute really changed.

The thick circle: the real word.

The dotted circle: the illusory world.

The thick arrow: *relatio realis*.

The thin arrow: *relatio rationis*.

ROMAN STOPA

BUSHMAN SUBSTRATUM OR BUSHMAN ORIGIN IN HAUSA

The influence of substratum is to be assumed where the phonetic systems of two languages have some common traits, respectively some similarities, e.g. similar tendencies of pronunciation. The source of these tendencies consists in the mixing of different racial or ethnic types, the pronouncing trends of the original inhabitants being inherited by the mixed population. Grammar of both ethnic groups remains, in the main, different, however, the accepting of the phonetic system of the substratum by the conquerors can be accompanied — when the substratum population overcomes numerically the conquerors — by accepting most lexical material from the language of the subdued tribe. The Hottentot language offers a good example of such a mixture. The basic phonological and lexical features here are Bushman, while morphology and syntax are for the most part Hamitic.

When we want to investigate, whether there is any Bushman substratum in Hausa, respectively how far its influence goes, we have first of all to answer two questions:

1) Does the history of racial background of the Hausa people allow us to assume the existence of Bushman substratum in its language?

2) What is the structure of those languages like in which the Bushman substratum is undeniable?

The first question will be answered by quoting some passage from the work *Völkerkunde von Afrika* by Baumann, Thurnwald, Westermann, Essen 1941. Baumann writes there on p. 9:

„Die ältesten afrikanischen Menschenfunde sind ein... im Nyarasagraben (Ostafrika)... entdeckter Schädel... und der Homo Rhodesiensis von Broken Hill... Wir haben hier anscheinend eine