CHARLES UNIVERSITY IN PRAGUE
FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY
Department of Philosophy and Religion

The Nature and Solution
of Solutionless Problems
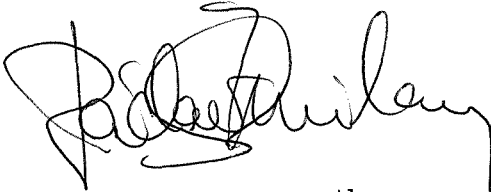# with Special Regard to Buddhism

—diploma thesis—

Václav Šmilauer

Mary I. Bockover, PhD.
Humboldt State University
supervisor

Prague, 2006

I hereby declare, that this diploma thesis was elaborated independently, using referenced sources exclusively.

Prohlašuji, že jsem diplomovou práci vypracoval samostatně s využitím pouze citovaných pramenů a literatury.

author

Contents

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Motivation

Philosophy is born from the inner longing, as a way to understand in order to be able *to live*. Such was the declared aspiration at the beginnings of the Occidental philosophy. How come that this discipline is reputed for always "solving" yet never coming to the solution of its problems? "Nothing is so absurd that it has not been said by some philosopher."[1] And so on.

We believe that such generalizing judgements stem from the distance between vast majority of philosophical theories and everyday life, which is after all the only validation for any theory. What is this "distance"? What can be the difference between one abstract theory and another one? How can one be superior if it rests on the same level, on that of abstraction? And concerning this paper: are we, too, merely adding dung to the heap of philosophical uselessness?—True, there is no difference as far as the fact of abstraction goes. It matters *from what* does a theory abstract. If the subject is abstracted from, one hardly ends up with a theory useful *for the subject*.

1.1.1 Cartesian subjectivity and its limitations

The exemplary case of distance-making abstraction is the Cartesian notion of subjectivity; it is also the most important case, since Cartesian metaphysics is prevalent (implicitly) in nowadays' natural-scientific disciplines

---

[1] "Nihil tam absurde dici potest, quod non dicatur ab aliquo philosophorum." (Cicero, *De Divinatione*, ii. 58.)

and is deeply rooted in the occidental consciousness as well. Descartes declared the subject to be the *res cogitans*, sort of angelic intellect, separated substance; the mind is identical (structurally, not numerically) for everybody, without any intrinsic limitations of its functioning. Everything the (natural) science is concerned with is the mechanicist *res extensa*. Such arrangement is ideal for natural science, without any doubts: the object is perfectly inter-subjective, because subject is trivially empty of any (scientific) content.

When cognition of anything where one's self is involved (and this is, by definition, outside the domain of Cartesian natural science), the Cartesian approach breaks: the self will be replaced by completely sterile, abstract, universal *res cogitans*: the ultimate "locus" of individuality as the furthest counterpart of scientific universality is inexpressible in its semantics.

Going after meaningful individuality, thereby abandoning the Cartesian metaphysics, results frequently in giving up science as such, in the Aristotelean sense: that of knowing, of thinking *exactly*. It may be objected that taking the individual subject into account, as opposed to the universal *res cogitans*, psychologizes the philosophy; and such objection is true. However, as we will maintain, disregarding the psychological is precisely the source of ("subjective", individual) uselessness of abstract philosophy and that taking the psychological into account does not *per se* make the theory less exact, as if the *psyche* were something arbitrary—it is only from the *res cogitans* point of view.[2]

The criticism of Descartes is nothing new (it is in fact quite popular). But we are not criticizing Descartes for having made such a theory: he considered himself mainly a scientist and his occasional philosophical undertaking resulted in a perfectly suitable theory re-establishing natural science. What we criticize is when this theory is applied outside of its domain; *i.e.* if the only acceptable science is considered natural science, with the implicit Cartesian metaphysics behind.

---

[2] For an exceptionally nice example of exact, non-Cartesian approach, see [Vopěnka, 2001].

1.2 Objective

This paper aims at elaborating concepts (theory) naturally fitting everyday problems—defined very broadly, as to cover any and all activities—and the ways to solve them, taking strongly subject into account. The problems we are concerned with are naturally and above all those which depend on the subject in some way and are not, consequently, describable when subject is abstracted from. The latter have been taken care by scientific disciplines already: the only problem an abstract *res cogitans* may have is the lack of cognition, *i.e.* information. Our focus will be on problems can *not* be solved by providing any information whatsoever: are *solutionless*. For example, existential problems are solutionless in this sense.

Where does such a problem come from, then, if not from the lack of information? To cope with such problems, redefinition and elaboration of subjectivity is required; for it is precisely where we will find source as well as solution of the problem in question—in the transformation of subject, thus changing the problem itself. But let us not risk premature oversimplification at this point.

This work was not merely theoretical for the author and should not be for the reader; for the concepts of which criticism it provides (subjectivity, truth, ...) are dear to the Westerner and accepting the criticism is not a mere fact of intellectual understanding. It is for this reason that we give numerous simple examples (signified by SMALL CAPS) that try to rest as much close to everyday experience as possible.

Giving up the abstract subjectivity implies, that philosophy is an intimately personal undertaking, aiming at (necessitating) substantial subject-transformation. Abstract subject is not in any existential situation. Giving up the pure reason means to acknowledge our situation as hellish chaos of inadequate approaches to the Reality, to become humble (yet bold) and open.

1.2.1 The role of Buddhism

In what sense is this work concerned with Buddhism? The Indian religious tradition since ancient times was in the quest of eliminating suffering ("problems", using our vocabulary), medicine and religion being closely related; for this reason, it was very much concerned with the subject, contrary

3

to the Cartesian science.

> However useful may be medicaments, they are always partial, uncertain, always challenged. There is a bottom of suffering that is not curable by medicine, since it is consubstantial to the human situation. The undertaking of ascetics-doctors, coming and going in the 6th century BCE in the Ganges Basin, was trying to go, without despising medicaments, yet further and finding a radical solution to this insatisfaction that is characteristic for man. This going after eradication of suffering has not ceased in India ever since.[3]

The Buddhism is primarily a therapy, with a very concrete aim: eradication of suffering. It is not a purely abstract philosophical system, yet we will take advantage of it comprising an overwhelming amount of philosophical schools, of which theories served as structure for its goals.

We found that there was a strong convergence between our analyses and some philosophical theories of Buddhism; it should not be surprising since the objective is similar: description and treating of problems/suffering. The relationship is bi-directional and our analyses will be frequently, and quite naturally, mixed with the Buddhists ones:

Towards Buddhism. Establishing the exact (that is, experiential) meaning of some Buddhist doctrines, based on the experience-analysis we elaborate. As such, this paper may be seen as an introduction into the Buddhist philosophy (with the disclaimer of this introduction being, due to our very limited knowledge, only partial and superficial), at least for introspective persons. Since the oriental thought in general is often subject to prejudices of different kinds (that of irrationalism, nihilism, pessimism, fatalism) by the Westerners, we hope to show that it is not the case: that Buddhism is no more pessimist than our existence is (or is not).

---

[3] "Si utiles, en effet, que soient les correctifs médicaux, on constate qu'ils restent partiels, précaires, toujours remis en cause. Il subsiste ainsi un fond de souffrance inéliminable par la médicine parce que consubstantiel à la condition humaine. Le grande affaire des ascètes-médicins, qui allaient et venaient, au VIe siècle avant notre ère, dans le bassin moyen du Gange, c'est donc, sans dédaigner les médicaments, d'essayer d'aller plus loin et de trouver une solution radicale à cette espèce d'insatisfaction qui nous caractérise. Cette recheche en vue d'une éradication de la souffrance n'a, depuis lors, jamais cessé en Inde." ([Bugault, 1994], pg. 56.)

From Buddhism. Inspiring ourselves by some elements from the vast Buddhist philosophical tradition: both in the sense of conceptual structures for grasping introspection content and that of theoretical responses to abstract problems that we encounter within the theory.

1.3 Acknowledgements

I would like to express my thanks to:

- my parents, for making my studies possible;
- Mary I. Bockover, for her lectures on Eastern philosophy, for kindly accepting supervision of this diploma thesis, for many comments, encouragements and for her personal attitude;
- Jiří Holba, for numerous consultations, encouragements and literature;
- Karel Hauzer and Ivan Špička, for their works, discussions and encouragements;
- Petr Uherka, Miloš Hrdý and Mariana Cecilie Svobodová, for having read preliminary versions and sharing comments and for their personal interest in the work;
- Jan Kopecký, Jan Pospíšil and Matěj Pošar for inspiring discussions;
- my students from Arcibiskupské gymnázium, for not having agreed with me;

Further thanks go to all others who contributed directly or indirectly; they are too many to be enumerated.

1.4 Availability

This paper will be, as long as it is technically feasible, available online from http://www.arcig.cz/eudoxos/solutionless/ in the following formats: structured HTML, one big HTML page, PDF A4 reduced layout (23 pages), PDF A4 final layout (93 pages), LaTeX document sources.

Chapter 2

Conceptual framework for experience

Our work begins by establishing conceptual foundations, which is this chapter's task. All the rest will follow quite naturally from the problems that we encounter here. All the concepts treated should be evidenced in experience by the reader as clearly as possible.

Definition 2.1. Subject *(of attribution) is what the doer of an activity considers himself to be.*

Definition 2.2. Situation *is things along with their perception*[1] *by a subject.*

Our ordinary language gives the impression that things are intersubjective unities relatively stable over time. We suppose that in our knowledge there is always something from the subject and something from the object. It is important to note explicitly that this distinction is purely intentional; the possibility of designating these two does not imply the possibility of their separate existence. "Things" are not *realitas objectiva* but only a way to make our discourse easier.

For example, two drivers in a CAR ACCIDENT are seemingly in the same situation. Both have their cars damaged and will have to undergo formal procedures with insurance companies etc. With regards to other

---

[1] Perception is taken in the phenomenological sense, as things are presented to the subject, as it relates to things. Subject is always a general subject, not transcendental one: an experientially valid proposition is obtained by substituting subject with one's own, particular subject.

goals of these individuals, one may take it as an episode because of his income. For the other one, his life-dream (car) is threatened, he may be distressed because he no longer can think of himself as a great driver, etc. Motivations behind some superficially identical behavior may differ widely. It is our everyday experience that a situation is not deducible from simple (and not even from complex) "objective" description, from "things".

Definition 2.3. Problem *is a discrepancy between will of a subject and its situation.*

Definition 2.4. Solution *is disappearance of the respective problem.*

Clearly, there is not a problem without will (*e.g.* being hungry when fasting is not a problem, being hungry when I would like to eat is). For this reason, a problem always exists only insofar it is individual, subject-bound. It does *not* have to be intellectually, conceptually understood (likewise for solution).

Definition 2.5. Goal *is a solution achieved in anticipation.*

Definition 2.6. Intermediary goal *is a goal (explicitly) willed in order to make possible realization of another goal.* Ultimate goal *is a goal that is not intermediary.*

2.1 Goals and problems

Notation. In the following, $\mathcal{G}_i$, $\mathcal{P}_i$ and $\mathcal{S}_i$ note goal, problem, subject of order i respectively. Frustrated goals ($\equiv$known to be unreachable) are ~~struck out~~.
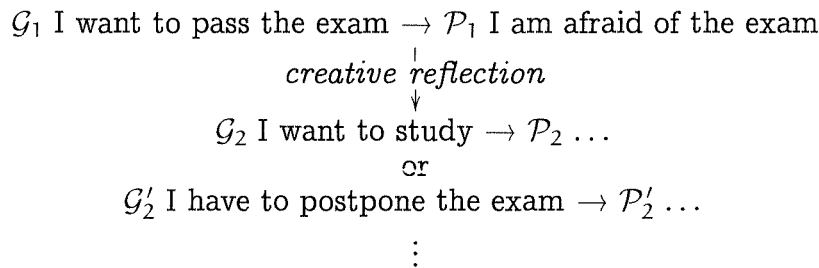
Let us start with the problem "I am afraid of an exam" (EXAM). This problem expresses the goal "pass that exam". Schematically, we have:

$\mathcal{G}_1$ I want to pass the exam $\rightarrow$ $\mathcal{P}_1$ I am afraid of the exam.

There are (theoretically) two substantially different approaches how to deal with this problem.

2.1.1 Achievement

In this case, to resolve the problem $\mathcal{P}_1$, I need to imagine an anticipated solution. The anticipation involves an analysis of the situation (the *mine* one)—otherwise, the goal would be arbitrary and effective at most by accident. I get the following structure:

$$\mathcal{G}_1 \text{ I want to pass the exam} \rightarrow \mathcal{P}_1 \text{ I am afraid of the exam}$$

$$creative\ reflection$$

$$\mathcal{G}_2 \text{ I want to study} \rightarrow \mathcal{P}_2 \ldots$$
$$\text{or}$$
$$\mathcal{G}_2' \text{ I have to postpone the exam} \rightarrow \mathcal{P}_2' \ldots$$

$$\vdots$$

Now, from the $\mathcal{G}_2$ alternatives, the best one is chosen—this evidently depends on evaluation of the alternatives; this evaluation is based on $\mathcal{G}_1$, the superordinate goal, for it is *raison d'être* of $\mathcal{G}_2$ as anticipated solution of $\mathcal{P}_1$ (if no superordinate goal beyond $\mathcal{G}_1$ existed, it would be the only criterion).

2.1.2 Renouncement

To renounce to $\mathcal{G}_1$, I need to have a reason to do so. Otherwise said, there must be a superordinate goal, which will justify the renouncement, with regards to which $\mathcal{G}_1$ is only an intermediate goal. For example:

$$\mathcal{G}_0 \text{ I want to have a diploma} \rightarrow$$
$$\mathcal{P}_0 \text{ I do not have the diploma}$$

$$anamnesis$$

$$\mathcal{G}_1 \text{ I want to pass the exam} \rightarrow$$
$$\mathcal{P}_1 \text{ I am afraid of the exam.}$$
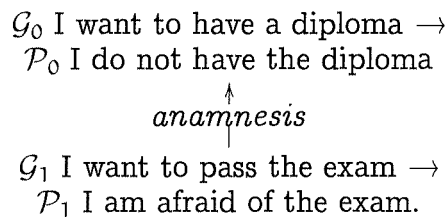
This superordinate goal $\mathcal{G}_0$ makes it possible to circumvent $\mathcal{G}_1$, by using the first strategy ("achievement") on a higher level:

$$\mathcal{G}_0 \text{ I want to have a diploma} \rightarrow$$
$$\mathcal{P}_0 \text{ I do not have the diploma} \qquad reflection$$

$$anamnesis$$

$$\mathcal{G}_1 \text{ I want to pass the exam} \rightarrow \qquad \mathcal{G}_1' \text{ Obtain an exception} \rightarrow$$
$$\mathcal{P}_1 \text{ I am afraid of the exam.} \qquad \mathcal{P}_1' \text{ Ask for the exception}$$
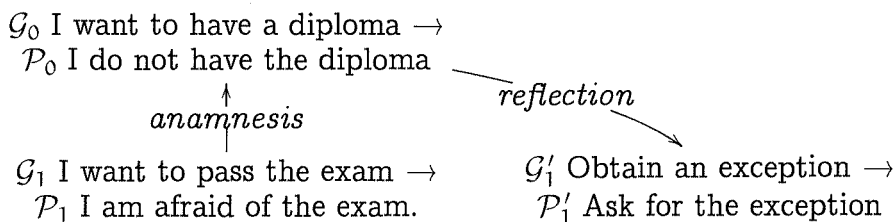
Thus, $\mathcal{G}_1$ may be renounced to, in favor of $\mathcal{G}_1'$.

It should be noted that goal is not a distant point we reach at once, as in a road leading to goal. The goal is an activity in the mind, something that exists within the subordinate goals. Otherwise said, the goal hierarchy does not mean, that the series $\mathcal{G}_2$, $\mathcal{G}_1$, $\mathcal{G}_0$ is ordered in time. $\mathcal{G}_0$ *is* somewhat achieved when any of its subordinate goals is achieved.

2.1.3 Technical and ethical solution

The following is an implication of the definition of problem and is illustrated by EXAM.

Theorem 2.7. *A problem can (formally) be solved either by changing the situation or by changing the will.*

Definition 2.8. Technical solution *is solution by changing the situation ("achievement"). Ethical solution is solution by changing the will ("renouncement").*

Names are taken from the Greek words τέχνη (*"art, skill, craft in work* [...] *the way, manner* or *means whereby a thing is gained"*[2]) and ἦθος (*"of man his disposition, character"*[3]) respectively. They correspond to two basic (albeit schematically understood as disjoint) ways of interaction with the world: active and contemplative.

Whether one solution type is better than another depends on particular situation. Let us give some examples, which will serve us (along with EXAM) as a basis for formulating necessary conditions for each type of solution.

HUNGER I am hungry. Technical solution consists in eating, thereby satisfying the hunger. Ethical solution would involve making myself indifferent to the unpleasant feeling, consequently make myself indifferent with regards to my own death.

COLD I am cold. I can put on some more clothes, make fire, set the air-conditioning temperature higher etc. Or, I can be indifferent to cold (*i.e.* forget about wanting not to be cold), which is not the same as stand the cold (where it still is a problem).

---

[2]   [Lidell & Scott, 1997], pg. 804.
[3]   [Lidell & Scott, 1997], pg. 349.

FRIEND My dear friend has died. Technical solution clearly does not exist (make him alive). An ethical solution may or may not exist.

2.1.3.1 Technical solution

The intervention into the situation requires an ability to do so. Some interventions are beyond my power or are generally impossible (the difference between these two is altogether irrelevant, for the latter implies the former, which is the criterion for me being able to to do). I can not resurrect a person (FRIEND), maybe I am even not able to make fire to get rid of being cold (for lack of money, kindling, matches, hands, ...; COLD).

How do I know that particular action will bring about the desired effect?

By experience. I have successfully done so several times already. This does not imply that it will always be the case, although it is frequently a tacit assumption (incomplete induction).

By knowledge. I know *why* the effect should be brought about. Again, here we suppose that there is an invariant order of things: that I am able to make the subsumption of an individual under a general concept; and in the order of concepts the principle, the knowledge, takes place. However, since the subsumption is nothing more than experience-based categorization of a particular individual (thing, situation, etc.), it suffers from the same uncertainty as the experience-based approach, though on a different level and presumably less intensely.

2.1.3.2 Ethical solution

The ethical solution consists in renouncement to a goal, which is (as we have seen) always done by virtue of a superordinate goal. What happens if the goal is ultimate? In EXAM, this would involve wanting to pass the exam for its own sake.

Frequently, superordinate goals are not conscious and consequently unusable for the substitution $\mathcal{G}_1 \to \mathcal{G}_1'$. In the ethical solution of EXAM, we marked the transition from $\mathcal{G}_1$ to $\mathcal{G}_0$ as "*anamnesis*", for (presumably) $\mathcal{G}_0$ used to be explicit and $\mathcal{G}_1$ was chosen as an intermediary goal with regards

11

to $\mathcal{G}_0$. Then, as the capacity of mind is limited, the necessity of full concentration (on studying, for example), pushes $\mathcal{G}_0$ out of mind. The more acute $\mathcal{P}_1$ is, the more mind it tends to fill up; the less likely is the *anamnesis* going to happen.

Let us give more examples.

MOVIE   I am $(\mathcal{S}_1)$ intensively watching a movie. I forget about the TV set, about other people, about me sitting in a chair. I simply become the movie itself—let us call this "lower subject" $\mathcal{S}_2$. I identify myself with the hero, which is unfortunately but clearly going to die. This poses a big problem for me, for we are identified; in a way, I fear my own death. A big frustration takes place.

The theoretical solution would be to realize the fact, that I $(\mathcal{S}_1)$ am only watching the movie, to "wake up". But to be able to think (as $\mathcal{S}_1$) of such solution, I would already have (had) to be woken up (be $\mathcal{S}_1$); but to be woken up, I would already have (had) to know that solution.

This does not imply, that the frustration will never end; it does imply, that the realization is beyond my will (of $\mathcal{S}_2$). It may happen spontaneously, without any conscious reason. It may be forced on me by a *force majeure*, like power outage or heart attack; in that case, $\mathcal{S}_2$ will cease to exist and after a while of chaos and disorientation, $\mathcal{S}_1$ will be in working state again.

Having woken up, $\mathcal{S}_1$ says to itself "what have I $(\mathcal{S}_2)$ been doing? What a silly fear!"

DREAM   As an instructive analogy to MOVIE, let us consider dream. I $(\mathcal{S}_1)$ sleep and have $(\mathcal{S}_2)$ a dream, in which something terrible is going to happen to me $(\mathcal{S}_2)$ (being killed and the like). As in MOVIE, the awakening may not take place by my $(\mathcal{S}_2)$ own forces. $\mathcal{S}_1$ does not need to be awakened, it is awakened already.

Again, as our experience proves, this does not mean that one never wakes up—just like the exclusion of suicide would not imply immortality. But this proposition is said from the point of view of $\mathcal{S}_1$, the awakened one—for $\mathcal{S}_2$, the dream is a truly solutionless problem. The dream-situation is the ultimate situation, the *cosmos* of $\mathcal{S}_2$.

Definition 2.9. Emergence *is subject-transformation from the "sleep-ing" one to the "awakened" one ($S_2 \to S_1$).* Submergence *is the reverse transformation.*

This partially metaphorical newspeak tries to suggest, that S_1 and S_2 are *qualitatively* different and that the transition is asymmetric (up and down, under and above water). The higher subject S_1 "contains" the lower subject S_2, although not as a part in a whole. Inversely, the lower subject exists only by virtue of the higher subject (in MOVIE, S_2 would not survive dead of the watcher)

2.2 Aporia and technical problem

Preceding paragraphs lead us to the following distinction.[4]

Definition 2.10. Aporia *is a problem, which has no solution.* Trivial problem *is a problem, for which a solution exists. Alternatively: If a problem and its solution may both be understood by the same sub-ject, the problem is called a* trivial problem. *If solution understanding involves emergence, it is called an* aporia.

Several remarks should be made to this definition.

- The equivalence of both definitions should be clear from the examples above (notably, DREAM and MOVIE). The first definition is given from the "subjective" point of view ("no solution" equals to "I do not see any solution"). The second definition is given from an "objective" point of view; its pure theoreticity may be seen from the fact that it speaks about two different subjects at the same time, *as if* they could be seen simultaneously. If the solution requires an emergence, at the same time emergence implies *total* disappearance of the problem: the higher subject *can not* understand in deep, what the problem was actually; only trace of frustration rests in memory. As the solution of an *aporia* cannot be anticipated (for its contents is altogether beyond

---

[4] The distinction of aporia and trivial problem is inspired by [Hauser, 2002], pg. 60–63; we chose to use "aporia" instead of "true problem" to avoid misleading connotations and, at the same time, to use a word that has a long tradition in occidental philosophy since well before Socrate.

understanding of the frustrated subject), it may, by definition, never be thought as a goal. On the other hand, in the case of trivial problem, the understanding of both problem and solution may be simultaneous.

- The name *trivial problem* is by no means intended as derogatory. "Trivial" pertains to the possibility of understanding the nature of solution, not to its actualization. The problem "make someone set foot on the surface of the Moon" *is* trivial in this sense, although it involved tremendous amount of effort and resources. For this reason, *aporias* are what will be of our concern in the following.

2.2.1   Quotidian *aporias*

BUS. To make our discourse less abstract and to show, how frequently *aporias* may occur in our everyday life, let us consider the following example. This example was related by life itself, although it is taken somewhat to extreme here. To simplify the figures, only goals $\mathcal{G}_i$ will be given, without their respective problems $\mathcal{P}_i$ which follow from them immediately.

I get up in the morning and need to get a bus. As I am sleepy, my mind does not work properly and the goals I am aware of can be shown thusly:

$$\mathcal{G}_8 \text{ Get onto the bus}$$

I go to the bus stop (yes, there exist many intermediary goals with regards to $\mathcal{G}_8$ itself, but they are frequently automatic, subconscious—like opening the door, going to the bus stop etc.) but I find out, that there is a traffic jam; $\mathcal{G}_8$ is frustrated, a mini-*aporia* is right here. There are two scenarios how the situation will evolve:

1. Such a short-term stress makes my mind work wake up, realize more. I recall that I am a high-school teacher and get to:

$$\mathcal{G}_7 \text{ Be at the school on time}$$
$$\uparrow$$
$$\mathcal{G}_8 \text{ \sout{Get onto the bus}}$$

   The immediate problem being resolved (its " *aporia*-ness" has disappeared), it is now possible, as shown in EXAM, to think of another means of transport: car, bicycle, taxi, . . .

2. The crisis perhaps makes me wake up a bit, but the frustration will fill my mind up entirely anyway. For this lack of mental capacity, I will not be able to realize the higher goal and circumvent the obstacle. It is not until the anger (or sadness, self-regrets or whatever form the frustration takes, depending on natural temperament) ceases spontaneously that I will be capable of dealing with that situation again. Then, maybe, a solution may come to me.

Suppose $\mathcal{G}_7$ has emerged in the mind (or, otherwise said, that an emergence of the corresponding $\mathcal{S}_7$ has taken place). I iterate through all $\mathcal{G}_8'$'s and find out, that none of them will do. My mind is not necessarily blocked by some brute emotion, as suggested above. The very impossibility if reaching $\mathcal{G}_7$ makes may mind think of it intensively, proportionately to the importance I give to it. I think hard of yet another alternatives, both possible and impossible. I may (and may not) find the solution—will $\mathcal{G}_6$ emerge?
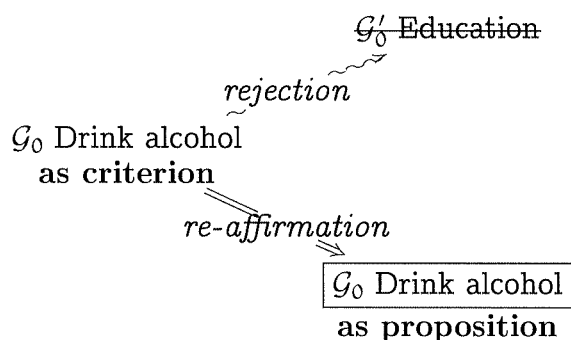
$\mathcal{G}_6$ Fulfill my contract with the school

$\mathcal{G}_7$ ~~Be at the school on time~~ $\mathcal{G}_7'$ Excuse myself by phone

$\mathcal{G}_8$ ~~Get onto the bus~~ $\mathcal{G}_8'$ ~~taxi, bicycle, ...~~
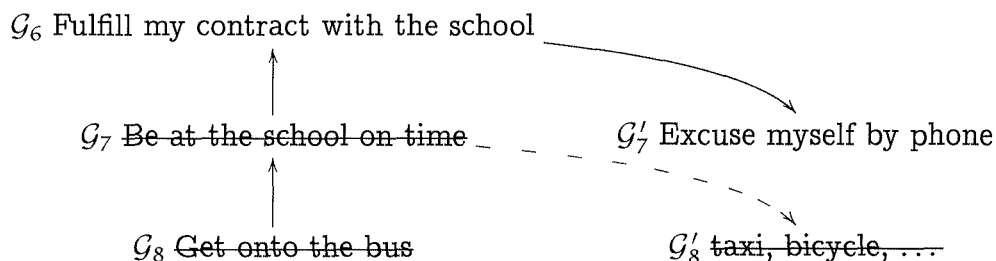
It must be emphasized, that *the emersion of a $\mathcal{G}_i$ is not on voluntary basis* and that, however unnecessary it is from an abstract point of view, a substantial amount of time may be needed or it will never happen at all. As is evident, from DREAM in particular, the lower subject can not make up the solution, its (which is larger than plainly "intellectual") capacities being limited. This does not necessarily mean that $\mathcal{S}$ is unable to understand the solution; it is unable to understand it *as solution*.[5]

To illustrate the aforementioned inability to understand a proposed solution, let us give the following example.

---

[5]   This is precisely the reason why it is entirely (or partially) useless to use logical argumentation when dealing with people who are totally (or only a bit) angry; the same holds for whatever intensive activity occupies their mind. The spontaneous cessation of the activity is made much less probable if such a state is shared within a group or crowd.

ALCOHOLIC A friend of mine is alcoholic (in the sense of *psychic* addiction). Within our conceptual framework, this can be described as him having the ultimate goal "$\mathcal{G}_0$ Drink alcohol". Otherwise said, $\mathcal{G}_0$ is what is the most important for him. I would like to save my friend from alcoholic deterioration and I propose him another goals, such as "$\mathcal{G}_0'$ Education". He does understand very well what education is. Is the transition $\mathcal{G}_0 \to \mathcal{G}_0'$ going to happen? For what reason? His judgement is as follows:

$$\mathcal{G}_0' \; \text{Education}$$

rejection

$\mathcal{G}_0$ Drink alcohol
as criterion

re-affirmation

$\boxed{\mathcal{G}_0 \text{ Drink alcohol}}$
as proposition

As $\mathcal{G}_0$ already exists in the mind (it is a mental activity), it always reaffirms itself. From this follows, that I will be able to help my friend only if I present him another goal as being yet better for $\mathcal{G}_0$ than immediate satisfaction of his alcoholic lust. For example if I told him: "being educated, you are going to earn much more money, you will be able to drink yet more, at the price of temporary self-discipline", hoping that meanwhile, when he does not drink, his obfuscated mind will gain some intellectual capacity to discover $\mathcal{G}_0$ as unsatisfactory.

Preceding examples lead us to formulate the following:

Theorem 2.11. *The ultimate goal is* by itself *persistent.*

The "by itself" is intended to signify that even if the goal would cease to be attractive in its contents, it will be maintained (re-affirmed) by itself as goal—it does not need anything external to it.

Such persistence will be better illustrated in the following example (LIFE), where $\mathcal{G}_0$ is frustrated, contrary to ALCOHOLIC, where $\mathcal{G}_0$ was being happily fulfilled and there was less reason to give it up. Even so, it will not cease to be a goal, although from an external perspective it may well paralyze all the rest of the activities of S_0. Suppose I have "$\mathcal{G}_0$ I want to

live" and I realize that I am going to die. The solution of this *aporia* would be:
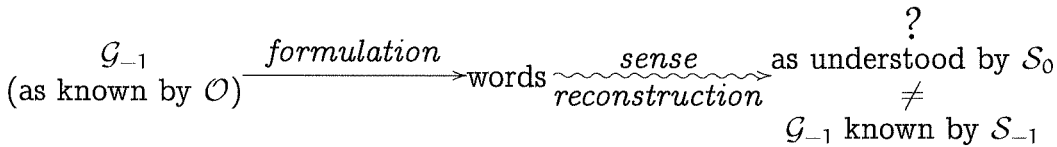
$$\mathcal{G}_{-1}\,? \quad - \; - \; \sim$$

$$\mathcal{G}_0 \; \text{I want to live} \qquad \mathcal{G}_0'\,?$$
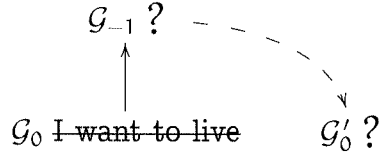
Although I may understand *intellectually* that my *aporia* (what blocks the emergence) consists in my very will to live ($\mathcal{G}_0$), it does not help resolving the problem.

Further implications of the persistence of the ultimate goal will be discussed in section 2.3.3.

2.2.2 Solution communication and algorithmization

Let us consider a subject $\mathcal{S}_0$, whose ultimate goal is frustrated (*aporia*), for example as in Life. Suppose that there exists another subject, call it $\mathcal{O}$ (as "other"), who is able to grasp the solution of the *aporia* of $\mathcal{S}_0$, *i.e.* capable of identifying $\mathcal{G}_{-1}$.[6] If $\mathcal{O}$ is about to help $\mathcal{S}_0$ by explaining him in words what the solution looks like, the following happens:

$$\mathcal{G}_{-1} \quad \xrightarrow{\;formulation\;} \text{words} \; \underset{reconstruction}{\underbrace{\quad sense \quad}} \; \overset{?}{\text{as understood by } \mathcal{S}_0}$$
$$(\text{as known by } \mathcal{O}) \qquad\qquad \neq$$
$$\mathcal{G}_{-1} \text{ known by } \mathcal{S}_{-1}$$

The part marked *sense reconstruction* is where misunderstanding is necessarily going to happen. $\mathcal{G}_{-1}$ cannot be understood by $\mathcal{S}_0$ and the speech itself will not make $\mathcal{S}_{-1}$ wake up.

The sense of signs used for communication (words in the case of language) has to be re-constructed by the recipient ($\mathcal{S}_0$). Since the activity of reconstruction is restricted by existing $\mathcal{G}_0$ in the same ways as all other activities of $\mathcal{S}_0$, the reconstructed sense will not transcend $\mathcal{G}_0$:

Theorem 2.12. *Solution of an* aporia *is not communicable.*

Neither an instruction of how to proceed to find the solution by oneself (algorithm) is communicable, for it is a sub-sort of communication (aiming at being subject-independent).

---

[6] We silently neglect the fact, that $\mathcal{O}$ is not able to grasp truly the problematicity of $\mathcal{G}_0$ for he already sees it (by virtue of $\mathcal{G}_{-1}$ as a fiction).

Theorem 2.13. *Solution of an* aporia *is not algorithmizable.*

This problem is faced not only within many religious traditions (spiritual leadership), which will be subject of our considerations later, but also in everyday life. When someone is angry, it is to some measure useless to use rational argumentation for why he should not be angry. Such mental cage may have different persistence, depending on how persistent is the ultimate goal itself. It is frequently amazing, how twisted interpretation may be given to a seemingly clear utterance.[7]

For this reason, O (in various contexts) may not use language as a channel for information transmission (for the transmission is blocked by S_0) and has to withdraw from purely intellectual area. Language (words) is used only to make S_0 to make place for S_{-1}, to crack the cage of G_0 from inside. Never is the solution input right into (the mind of) S_0, never is it caused by O as *causa efficiens*; it is at most catalyzed by O.

2.2.2.1 The role of paradox

It has to be mentioned, that a special way of such extra-communicative language usage is where words convey a *paradox*. In such situation, the subject does understand significance of all propositions, all of them seem plausible but are at the same time in mutual contradiction. Although the sense reconstruction tweaks the sense, it may be such puzzling that the paradoxity is overwhelming; the subject S_0 may come to realize suddenly that there is something beyond his understanding, thereby negating S_0 as the real subject—who understands the paradox, if not S_0? In such way, an emersion may be catalyzed by a paradox. This point will be treated in detail in chapter 4.

---

[7] How communication "noise" affects psychological problems (or, in fact, how it constitutes psychological problems) and how such noise originates in goals of both sender and receiver, may be found in copious literature; for the most explicit examples see *e.g.* [Yalom, 2004], [Nietzsche, 2005], [Frisch, 1985]

2.3 Goals and subject(s)

2.3.1 Knowledge of the subject

The term "subject" is largely vague due to its various different meanings. We shall make the distinction between

true subject, which is the hypothetical principle (source) of all activities that I attribute to myself; as it cannot be know directly, we distinguish from it

subject of attribution, which is what I think the true subject is, through the mediation of observer activities ascribed to "me" (we are aware of the circularity of such definition; it is, in fact, the first hint at the arbitrariness of the subject of attribution; this will have to wait until later to be elaborated, though).

The difference of these is shown in the following schema, where also the non-equivalence of both "subjects" is marked.
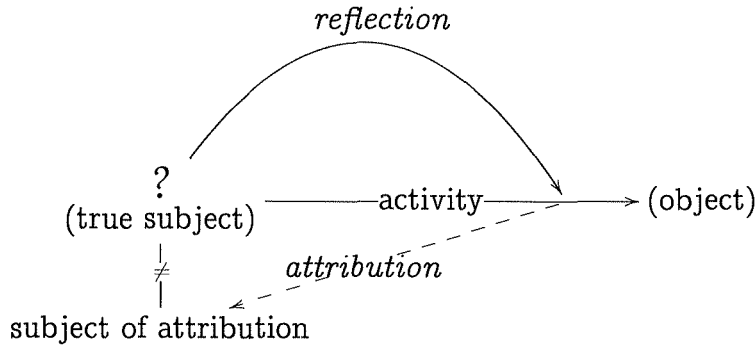
As should be evident, (true) subject does not know itself, save indirectly through its activities. The true subject may have no determinations and never becomes an object of knowledge—*who* would be the one knowing this "subject"? Merely subject knowing an objectified subject, that is, subject of attribution.

The true subject has, if taken apart from its activities, no properties, nothing can be predicted about it. It is a mere hypothesis, possibly useful but certainly also misleading: if it is supposed as inherently existent, without any activity: for in that case, it is gnoseologically impossible to ascertain it.[8]

---

[8]   See [Garfield, 1995], pg. 181–182, on the following verse from Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamad-hyamakakārikā*, VIII 12: "Action depends upon the agent / The agent itself depends

19

2.3.2 Identity and ultimate goal

The "I" the is subject of attribution; as it is constructed from reflection upon activities, it does not exist without these activities. What one takes for his/her identity rests in nothing else than these activities; namely, in the unifying (most important) activity, which is the ultimate goal. Even if we supposed (as if in some *realitas objectiva*) that there is an immutable substrate of subjectivity (persistent identity), it could never be present in any way in the subject of attribution which depends solely on the activities (*i.e.* objects).

This is the common reason for being interested in one's ultimate goal (as per definition of goal) *and* in one's existence, meaningful existence—otherwise said, subject fundamentally depends on its objects and *vice versa*.[9] We hope to elucidate somewhat this obscure reason in following parts of this work. The issue of object-based (activity-based) identity is very pertinently expressed in a Irvin D. Yalom's psychotherapeutic story:

> I told him, that man facing a threat to his very essence naturally reacted accordingly – in fact, his own life was at stake. On the other hand, I pointed out that he widened the borders of his person as to include his work as well; and that, consequently, he reacted to the slightest criticism of his work as if someone were trying to annihilate the core of his being and as if his survival was in question.
>
> I urged Carlos to make the distinction between his essence and different, marginal attributes or activities. Then, he had to

on action. / One cannot see any way / To establish them differently."

[9] Let us quote *in extenso* from the excellent [Martino, 1983], pg. 146–147: "Available to itself—even as it contemplates its own subjectivity—only in terms of some object cast of itself, the ego naturally comes to confuse being fulfilled with 'being something'. In its attempt as subject to cope with its task of finding itself, it envisages some object-image of itself. [...] Most or perhaps all of its subjectivity is now devoted and, in effect, subordinated to the content, or contents, necessary to realize the vision—wealth, power, prestige, masculinity, femininity, knowledge, moral perfection, artistic creativity, physical beauty, popularity, individuality, of 'success'. Virtually identifying with these contents, it focuses exclusively upon them and upon the conception of itself which they constitute. In this fixation and attachment it easily falls prey to the arch delusion of egocentricity. Ever in search of, yet ever elusive to, itself, the ego, object-dependent and object-obstructed, comes to be object-dominated and object-deluded."

"disidentify" himself with the parts that were not his essence; they could represent anything he liked or esteemed – but it was not him, not the essence of his being.[10]

2.3.3 Self-deception

The interdependency of ultimate goal and identity (*i.e.* subject of attribution) allows us to see, why a subject has eager interest in maintaining its identity. In ALCOHOLIC (sect. 2.2.1), we tried to show that the ultimate goal always re-affirms itself—the self-affirmation is only another aspect of the very same re-affirmation.

To know oneself amounts to knowing one's goals (as activities, not as enumeration of abstract objectives). Contrary to Cartesian *res extensa*, fully conscious of all its activities, there can be much divergence between what one *thinks* his activities are and what are they in reality (speaking of myself at least, to not generalize overly).

The following example, BEGGAR, may help us. A beggar asks me for money in the subway. I do give him some money, after a short hesitation. Why did I do it? The answer will depend on whether I was aware of the activity of deciding as it was happening in my mind or not. Naturally, these two represent extremes of a continuous scale.

2.3.3.1 Vigilance

Definition 2.14. Vigilance *is presence of both (arbitrary) activity and awareness of this activity in mind.*

In the BEGGAR case, I was *aware of the activity of deciding* (hesitation) and was consequently conscious of the incentive leading to action.

---

[10] "Je přirozené, řekl jsem mu, že člověk útoku na svou podstatu čelí přiměřenou reakcí – vlastně je v sázce jeho přežití. Ale upozornil jsem ho, že své osobní hranice rozšířil, takže zahrnují i jeho práci, a v důsledku toho reaguje na sebemenší kritiku jakéhokoli aspektu své práce, jako by to byl vražedný útok na podstatu jeho bytí a hrozba pro samo přežití.

Naléhal jsem na Carlose, aby rozlišoval mezi vlastní podstatou a jinými, okrajovými atributy nebo aktivitami. Potom se musel „dezidentifikovat" s částmi, které netvořily jeho podstatu: mohly reprezentovat cokoli, co měl rád nebo co dělal nebo čeho si vážil – nebyl to však on a nebyla to ani podstata jeho bytí." ([Yalom, 2004], pg. 97)

Otherwise said, I know the cause(s). There is a vast amount of possibilities but if such a direct observation is there, this activity is experienced, without doubts. To point out the complexity and to justify the fact, that being conscious of something is not a binary (yes/no) statement, let us give some examples of what I might have identified in myself.

1. I really was pursuing his good.
2. I was proving myself by this act that I am merciful and not a frigid contemptible subhuman creature.
3. I observed that I actually gave him the money because I wanted to make end to provoked thought about injustice of the world, why I have more money than he does, compassion for a potentially great guy, unfortunately born into a family of alcoholic and a prostitute—and, at the same time speculations about his laziness as reason for his poverty (for, after all, I would *like* the world to be just, as my relatively good social situation would be a compliment and appreciation of all the efforts in my life).Stopping this mental cacophony was more valuable than the small amount of money I gave him to calm my mind.
4. ... (limitless possibilities)

2.3.3.2 Aposterior reflection

Definition 2.15. Aposterior reflection *is intellectual activity of reconstructing causes (goals) from remembered effects (deeds).*

For BEGGAR, I only remember that I gave him the money *without having been aware of the inner motion* leading to the deed. In such a case, only the effects are known, without knowing the cause(s). As the cause is what I am interested in (the goal, which is the superordinate activity of the effect), I have to reconstruct the cause abstractly.

It is known and not surprising that such reconstruction is frequently rather a construction—one can not construct something what one does not already know at least in an implicit manner. In this way, an illusion about oneself may be perpetuated. To make our point clear, we may say (making a caricature, certainly), that a Christian will conclude that the incentive was the good deed itself or imitation of Christ etc.; a leftist will interpret it as fight against unjust capitalist society; a conservative will consider it doing an undeserved, condescending favor to such a lazy creature incapable of hard work (as he is); and so on.

Often, the imagined and willed goodness (of lefty-ness etc) *will* be the incentive, but only in the sense that the subject in question will joyfully use it as an excuse for an already existing goal. In this way, activities he/she is (subconsciously) ashamed of, may be covered by another activity which has the same effects, furthering the self-deception.

It is not difficult to see that the situation is the same as when $\mathcal{O}$ is explaining in words his understanding to $\mathcal{S}_0$, who has to reconstruct the meaning (sect. 2.2.2), the only difference being the medium—external acts instead of words.

The more such interpretations are fabricated, the more is "proved" what was hoped and, consequently, the more it is not only hoped, but also "known".[11]

There is a limit of how much self-delusion one can bear and it is proportional to one's lack of vigilance, emotional excitement etc; at some point the self-delusion may become incredible even to its bearer and breaks. This limit may be surprisingly high, though (more in sect. 4.2.3).

2.3.4 Subject persistence and fluctuation

Having shown that there is an intimate relationship between ultimate goal and subject of attribution, we may formulate the following, as a parallel to theorem 2.11:

Theorem 2.16. *The subject of attribution is* by itself *persistent.*

The persistence should be properly understood. The ultimate goal (or the subject, correlatively) may persist either actually, as goal, or through

---

[11] See Paul Watzlawick's *Les prédictions qui se vérifient d'elles-mêmes* , of which beginning we cite: "A prediction that verifies itself is a supposition or prognosis that, by the very fact of being pronounced, incurs the realization of the expected event and thus confirms its own "exactness". For example, someone supposes, for some reason, that he is not respected; because of this supposition, he behaves in such a hostile and mistrustful way, exhibiting such hypersensibility, that others react by contempt, which "proves" him incessantly that his profound supposition is true." ("Une prédiction qui se vérifie d'elle-même est une supposition ou prévision qui, par le siple fait d'avoir été prononcé, entraîne la réalisation de l'événement prévu, et confirme par là même sa propre « exactitude ». Par example, quelqu'un suppose, pour une raison quelconque, qu'on ne le repecte pas ; et il a, à cause de cette supposition, un comportement tellement hostile et méfiant, et il manifeste une telle hypersensibilité qu'il provoque chez les autres un sentiment de mépris qui lui « prouve » sans cesse que sa profonde et solid conviction est vraie."; [Watzlawick, 1988], pg. 109–130)

23

its intermediary goals, in which it is contained (as their goal). It *does not* prevent submergence into an already existing activity; such submergence is even being favored by the fact that mental capacity is limited: full concentration tends to push the rest out of the mind. Going back to Movie, we saw that the waking subject S_1 (having, for example, "$\mathcal{G}_1$ have fun") submerged into S_2, identifying itself with the watching itself; for the movie was an incarnation (intermediary goal) of "having fun". This identification has to be taken in the strong sense, for there was nothing else in the mind of S_2 any more than the movie itself. At this moment, S_2 is persistent in the sense that it *does* block the emergence of S_1, the "waking up" from the activity. The relation is asymmetric: emergence (as an effect) is impossible, wherefore the persistence; submergence is easy, wherefore the fluctuation. Various facets of this phenomenon were presented in Life, Dream and, in a multiplexed form, Bus.

As can be seen, two problems arise:

1. How to to limit such fluctuations of goals. The solution involves some rather straightforward habits (as far as understanding, not practice, goes).

2. How to break the "mental cage" of the ultimate goal blocking something exceeding that goal (transcendence) to be realized. This problem is an *aporia*.

Both of these problems will be dealt with later.

2.4   Goals and suffering

Goals may be thought as culmination of the subject-object interaction. Taking both subject and object as subsistent, separate "things" (which is, precisely, our ignorance), prevent effectively total unity between them, saturation of mind by the object.

A goal is an anticipated solution of a problem, *i.e.* anticipated disappearance of suffering (see definition 2.5). This can be equally seen from the fact that the consideration of what will remedy the suffering is based on the supposition of an permanent essence, or stable aggregate of anticipations (sect. 2.1.3.1). Goal ceases to exist in the very moment it is reached

(suffering ceases); but the recrimination of past suffering makes us desire keeping the suffering-less state, further creating suffering.[12]

Even if a goal is reached, without the side-effect of suffering from fear of future (because at present absent) suffering, that does not stop suffering either. The fact that subject necessarily identifies itself with its objects (attribution) implies unceasing necessity to have some object of desire, to anticipate identification with objects and thus to perpetuate suffering.[13] Such basic desire to will (without yet having an object) may be experienced in the case of boredom, where nothing particular is wanted—one would be almost tempted to say: a perfect achievement of all goals—yet it is quite the contrary of an extinction of all desire.

2.4.1 Interdependent arising

The cycle of interdependent arising (or the Twelvefold chain of co-dependent causation) is Buddhist conceptualization of the mutual dependence of ignorance and suffering and their perpetuation of one by another. The cycle is as follows: ignorance → volition → consciousness → body-mind (name and form) → six senses → contact → sensation → desire (craving) → attachment → existence → birth → suffering (old age and death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief and despair). "Thus does this entire aggregation of misery arise."[14]

It seems to us that the chain may be understood by taking only three principal elements as follows: ignorance → craving → suffering. The

---

[12] "The individuality is created and perpetuated by desire; and the cause of all desire is ignorance (*avidyâ*). For we ignore that the objects of our desire can never be possessed in the true sense of the word; we ignore that having seized what we desire, we desire to keep it et thus remain in the desire. The ignorance in question is that of things as they are in the reality (*yathâ bhûtam*); it consists in ascribing substance to what is purely phenomenal. It is the void of the Self in the non-Self." ("L'individualité est mue et perpetuée par le désir, et la cause de tout désir est l'ignorance (*avidyâ*). Car nous ignorons que les objets de notre désir ne peuvent jamais être possédés au sens réel du mot ; nous ignorons que, lorsque nos avons saisi ce que nous désirons, nous désirons le garder, et somme encore en état de désir. L'ignorance en question est celle des choses telle qu'elles sont en réalité (*yathâ bhûtam*) ; elle consiste donc à douer de substantialité ce qui est purement phénoménal. Elle est la vide du Soi dans le non-Soi."; [Coomaraswamy, 2000], pg. 101)

[13] See footnote 9, pg. 20.

[14] [Koller, 1991], pg. 233.

same scheme appears, in the wording "fiction → appetite → frustration", in [Špička, 1992] (pg. 23–29); such vicious circle of mind is called "mental paradox" for it logically excludes any possibility of being broken:

ignorance
(fiction)

craving
(appetite)

suffering
(frustration)
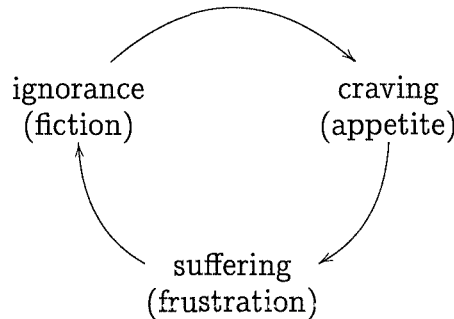
The "ignorance → craving" part was already demonstrated. "Craving → suffering" takes place because subject is not fully satisfied by any particular object, even if was a perfect match for his goal: what next? The necessity of filling the emptiness of boredom (lack of object which may serve for attribution to the subject) makes the subject cling to an another activity, in the extreme case to any activity whatsoever.[15] Such "suffering → ignorance" transition was described, albeit from the point of view of fluctuating mind, in Bus and other, sect. 2.2.1.

2.5 Conclusion

Choosing goals (or problems) as the point of view for all activities in general, we distinguished two fundamental types of problems: technical problems (which are "trivially" solvable, hence philosophically not very interesting) and *aporias*, where the impossibility of solution is given by the very functioning of human mind: cognition and volition are not independent, wherefore follows the factual impossibility of realizing "ethical solution" (changing one's goals) in some situations—namely if the goal in question

---

[15] "Ignoring the nature or components of its acts and decisions, the ego would now immerse itself in a flood of doing, acting and deciding—either in search of distraction, or else exclusively for the sake of doing, acting and deciding. In the latter case, seeking to realize a pure subjectivity free from all object constraints, the ego, misled by an implied fallacy of reductionism, falls into a double delusion. While assuming that as active subject its sheer subjectivity will reduce the object aspect, it fears that unless it is continuously active as subject, it will itself be reduced to object." ([Martino, 1963], pg. 149–150)

is ultimate. The ultimate goal is persistent, preventing by its very role another goal replacing it; since the ultimate goal is *locus* of subject-identity (subject is a subject of attribution), this can be equivalently formulated as persistence of subject; it is also, to some extent, resistant to self-reflection, where self-delusion necessary takes place. At the same time, the ultimate goal (subject) is prone to fluctuation, since its subordinate activity may push it out of the mind. The asymmetry of easy submergence (disappearance of the higher subject) and "impossible" emergence (its appearance) leads to spontaneous furthering of problems, not to their spontaneous disappearance. This perpetuation of goals and problems was also formulated using the Buddhist terms "ignorance", "craving" and "suffering", fundamental concepts of Buddhist philosophical-religious-therapeutic doctrine.

Two fundamental problems for the rest of this paper were formulated (sect. 2.3.4): (i) how to limit the subject-fluctuation, so that a relatively stable base for practice is established; (ii) how to break the subject-persistence, so that the practice has the "impossible" aporia-"solution" for result.

In the following, we will try to present some of the extremely rich and various Buddhist doctrines and practices which seem to us most relevant to these problems; Buddhist terminology will be used, along with frequent pointers to the one we used hereto. The intent is to show how the rich Buddhist tradition is useful, even if deprived of its mythological and cultural context, both as doctrine and as practice: as for the doctrine, we maintain that the categories of Buddhist philosophy are more suitable for our analyses that their commonly accepted occidental counterparts (Cartesian notion of subject and object, Aristotelean logic). As for the practice, we will try to show how intimate the relation of doctrine and practice is in Buddhism, at least in some of its many branches, and what inspiration it can provide for us.

Chapter 3

Some (Buddhist) doctrines

This chapter presents some doctrines from the Buddhist tradition pertaining to the topic we explored in the preceding: solutionless problems.

The doctrine does not exist separately from morality for Buddhism (as philosophy is not separate from religion—doing so would not do justice to Buddhism) and our division is purely for the sake of clarity (the *praxis* is treated later, in chapter 4);

> When the Indians speak of one who has understood (*êvamvit*)
> a doctrine, they do not mean simply the one who has grasped
> the logical signification of what he exposes; rather, they mean
> someone who has "verified" it in himself, who is what he knows.[1]

Understanding one's activities as well as the process of their transformation can only happen through some conceptual framework; in the Buddhist case, Buddhist framework. The sense of Buddhist doctrines (metaphysical, psychological, ...) is to convey pointers intelligible to the adept during the curing process; any doctrine as well as rules are to be understood as conventional, pragmatic; as "vehicle" of communication. The danger of conceptual conservation and plain abstraction exists for individual adepts and is collectively revealed in brief account of the history of Buddhism. At its beginnings, Buddha's teaching was meant primarily for Brahamans or ascetic monks;[2] accordingly, the doctrine was formulated using concepts

---

[1] "Quand les Hindous parlent de Celui qui a compris (*êvamvit*) une doctrine donnée, ils n'entendent pas simplement celui qui a saisi la signification logique de ce qu'elle expose, mais celui qui l'a « verifiée » en lui-même, qui est ce qu'il connaît." ([Coomaraswamy, 2000], pg. 106.)

[2] [Coomaraswamy, 2000], pg. 69.

appropriate for the class of relatively educated people. Doctrinalism seems to become flesh *e.g.* in the school of Abhidharma (literally "higher doctrine"; a part of early Buddhism);[3] and the same Abhidharma was chief target of Madhyāmika's criticism of the ultimate truth (see sect. 3.4.2).[4]

3.1 Ignorance

The goal of the Buddhist therapy is liberation from suffering; although the fourfold truth mentions craving (thirst) as the cause of suffering, it is equally true of ignorance, as per interdependent arising. Because ignorance entails our cognitive faculties, it is more accessible for philosophical analysis than craving; thus, the following may be seen as complement to the preceding analysis of attachment.

It should be noted[5] that

1. ignorance does not mean ignorance of something particular;
2. ignorance is not to be confused with illiteracy (quite on the contrary, in a sense);
3. wisdom does not prevent knowledge of positive facts, neither is *per se* opposed to scientific knowledge.

There are classifications of particular ignorant opinions, such as: thinking that there is self, that soul is either mortal or immortal (it is neither according to the Buddhist metaphysics), taking one's world-view for the right one, considering ethical precepts to be absolute.[6] Another enumeration of "heresies" would be: existence of "soul", to think that causal determination abolishes moral responsibility, that there is no "another world", that Buddha taught a new doctrine (!), that he taught annihilation of or detachment from everything except suffering.[7] These particular false opinions nevertheless rest upon more basic, more fundamental ignorance—that of the nature of reality. This permits us to take the analysis to a more fundamental level, while being aware of the fact that the experiential level is still not reached by argumentation alone. The principal themes we will take into account are subject, object and truth (logic).

---

[3] [Coomaraswamy, 2000], pg. 73–74.

[4] [Bugault, 1994], pg. 248–254.

[5] [Coomaraswamy, 2000], pg. 101–102.

[6] [Kitayama, 1934], pg. 73–78.

[7] [Coomaraswamy, 2000], pg. 108.

3.1.1   Occidental theories

The importance of Buddhist theories for a Westerner comes from the fact that they are at the same time philosophically founded criticism of common occidental theories. By those, we mean the Cartesian (and, consequently, natural-science) concept of subject and object. The Cartesian object, a *res extensa*, exists objectively, without any relation to an ordinary subject; combined with the Platonic/Aristotelean tradition, such an object has its "what", its idea (or form). The trivial interpretation is that such form is independent on the knower of that form. The Cartesian subject is a pure spirit, soul, which fully cognizes itself and is always self-same. The mixture of physical and angelic is man.

From the logical point of view, *realitas obiectiva* gives the measure of truth: it is given by the conformity of reason (concepts) with that objective reality. As such reality is subject-independent, truth is likewise subject-independent, one for everybody. For this reason, it is consequent to hold the principle of the excluded middle: by looking at the objective reality, one can immediately decide whether a proposition is true of false.

Not that occidental criticism of such concepts were altogether absent— Hume and Wittgenstein may serve as great examples. Mainstream thinking, as is seen from the development of natural sciences, has not accepted their criticism.

3.2   Object and concept

Knowledge of objects has two assumptions: there are objects (subsistence) and they have some invariable properties (permanence) about which is the contents of knowledge—subjects and predicates. If their properties were not invariable, no knowledge would be possible. We will try to provide criticism of these two assumptions (which need to be valid both at the same time), expressed traditionally in the notions of substance and essence; they are tightly dependent: there would be no essence without substance.

3.2.1   Essence—permanence

Essence is commonly understood as a fixed "what" of a thing, an intelligible unit of that thing. It corresponds, at the same time (if correspondence

31

theory of truth is adopted), to the substantial form of that particular thing.

If the process of conceptualization of our experience is thoroughly analyzed, an essence (as thought) is nothing more than an aggregate of *anticipated* responses (based, perhaps, on past experience or experimentation), rather arbitrarily taken as one "thing"; for (neither sensual, nor mental) experience does not provide autonomous entities that could provide the base of such cutting.

Neither is the supposition of the same behavior in the future founded in our experience; the essence no more than a convenience mental category for easier operation with things, an aggregate of anticipated future responses.[8] Adopting essence permanence ("eternalism") results in the opinion that even if properties of a thing are not being manifested, they are present latently, which is begging a question. No doubt the occidental scramble for essences made great scientific and technical achievements possible, but apparently for the price of ignoring that essence is only such a "fabrication" (as Buddhists would say) without being aware of it.

3.2.2 Substance—subsistence

Substance expresses the fact that a thing can be by itself, is independent in its existence from other things. The decision of what is substance and what is not is rather arbitrary a we will try to show it in the following.

3.2.2.1 Sectioning the sensual

A simpler case is the arbitrary nature of dissecting sensual experience into physical units, which is shown as arbitrary by considering some corner cases; strictly binary nature of substance (it does or does not have a substance) is confronted with continuous progress beginning with a substance

---

[8] "ce qu'elle [sagesse] demande, c'est que l'on reconnaisse dans ce qu'il est convenu d'appeler les « faits » ou les « lois scientifiques », non des vérités absolues, mais des formules statistiques de probablité." ("What it [wisdom] asks us is to recognize in what is conveniently called "facts" or "scientific laws" merely statistical formulas of probability, not absolute truths."; [Coomaraswamy, 2000], pg. 102). See also our [Smilauer, 2000] for examination of essence-construction from sensual data. Frequently, analogies of David Hume's criticism of substance and Buddhist "reductionism" and "anti-realism" (as [Siderits, 1989] calls the position of Madhyāmika) are pointed out.

(subsistent) and ending with an aggregate (substanceless) or vice versa.

PILE OF SAND, for example, is considered a thing (in thought—the demonstration that it is nothing more than an aggregate of grains is purely rational and contradicts, in most cases, the experience). By removing grain after grain, eventually there is but a few grains left, which is not a thing (pile) anymore: it is merely a few grains (aggregate) next to each other. When *exactly* did the substance disappear? Subsistent and aggregate thing would differ by one grain of sand, which is ridiculous.

3.2.2.2 Sectioning the mental

In the example previously mentioned (PILE OF SAND), we might believe that there is one raw sensual experience, which provides a common basis for whatever further arbitrary interpretations we please to make. This is no longer the case once more abstract entities are considered. What is considered as an individual highly depends on the intents of the approach.

Different scientific disciplines show best how different "the same things" are. For example, atomism (the ancient one as well as physics of particles, chemistry, ...) considers the real beings to be the *atomos*—such limit of divisibility is posited in order to stop the vicious regress of aggregates, for in the end there would be nothing. On the other hand, the everyday choice of ascription of substance is on a quite different level: a flower (or a dog, etc., to recall Descarte's mechanicist explanation) is an *individual* (in-divisible) organism, something more that a mere aggregate of the underlying constituents.

> Some phenomena are interpreted as stand-alone individuals [objects]. Stand-alone is what can stand without being supported by something else, what could even be alone. Individual is what is united by something. What makes phenomenon a stand-alone individual will be called personality of this phenomenon.
>
> Although any phenomenon can be interpreted as an object—as evidenced by fairytales for children, in which anything can appear as if it were a living creature—, some phenomena almost call for such interpretation. [...] Most often, those are phenomena susceptible of being made independent (stand-alone), at least in imagination or only in thought, in some way; that

is, to take them out of the observed world. [...] Other worlds do not call for the interpretation as an association of objects; in some cases, such an interpretation may seem inappropriate. [...] On the other hand, some world may be wrapped in two antagonistic interpretations that are both quite natural and satisfactory, even if one of them were not broadly used.[9]

BODY AND SOUL. For example, the Cartesian division of man into subsistent (independent) body and soul falls short of explaining their interactions in a satisfactory way, for it chose to almost ignore them by marking out the division; medicine, psychology. The appearance of psychosomatics, for example, is disquieting because it challenges the claim of these disciplines to be "right", to be "objective" (this the one, unique, exclusive truth), *i.e.* not taking any particular point of view, not being arbitrary at all.

This will be the case for a much more common concepts, as the following example of table (understood as a thing) points out:

If our culture had not evolved this manner of furniture, what appears to us to be an obviously unitary object might instead be correctly described as five objects: four quite useful sticks absurdly surmounted by a pointless slab of stick-wood waiting to be carved. Or we would have no reason to indicate this particular arrangement of this matter as an object at all, as opposed to a brief intersection of histories of some trees. [...] The table, we might say, is a purely arbitrary slice of space-time chosen by us as the referent of a single name and not an entity

---

[9] "Některé jevy vykládám jako samostatné jedince [objekty]. Samostatné je to, co ničím nepodpíráno může stát samo, co by mohlo i samo být. Jedinec pak je to, co je čímsi sjednoceno. Tomu, co z nějakého jevu činí samostatného jedince, budu říkat osobnost tohoto jevu. [...]

Ačkoliv jako objekt mohu vykládat kterýkoliv jev, dokladem čehož jsou ostatně pohádky pro děti, v nichž cokoliv může vystupovat tak, jako kdyby to byla živá bytost, některé jevy takovýto výklad přímo podsouvají. [...] Nejčastěji se za objekty nabízejí ty jevy, které lze alespoň v představě nebo jen v myšlení nějak osamostatnit, to je vyjmout je z pozorovaného světa. [...] Některé jiné světy potřebu výkladu jakožto společenství objektů nevyžadují, a u některých z nich lze dokonce nabýt dojmu, že by takovýto jejich výklad nebyl vhodný. [...] Na druhé straně některý svět lze obestřít i dvěma protichůdnými, a přitom nenásilnými a uspokojujícími takovýmito výklady, i když jeden z nich nenalezl všeobecné uznání." ([Vopěnka, 2001], pg. 20–25.)

demanding, on its own, recognition and a philosophical analysis to reveal its essence.[10]

Otherwise said, the very fact of ascribing subsistence stems from a particular point of view—and this point of view is determined by goals of the respective subject. Had the Cartesian medicine not have the intention of explaining the body as mechanism and cure (repair) it as a mechanism, it would not have to make the division of body and soul in such way.

3.2.2.3 Multiple points of view

The fact that the conceptual explanation ("description") depends heavily on intentions of the subject approaching it may be revealed if a comparison of different disciplines treating the "same" subject is made. Once there is a subsistent object (which is already a point of view), it may be approached under different angles, which further refines the object, the point of view: different conceptual frameworks can be used to capture it. The point of view is a reference system to which all concepts make (implicitly) reference; but it is inexplicable within itself.

Knowledge is fragmented by the multiplicity of such different semantic frameworks, of which expression is multiplicity of scientific disciplines. For example (PASSION), passion is understood differently by psychology, theology, philosophical anthropology, sociology, marketing, etc.
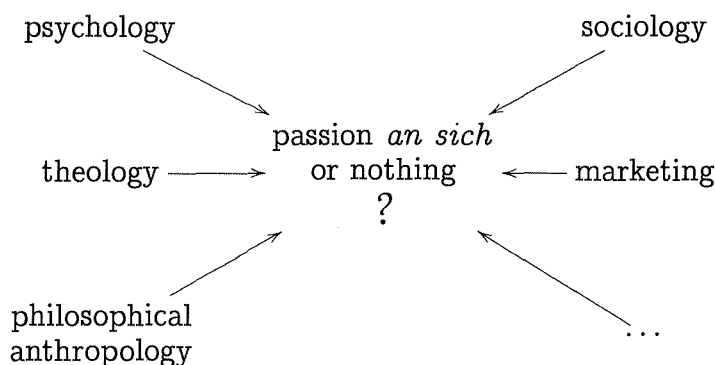
How do we know they talk about the same thing? Where is the "objectively existing" thing, of which points of view the disciplines express? To answer, there would have to be a communication between the disciplines,

---

[10] [Garfield, 1995], pg. 89–90.

which would be only possible in a meta-language embracing (somehow) all their semantic frameworks, meta-point-of-view, which is nevertheless still a point of view. The objective thing is unreachable—for objective is "as it is through none's regard", without any particular point of view. But without point of view there is no substance.

Is everything, then, a simulacrum? Are concepts only vicious regress of interpretations without the thing that is being interpreted? Yes, in the sense that all concepts are conventional; all concepts are points of view, hence fail to grasp the Reality. Contrary to what some may call relativism— *i.e.* that all interpretations are, given the absence of any objective truth, equally true—, the point is rather, without judging their differing pragmatic usefulness, that all the interpretations are equally *false*, in the sense of none of them being the only right one.[11]

3.2.3 Concepts replacing reality

We hope to have assembled sufficient evidence by now to justify the assertion that concepts we use to deal with things are determined by intentions— which are in turn determined by what we know. As intentions are beyond our deliberation (the ultimate goal determines them), we cannot "step out" from the point of view we have have adopted (or rather we have *become*), get rid of it. Therefore, our concepts necessarily take the place of things, in the same way as psychology sees *psychological* passion. Being aware of the fact of hypostatization does not resolve the problem.

> The main trouble with the human mind is that while it is capable of creating concepts in order to interpret reality it hypostatizes them and treats them as if they were real things. Not only that, the mind regards its self-constructed concepts as laws externally imposed upon reality, which has to obey them in order to unfold itself. This attitude or assumption on the part of the intellect helps the mind to handle nature for its own purposes, but the mind altogether misses the inner workings of life and consequently is utterly unable to understand it. This is the reason we have to halt at contradiction and are at a loss as to how to proceed.[12]

---

[11] For this reason, conceptual knowledge is called *"multi*signal" in [Špička, 1993].

[12] [Suzuki, 1996], pg. 269.

Concept-based approach to reality is extremely beneficial as far as technical problems are concerned—a new concept may present a much more elegant solution etc. On the other hand, concepts are at the same time one of the roots of delusion; because of the cognitive-voluntary non-separability, a concept being made up becomes object of attachment, if it corresponds to a goal of the subject; in that case, the reason for that concept being fabricated is the goal itself. A few examples will show the point more clearly:

SALVATION A person experiencing suffering (and by definition willing not to experience it) may make up, perhaps based on some religious teaching, a concept of suffering-less state (call it nirvāna, heaven, ...). Immediately, it becomes object of volition and if the volition is strong enough (otherwise said, if the subject submerges into that activity of volition), he/she will desperately want to achieve that state, deepening the suffering already present. His/her will itself persuades him/her, so to say, of its existence.

NOUMENA A person who is unable to find a criterion for true knowledge makes up the concept of objective reality, as the criterion of truth: craving (to establish the theory, the truth) and suffering (inability to find it) results in ignorance (objective reality is, arguably, a contradictory concept). This concept produces the desire to know that objective reality (craving), but there seems to be no way out of the Cartesian division we created before (suffering); yet the concept is so much compelling that the person does not go back and decontruct it (suffering furthering ignorance). In the next round, the person (or another person, who underwent the same mental trouble) thinks that he/she has to try *yet harder* to get hold of the objective reality, calls them *noumena* and writes obscure books on the subject, persuaded that it exists; though much energy could have been spared if their existence would never have been thought.

The result is subject being caught by concepts fabricated by itself ("halt at contradiction"), having problems that have no solution; changing the point of view is impossible (see ALCOHOLIC), as the reason for such conceptualization is in already existing goals: the problem we are facing is an *aporia* (sect. 2.2), of which solution involves subject transformation (emergence).

Without such transformation, no response is right, for *aporia* is precisely the impossibility of an "ordinary" (conceptual) solution.

The Buddhist doctrine, if it is to describe and convey at least to some degree the process of transformation to the adept, has to account for the multiplicity of perspectives and of *aporias*, no responses being right within a particular perspective. Such structure may be captured by the tetralemma in logic, a remarkable feature of some Indian schools; it will be treated after the object's correlative, subject, will have been examined.

3.3 Subject

Sentiment of personal existence is said to be one of the causes of mental suffering.[13] The force with which this sentiment is imposed indicates the necessity of very careful analysis.

Some of this criticism was already anticipated: the Cartesian concept of *res cogitans* (sect. 1.1.1) is refuted, as far as its usefulness for self-knowledge goes, by the very distinction of true subject (which it supposedly should be, but is unknowable) and the subject of attribution (sect. 2.3.1). The following tries to not only show that an identified subject is always subject of attribution but also to point out that the attribution is arbitrary, not supposing the true subject as subsistent substrate of that attribution.

3.3.1 External aggregate

The most straightforward (and also the least sophisticated) critique is to question closely one's experience for the referent of an individual person (other than myself). The dialogue of Indo-Greek king Menander (Milinda in Pāli) and a Buddhist sage Nāgasena is recorded in *Milindapañha* (*Questions of Milinda*) and is a classical text where a concept is destructed by pointing out that it can not be found in experience.

> "Your majesty, I am called Nāgasena; by fellow-priests, your
> majesty, address me as Nāgasena: but whether parents give one

---

[13] *Yoga-sūtra* (II, 3–9), quoted by [Bugault, 1994], pg. 58. All the (interdependent) causes are as follows: ignorance (*avidyā*), sentiment of personal existence (*asmitā*), passion in the form of attraction (*rāga*) and aversion (*dveṣa*) and blind will to live (*abhiniveśa*).

the name Nāgasena, or Sūrasena, or Vīrasena, or Sīhasena, it is, nevertheless, your majesty, but a way of counting, a term an appellation, a convenient designation, a mere name, this Nāgasena; for there is no Self here to be found." [...]

And Milinda the king spoke to the venerable Nāgasena as follows: —

"Bhante Nāgasena, if there is no Self to be found, who is it then furnishes your priests with the priestly requisities,—robes, food, bedding, and medicine, the reliance of the sick? who is it makes use of the same? who is it keeps the precepts? who is it applies himself to meditation? who is it realizes the Paths, the Fruits, and Nirvana? [...] who is it commits the five crimes[14] that constitute 'proximate karma'? In that case, there is no merit; there is no demerit; there is no one who does or causes to be done meritorious or demeritorious deeds; neither good nor evil deeds can have any fruit as result. [...] When you say, 'My fellow-priests, your majesty, address me as Nāgasena,' what then is this Nāgasena? Pray, bhante, is the hair of the head Nāgasena?"

"Nay, verily, you majesty." [...]

"Are nails ... teeth ... skin ... flesh ... sinews ... [...] saliva ... snot ... synovial fluid ... urine ... brain of the head Nāgasena?"

"Nay, verily, your majesty."

"Is now, bhante, form / sensation / perception / predispositions / consciousness[15] Nāgasena?"

"Nay, verily, your majesty."

"Are then, bhante, form, sensation, perception, the predispositions, and consciousness[16] unitedly Nāgasena?"

---

[14] These "crimes" are ([Coomaraswamy, 2000], pg. 108) killing, stealing, sensual misconduct, lying, using mind-obfuscating substances.

[15] We abbreviated several questions into one; the reply to them is invariantly "Nay, verily, your majesty."

[16] These are the five Buddhist *skandhas*, aggregates. "skandhas (Sanskrit): literally 'aggregates', one of the terms used to describe the physical and mental constituents

"Nay, verily, your majesty."

"It it, then, bhante, something besides form, sensation, perception, the predispositions, and consciousness, which is Nāgasena?"

"Nay, verily, your majesty."

"Bhante, although I question you very closely, I fail to discover any Nāgasena. Verily now, bhante, Nāgasena is a mere empty sound. What Nāgasena is there here? Bhante, you speak a falsehood, a lie: there is no Nāgasena."[17]

If one tries to find the self of someone else as object (of someone else, in this case Milinda searching Nāgasena's self), all the arguments presented for objects (sect. 3.2) will apply. It will be much more interesting at this point to turn to one's inner experience in the quest of the subject.

3.3.2 Internal aggregate: attribution

If the *Milindapañha* dialogue seemed being a plain sophistry, it might be because it treats subject externally, as a person. Turning inside gives much more evidence, but it requires much sharper reasoning and vigilance, to se the activities in action.

As we have seen above (2.3.1), there is necessarily a difference between a subject of attribution and the true subject;[18] the subject of attribution is dependent on its objects (activities), not subsistent. As a complement to the object being always object of its subject (*i.e.* that object depends on the intentions of the subject and does not exist in experience *an sich*— see above), we may say that subject is always subject of its objects. The alleged individuality (personality) is constantly in the course of destruction and renewal,[19] in accordance with appearance and disappearance of its objects, with the wandering attachment and chaotic distractions. Such is a possible and historically existing interpretation of the famous Buddhist cycle of birth-and-death, from which one seeks to be freed. *(Alert to the*

---

of a person, among which there is no self. The five constituents are form, feeling, discrimination, conditioning factors and consciousness" ([Lopez, 2004], pg. 555.)

[17] [Koller, 1991], pg. 222–223.

[18] Some works, *e.g.* [Martino, 1963], term these two as "ego" and "self" respectively.

[19] [Coomaraswamy, 2000], pg.95

*reader: the following text, being written before the English terminology
stabilized, uses the word "soul" which is today's equivalent for ātman;
that may be misleding, since Buddhism rejects the ātman. Similarly for
eternity, the Absolute etc.; they are probably the best parallels in the
Christian (Occidental) culture, nevertheless rather misleading if taken
as originally Buddhist terms. As far as we are concerned here, this is
/ will be the case for the quotations from Kitayama, Coomaraswamy
and Suzuki.)*

> It is often claimed, that at that moment [of the insight into the
> workings of Everything] the life of the "I" is annihilated and
> personality disappears. In fact, what is annihilated is the mis-
> erable I, that, from the point of view of eternity, is nothing more
> than volume of unimportant experiences, deeds and thoughts.
> The phenomenon of what is called "I" is a sediment of millions
> images of consciousness that coagulate through corporal deter-
> minations. This "I", that is dust and unto dust shall return, is
> shrugged off in the process of purification of the soul [mind].[20]

The attachment to objects necessitates attachment to the subject (for
they become one in attachment, in the identification with the goal being
in anticipation fulfilled by that object), but as one may not grasp such
subject, suffering takes place. The following anecdote records Shên-kuan,
a monk, meeting Bodhidharma, 28th Buddhist patriarch:

> 'My soul [mind] is not yet pacified. Pray, master, pacify it!'
>
> 'Bring your soul here, and I will have it pacified.'
>
> Kuang hesitated for a moment but finally said, 'I have sought
> it these many years and am still unable to get hold of it!'
>
> 'There! it is pacified once for all.' This was Dharma's sentence.[21]

---

[20] "Öfters wird irrtümlich behauptet, daß dabei [= bei einem Blick an dem Gange des
Alls] das Ichleben verneint und die Persönlichkeit augegeben werde. In der Tat ist
das, was dabei verneint wird, das klägliche unjämmerliche Ich, das angesichtes der
Ewigkeit nichts ist ale ein Fülle unwichtiger Erlebnisse, Taten und Gedanken. Das
Phänomen, das man »Ich« nennt, ist Niederschlag von Millionen von Bewußtseins-
bildern, die sich durch körperliche Bestimmtheiten verdichten. Dieses »Ich«, das vom
Staube kommt und in Staub zergeht, wird durch den Reinigungsprozeß de Seele ab-
geschüttelt." ([Kitayama, 1944], pg. 75.)

[21] [Suzuki, 1961a], pg. 190.

41

Unfortunately, the cessation of subject-attachment does not come as easily as it might seem from the story, which is no doubt product of tradition; nevertheless, it illustrates the point: by the fact of realizing the vanity (or impossibility, to speak impersonally) of searching the soul/mind (subject), the soul/mind is pacified, the suffering ceases.

3.4 The tetralemma

Traditional Indian logic differs in one important aspect from the traditional occidental (Aristotelean) one: the principle of the excluded middle (*tertium non datur*) along with its consequences. In the following, we will try to assert that such a logic reflects the criticism of subject and object that we have just presented; and that it is consequently more suitable for describing one's inner experience, the *aporias* in particular.

3.4.1 Principle of the excluded middle

There are two fundamental logical principles:[22]

Principle of non-contradiction. From two contradictory assertions, one has to choose *at most one*, for not doing so would entail contradiction. This principle is held by both Indian logic[23] and Aristotle.

Principle of the excluded middle. From two contradictory assertions, one has to choose *at least one*, because both of them cannot be false at the same time. There is not a third possibility to choose from (*tertium non datur*), not a possibility in between these two contradictory propositions ("middle"). This principle is firmly held by Aristotle (and Aristotelean logic), whereas oriental thinkers were certainly less unanimous on that matter (the *way* in which this principle was not adopted is not homogeneous across India and certainly a matter of dispute of the interpreters; details below.)

Tetralemma are 4 possible truth-values Indian (Buddhist, in particular) logic uses to examine any given proposition A (in Aristotelean logic, as consequence of the adoption of *both* principles mentioned above, tetralemma reduces to a *dilemma*):

---

[22] [Bugault, 1994], pg. 281.

[23] [Tillemans, 1999], pg. 195.

1. A, affirmation is true (first term of the Aristotelean *dilemma*);
2. ¬A, negation is true (second term of the Aristotelean *dilemma*);
3. A&¬A, both are true (entails contradiction);[24]
4. ¬(A ∨ ¬A), neither affirmation nor negation is true (this is the "middle" or "third" excluded by Aristotelean logic).

Non-adoption of the principle of the excluded middle implies also the refutation of the double negation, for

$$\neg(A \vee \neg A) \to \neg A \& \neg\neg A \xrightarrow{\neg\neg A \to A} \neg A \& A$$

results in contradiction. The Buddhist philosopher Shengzhao (5th century) has it explicitly: "When you exclude an affirmation, take care not to include the affirmation of the contrary."[25]

This does not mean that the Indian logic is 3-valued. Rather, the 4th proposition of the tetralemma means that there is a "non-fulfilment of referential presuppositions", that the proposition is "not semantically well-formed", that its subject is "in fact null".[26]

An example of such a question is "what are the height or the measures of the son of a sterile woman and an eunuch."[27] Similarly, considering a proposition from Dream in sect. 2.1.3.2: "I (S_2) am going to be killed (in the dream)" From the point of view of S_1, the awakened subject, the proposition does not apply; it is void of meaning for its subject does not exist and never existed: the correct answer is "neither affirmed, nor negated".

This enlarged possibilities (with regards to Aristotelean logic) are paid for by the fact that such logic ceases to be purely formal (substitutional). This is given by the fact that the 4th proposition of the tetralemma applies in case of a *semantical* nonsense, taking the field of reference into account; what objects do we consider objects is given by intention, by the point of

---

[24] Some interpreters avoid the contradiction by understanding the 3rd proposition as "x is partly A and partly ¬A" or "x is A in one sense and ¬A in another" ([Katsura, 2000], pg. 203).

[25] "Veillez, lorsque vous excluez une assertion, à ne pas inclure l'assertion du contraire." ([Faure, 1998], pg. 66)

[26] [Bugault, 1994], pg 283–184; quoting D. S. Ruegg, *The uses of the four positions of the* catuṣkoṭi *and the problem of the description of reality in Mahāyāna Buddhism*, in *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 5, pg. 1–71.

[27] "de quel genre est la taille ou le physique du fils d'une femme stérile et d'un eunuque [...] cat un tel fils n'existe pas." ([Bugault, 1994], pg. 284; from *Traité de la grande vertu de sagesse*.)

view (sect. 3.2) and what is true in some situation may be quite different in another situation; this is expressed by the distinction of conventional and ultimate truth, as we will see below (sect. 3.4.2). On the other hand, substitution assumes that such field of reference is absolute.

3.4.1.1 Aristotelean digression

[Hauzer, 2002] argues[28], that Aristotle accepted the principle of the excluded middle for the sake of scientific (including philosophy) methodology, which is thus much simplified (*e.g.*, can use *reductio ad absurdum*), although he was aware of the 4th proposition, as is supposedly manifest from the following passage from *Metaphysics*:

> To say of what is that it is not, or of what is not that it is, is false, while to say of what is that it is, and of what is not that it is not, is true; so that he who says of anything that it is, or that it is not, will say either what is true or what is false; *but neither what is nor what is not is said to be or not to be.*[29]

The last obscure part can be understood depending on the sentence structure (signified by parentheses; subjects *slanted*):

1. neither (*what is* is said to be or not to be), nor (*what is not* is said to be or not to be): this interpretation does not hold, for both parenthesized parts are trivially true, therefore the two-sided negation of them is false.

2. (*what neither is nor is not*) is not said (to be or not to be): Aristotle says that the subject (the "middle", *tertium*: *what neither is nor is not*) is not excluded (neither affirmed nor negated). It is this reading that holds.

The conclusion, that the exclusion of the middle is perhaps merely "a methodological principle for the creation of two-valued logic, not an ontological of gnoseological one,"[30] seems to be weakened by other places

---

[28] [Hauzer, 2002], pg. 92–93.

[29] [Aristotle, 1968] 1011b 26–30, Γ, 7 (emphasis ours).

[30] "Snad se příliš nespleteme, budeme-li chápat zásadu o vyloučeném třetím u ARISTO-TELA jako metodologický princip pro vytvoření dvojhodnotové logiky a nikoli jako nezrušitelný princip ontologický či gnoseologický." ([Hauzer, 2002], pg. 93.)

from the *Metaphysics*, for example "And at the same time our discussion with him is evidently about nothing at all; for he says nothing. For he says neither 'yes' nor 'no', but 'yes and no' [3rd proposition of the tetralemma]; and again he denies both of these and says 'neither yes nor no' [4th proposition of the tetralemma]; for otherwise there would already be something definite."[31]

The traditional Aristotelean logic is unable to capture the "answer" to an *aporia* (which is, by definition, a problem without solution), for the answer, the 4th proposition of the tetralemma, is not *in*formation of the self-identical subject but *trans*formation (emergence) of the subject itself.

3.4.2 Two truths

Historically, the distinction of two truths to be motivated by reconciliation of Buddha's apparently contradictory statements, such as that there is no "I" and, at the same time, that the law of *karma* acts upon the personalities (rebirth). "Such apparent conflicts were resolved by distinguishing between contexts in which the Buddha speaks the strict and literal truth, and contexts in which the Buddha adapts his speech to the capacities of an audience not yet philosophically prepared to understand the strict and literal truth."[32] This distinction was later made explicit by the Abhidharma scholasticism. The two truths could be defined in the following way (note that the Abhidharma version of the ultimate truth merely explicates the second point, based on the criticism of subsistent objects we presented above):

> **Conventional truth.** A statement is conventionally true if and only if it is commonsensically assertible.
>
> **Ultimate truth.** A statement is ultimately true if and only if it corresponds to ultimately existent states of affairs, *i.e.*, names only ultimately existing entities, and depicts those entities it names in a way that correctly pictures how they in fact stand in the world.
>
> **Ultimate truth (Abhidharma version).** A statement is ultimately true if and only if it corresponds to reality and

---

[31] [Aristotle, 1958], 1008a 31–34, Γ, 4.
[32] [Siderits, 1989]

> neither asserts not presupposes that wholes exist.[33] [The
> Abhidharma version of the ultimate truth equals to the
> previous, provided that wholes (in the sense of indepen-
> dent, subsistent entities) *do not* exist: this is precisely the
> Buddhist doctrine of dependent arising, valid for anything
> whatsoever—see the criticism of objects above, sect. 3.2.]

The fact of going beyond Aristotelean dilemma (using the 4th term of
the tetralemma) makes it possible to take the subject (point of view) into
account; it allows one to escape contradictions resulting from the dilemma
(unidimensional truth) by offering the "middle way" of twofold negation,
which does not reduce to neither of the opposites. This, in turn, makes
multiple truths possible, taking the subject and correspondingly changing
objects and truths into account (or, with some sarcasm, making the truth
practically useful).

Thus there is not one truth, not even two truths, but many more of them
(although still categorizable either as conventional or ultimate), depending
on their context, the point of view.

> The occidental (not exclusively Christian) thought is in a way
> "diabolic" (from *diabolos*, "double"): essentially manicheist, it
> strives to cleave the real into truth and error, good and bad,
> and considers precisely equal aptitude to the contraries, rejec-
> tion of the principle of the excluded middle, to be diabolic. The
> Buddhist thought, having diabolized the diabolic, by cleaving
> any simple opposition, multiplies levels of the reality, the per-
> spectives from which one discovers "thousand plateaux" of the
> real.[34]

Otherwise said, a conventional truth (which is *not* one) is true with regards
to its own the conceptual framework; such a truth is only a pragmatic device

---

[33] [Siderits, 1997], pg. 6.

[34] "La pensée occidentale (et pas seulement chrétienne) est en quelque sorte « diabo-
lique » (de *diabolos*, « double ») : foncièrement manichéenne, elle s'attache à dédou-
bler le réel en vérité et erreur, bien et mal, et tient pour quasi diabolique, précisement,
l'égale aptitude aux contraires, le refus du principe du tiers-exclu. La pensée boud-
dhique, en diabolisant le diabolique, en dédoublant toute opposition simple, multiplie
les niveaux de réalité, les perspectives d'où l'on découvre les « mille plateaux » du
réel." ([Faure, 1998], pg. 214)

that allows us to cope with our environment and has no claims of grasping how things "really" are.

The supposition behind is that as a limit of more and more true conventional truths, *ultimate truth* exists. After all, there is a domain in which the Aristotelean logic would apply: the Reality as it really is, without any perspective. But what seems logical continuation of establishing the conventional truth(s) as opposed to the ultimate one was severely criticized by some Buddhist thinkers.

3.5 Nāgārjuna's rejections

Nāgārjuna is a Buddhist monk—philosopher—dialectic of the 2nd or 3rd century, founder of *Mādhyamaka* (or the school of the Middle) and author of *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, a great source of ulterior commentaries and studies until today.[35] The chief target of his criticism were philosophers of Abhidharma (Buddhist scholasticism) and he tried refute their theories using their own methods, those of rigid logic.[36]

3.5.1 Rejection of the tetralemma

The tetralemma (tightly coupled with the doctrine of two truths) implies that reality can be conceptually seized, though in a negative way (neither—neither). Using concepts is a necessary concession when trying to convey a doctrine (which may be, for the teacher, based on experience) in order to give indication to the adept.

> Nāgārjuna admits exceptionally, for pedagogical reasons, gradual and adapted instruction (*anuśāna, MK*, 18, 8); one can assume that the 4th proposition is, in his view, provisionally the least false.[37]

The reason for the 4th proposition being "the least false" is that it negates the point of view of the subject and makes it open, at least theoretically, to

---

[35] [Cheuet, 1998], pg. 57–58.

[36] [Bugault, 1994], pg. 250–254.

[37] "Nāgārjuna admet exceptionellement, pour des raisons pédagogiques, un enseignement graduel et adapté (*anuśāna, MK*, 18, 8), on peut présumer que la quatrième proposition est, à ses yeux, provisoirement la moins fausse." ([Bugault, 1994], pg. 247.)

the higher truth, to a different perspective, to different *concepts*. The point
is that such progression will never achieve the ultimate truth, that which
is beyond any concepts, beyond perspective; the 4th proposition negates a
particular perspective, but not the fact of taking perspective itself.

> We will see Nāgārujuna [...] passing off the tetralemma in most
> cases, [...] considering event the 4th proposition inadequate as
> it is a proposition and, as such, dependent on the polarizing and
> dichotomizing activity of reasoning, be it in the negative way.[38]

For this reason, Nāgārjuna's argumentation in *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*
is purely refutative, the point being that any concepts are inadequate. His
method is to show that no concept is inherently existent, founded in the
ultimate reality. The perspective from which stems this approach, "pure
and simple refutation, without any positive counterpart"[39] (*i.e.* refuting
successively all propositions of the tetralemma) is, again, soteriological.
Nāgarjuna, although himself a brilliant philosopher, is primarily a Buddhist
whose interest is the cessation of suffering, which cannot be product of
reason in any way:

> The awakening, can it be achieved from being?—No.—From
> non-being?—No.—From being *and* non-being?—No.—From
> *neither* being, *nor* non-being?—No.—How am I to grasp its
> signification in that case?—There is nothing to be grasped.
> Grasp the ungraspable, that is what is called "achieve the awak-
> ening".[40]

As result, Nāgārjuna says that "the ultimate truth is that there is no ulti-
mate truth."[41]; if one asks, thinking having trapped Nāgārjuna in his own
logic, "is this proposition itself the ultimate truth?", the answer would be,

---

[38] "Nous verrons Nāgarjuna [...] passer outre au tétralemme dans la majorité de cas,
[... car] il estime que même la quatrième proposition est inadéquate parce qu'elle est
une proposition et, come telle, tributaire de l'activité polarisante et dichotomique de
la pensée, fût-ce en mode négatif." ([Bugault, 1994], pg. 247.)

[39] "la réfutation pure et simple sans contrepartie positive" ([Bugault, 1994], pg. 264.)

[40] "L'éveil peut-il s'obtenir à partir de l'être?—Non.—À partir du non-être?—Non.—
À partir de l'être *et* du non-être?—Non.—En ne partant *ni* de l'être *ni* du non-
être?—Non.—Comment dès lors en saisir le sens?—Il n'est rien de saissisable. Saisir
l'insaisissable, voilà ce qu'on nomme "obtenir l'éveil"." ([Faure, 1998], pg. 150.)

[41] [Siderits, 1989], pg. 1.

most likely, the "noble silence",[42] through which the Mādhyamikas (including Nāgārjuna) ultimately talk.

We may ask, what will serve as the scale to order conventional points of view from those that are "less true" to those "more true", as a limit having and objective, adequate, ultimate knowledge—for were the ultimate truth admitted, closeness of a conventional truth to the ultimate truth would be the measure of truthfulness. (The western philosophy knows the same problem: knowledge of the first principle (God) in (neo)scholasticism rests on the notion of analogy (ananoetical knowledge) where a higher being is known (inadequately, though not plainly falsely) through a lower being. However, as the series does not converge to an adequate knowledge (adequate knowledge takes no point of view, that is not particular in any sense; is only unconceptual or straightforwardly contradictory?), what is the measure of the truthfulness of the analogical propositions?) For this reason, [Siderits, 1989] (pg. 6) proposes to take consistency ("reflective equilibrium") as the criterion for (conventional) truth: building a set of beliefs by using arbitrarily chosen rules ("causal conditions of knowledge"), starting from "stock intuitions", which share wide acceptance. In case of disaccord, stock intuitions or canons of reasoning are modified, etc., until there is an equilibrium.

It could be debated, whether the rejection of the ultimate truth amounts to saying that

1. the ultimate reality is beyond concepts; or that
2. the ultimate reality is a fiction, as it rests on the presupposition of independent existence, with which a correspondence of concepts should be established.

For a practically inclined reader, these two statements amount to the same (though the former may provoke the will to discover a cognitive faculty beyond reasoning). Siderits argues, that it is the second interpretation that does justice to the founder of Mādhyamika: "The point of Nāgārjuna's dialectic is not that reality transcends conceptualization, but that truth must conform to human practice, that philosophical rationality is doomed precisely insofar as it seeks a truth free of all taint of human needs and interests"[43]

---

42 [Bugault, 1994], pg. 310.
43 [Siderits, 1989], pg. 7.

Nāgārjuna's theory is not satisfactory as long as there is some hope for the ultimate truth behind the rejection anyway: "When we give up the ultimate truth and resign ourselves to nothing more than conventional truth, we may still be tempted to suppose that we at least have *that* right"[44] But the purpose of philosophy is to help us get rid of reliance on conceptuality, to cure this cancerous growth of fabrications.

3.5.2 Śūnyatā

Śūnyatā is a key-concept of Nāgārjuna's philosophy intimately related to the rejection of the ultimate truth. The usual English rendering "emptiness" (or "void", french "vacitué" etc.) has misleading negative connotation (for this reason, some sources keep the original term, as we also do). The common nihilist misunderstanding of *śūnyatā* as "nothing" is not founded in the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* text:[45] there is a difference between empty class (*śūnya* or *śūnyatvā*) and absence of class (*śūnyatā*). "The emptiness of Nāgārjuna is simply 'evacuation' (emptying) of thinkers' theses that are filled with themselves."[46]

Furthermore, Nāgārjuna is not saying that *śūnyatā* is the ultimate reality, the ultimate truth; he affirms that *emptiness itself is empty*. How to understand that proposition?[47] If emptiness were non-empty, a conventionally existing thing (such as PASSION), would be seen as empty (existing only conventionally), yet this emptiness itself would be its *substratum*, that which is not conventional, absolute, independent. But this supposedly independent emptiness depends on the conventional existence of passion, since without that it would not be possible to say that the passion is empty. Otherwise said, the contents of the emptiness is passion's lack of inherent existence, nothing more. As consequence, the ultimate truth depends on the conventional truth, which is a contradiction, hence the ultimate truth is possible only as "conventionally ultimate", that is, conventional. Product of thought, nothing more.

---

44 [Siderits, 1989], pg. 16.
45 [Bugault, 1994], pg. 311.
46 "La vacuité chez Nāgārjuna est simplement « évacuation » des thèses de penseurs trop pleins d'eux-mêmes." ([Faure, 1998], pg. 152.)
47 The following draws from an excellent exposition of the emptiness of emptiness in [Garfield, 2002], pg. 24–45.

The emptiness of emptiness is the fact that not even empti-
ness exists ultimately, that it is also dependent, conventional,
nominal, and in the end, it is just the everydayness of the every-
day. Penetrating to the depths of being, we find ourselves back
on the surface of things, and so discover that there is nothing,
after all, beneath those deceptive surfaces. Moreover, what is
deceptive about them is simply the fact that we take there to
be ontological depths lurking just beneath.[48]

3.6 Conclusion

The criticism of the notion of independent and subsistent subject and of
independent and subsistent object resulted in affirmation of their mutual
dependency. If they are dependent, the notion of truth must be redefined
accordingly; and this redefinition was provided by the two truths doctrine
and corresponding structures of the logic (the tetralemma).

The purpose of this criticism was twofold. Firstly, we tried to show
that the results of chapter 2 have close correspondences in the Buddhist
tradition and that this tradition provides parallel and thorough philosoph-
ical foundations for them. Establishing this correspondence permitted us
to freely mix Buddhist and our own argumentation in the following text.

Secondly, there is implicit criticism of vast part of the occidental thought
resting upon the concepts criticized; their rejection may help us to solve
some of the *aporias* that inevitably arise once the conceptual framework is
established. On the other hand, we are well aware of the fact that intellec-
tual understanding of the criticism is only the first step, if the conceptual
structure has already been internalized. Since we have shown these fun-
damental Western concepts to be aporetic in their nature, any problem
involving them by its formulation is itself aporetic and may not be solved
as a technical problem, by providing information. Therefore, the "hardcore
philosophy" has subject and functioning of the mind as its irreducible part.

Although the Buddhist doctrine (or the framework from chapter 2)
turns out to be more elegant (faithful, natural) way to structure the expe-
rience if the problem of suffering is in question, it is nevertheless no more
than concepts and entails itself inherent *aporias*, though at much higher

---

[48]   [Priest, 2002], pg. 267.

level: the relationship of the conventional and the ultimate and the notion of *śūnyatā* in particular. These problematic parts were pointed out by Nāgārjuna and we tried to present his understanding along with the middle way he "proposes", not forgetting that the "solution" entails emergence and is not purely rational: the subject must give up his quest for the ultimate as opposed to the conventional: the ignorance→craving→suffering structure is at work here, again.

Chapter 4

Some (Buddhist) practices

This chapter explores, as a logical continuation, some Buddhist practices that pertain to the subject: how to break the chain of dependent arising. We may call it practical philosophy in the strict sense of the word—the necessary complement to intellectual analysis we presented in chapter 3.

As we have seen repeatedly, the key to understand Buddhism is to take it primarily as a cure, not as a pure theory. Historically, much more important accent was put on *orthopraxis* rather than *orthodoxa* (if taken as abstract knowledge without any implications for practical life), as we already indicated in the Introduction.[1] The advantages of such approach are obvious: it is already a straightforward and rational (in the sense of *pragmatic*) interpretation of morality, stemming directly from its goal: elimination of suffering. Seen from the other side, we have a criterion of its validity and applicability, at least to the extent we pretend to know actually what the elimination of suffering (extinction) is.

It could be said with some irony and perhaps bitterness that the disastrous consequences of the absence of definitive perspective for ethics can be best seen in the history of occidental thought. Arguably, the occident inherited the roman law combined with Jewish rule-centered ethics through the Christian synthesis of both; the normative inclination is expressed by the fact that the ultimate measure is obedience to the rule, not the (mostly implicit and unclear) bad effect of trespassing it. If the normative is ultimate, for itself, it is experientially unjustified: either it has no justification whatsoever or there is an ad-hoc, merely theoretical explanation of the

---

[1] See citebugault-inde, pg. 53–73, for and account on generally Indian approach to the suffering.

sort "God wants it and his will is unfathomable to human reason". The drawbacks are obvious:

- it may have much less motivational power, including the temptation to slyly circumvent it,[2]
- because of the lack of justification, the applicability is undetermined; this results mostly in the claim of universal applicability; for without a criterion, it is either valid in all situations or in none, the latter being excluded by the very existence of that rule.

Buddhist ethics is, in contrast, contextual and not normative (and, as we will see, some schools are even anti-normative). The precepts Buddhists preach are pragmatic and do not equal functionally the ten Commandments (in their usual interpretation: *i.e.* that and external being will *impose* punishment in the form of suffering). If one transgresses a precept, one "punishes" himself/herself by the very (necessary) effects of that action. In this sense, the concepts of good and evil never appear as something absolute; something can be evil with regards to the way to liberation, but not by itself; likewise for the good. Nothing exists independently, by itself; everything is in a context, in a situation:

> Those advanced in their practice are not attached to the precepts, nor do they break them to prove how liberated they are. The precepts are like a scaffolding: necessary to erect a large structure, but who would insist on the scaffolding remaining when the building is completed? Remember, the precepts are not moral commandments handed down by an omniscient or divine being. Rather, they reveal how a deeply enlightened, fully perfected person, with no sense of self-and-other, behaves. Such an individual doesn't imitate the precepts; they imitate him. Until you reach that point, however, you would do well to observe the precepts, for unless your mind is free of the disturbance that heedless behavior produces, you will never come to awakening. That is why the precepts are the foundation of spiritual training.[3]

---

[2] See *e.g.* [Pascal, 1985] for am extreme deterrent.

[3] [Kapleau, 1966], pg. 231–232.

Basic precepts are traditionally 10 in number, first five for everyone, additional five for monks: abstain from killing, stealing, sensual misconduct, lying, using intoxicating substances; eating at forbidden time (after noon), entertainments (dancing, singing, music), beautifying the body (cosmetics), sleeping on a high or luxurious bed, accepting money.[4]

Kitayama enumerates, in [Kitayama, 1934], three basic evils (in the soteriological sense, again), which correspond to will, feeling and knowing (Wille, Gemüt, Vernunft) three basic psychic categories in Buddhism: desire, hatred and ignorance ($\approx$delusion). They are also referred to as "three poisons".[5] Although it may be surprising to see ignorance categorized as *moral* vice, it is understandable once the Buddhist category of "evil" is properly understood: it is any obstacle to the liberation, to the cure. These "poisons" are tightly intertwined in praxis: first, they arise mutually dependently (ignorance is the root of all the other vices and at the same time is preserved by them—sect. 2.4.1). Second, they are understood in much broader sense than their names signify: desire includes all attachment, hatred stands for any discrimination (inherent goodness $\times$ badness, beauty $\times$ ugliness, ...), ignorance refers to the ignorance of the very nature of reality (*i.e.*, the Four Noble Truths).

---

[4]   The list given by Coomaraswamy diverges in the last six: "The group of ten comprises the first four above and additionally slander, offensive speech, frivolous speech, covetousness, malicious intentions, false opinions." ("Le groupe de dix comprend les quatre premières des cinq pratiques ci-dessus, et de plus éviter la calomnie, s'abstenir de paroles outrageantes, de conversations frivoles, ne pas convoiter, ne pas nourrir de fausses opinions."; [Coomaraswamy, 2000], pg. 108.)

[5]   "These approaches [to the existence (*Daseinshaltung*) according to the Buddhist conception] are the most corrupt states of consciousness, that obstruct the true aspiration at liberation and at the knowing of the relative and absolute Being, and thus also the knowing of the being (*esse*) of every being (*ens*). ... These three attitudes (*Daseinshaltungen*) [desire, hatred, ignorance] are referred to as "three poisons", as they are always at work in the everyday existence." ("Diese Arten [der Daseinshaltung nach buddhistischer Auffassung] gelten als allerverderblichste Gestaltungen des Bewußtseins, die die wahre Strebung nach der Erlösung und die Erkenntnis des relativen und absoluten Seins und somit des Seins alles Seienden verhindern. ... Die ersten drei Daseinshaltungen [Begierde, Zorn, Unwissen] werden sogar „die drei Gifte" genannt, da sie im alltäglichen Dasein überall und immer wirksam sind."; [Kitayama, 1934], pg. 79)

"Desire is the will of the evil, hatred is the feeling of the evil and the ignorance is the knowing of the evil." ("Begierde ist der Wille des Bösen, der Zorn ist das Gemüt des Bösen und das Unwissen ist die Vernunft des Bösen."; ([Kitayama, 1934], pg. 70))

The Buddhist ethics involves much more than mere mental cultivation, for there is no strict division line between me and the rest of the world: the community (*sangha*) is one of its important concepts. Further, ethics does not reduce to mere intellectual analysis, thought that is the viewpoint we take for the sake of conceptual clarity, compassion being the most illustrious example.

Our analysis of morality will rest upon the framework we elaborated earlier, which should have provided sufficient basis for philosophically founded concept of suffering. As we have seen in 2.3.4, the solution of suffering will be twofold: providing a solid basis for training (by reducing subject fluctuation; sect. 4.1) and breaking the "mental cage", the *aporia* of the (strengthened) mind (sect. 4.2).

4.1   Mental stabilization

Numerous examples were proposed showing that activities of a person may change rather frequently in time (BUS, DREAM, MOVIE, ...). The common core was that the emergence (necessarily) as well as the submergence (frequently) is not a matter of choice of a given subject. Given this, how can a discipline be possible? Are we not damned to be subject to unceasing chaotic flux of mental objects, which in part depend in turn on external events out of our control? Such state is the cycle of rebirth, eternal wandering.[6]

If one is to engage in discipline (and this will be valid, *mutatis mutandis*, for any enduring activity, like scientific research, painting, music, ...), the first step is to provide a solid basis on which the respective activities can be cultivated. As an analogy (and a digression into occidental mythology), the prince going to the underground cave to cut heads of the dangerous dragon must already have some physical force to do it.

---

[6]   "The soul is disturbed through the approaches to existence (*Daseinshaltungen*) and wanders in the undisruptible cycle of eternal recurrence; this recurrence is, in the Buddhist sense, the eternal lornness, damnation, the most profound abasement and obliteration of the eternal in man (*Buddhatā*)." ("Die Seele wird durch die Daseinshaltungen zerrüttet und so wandert sie in dem unertrinnbaren Kreise der ewigen Wiederkehr; diese Wiederkehr ist in dem buddhistischen Sinne die ewige Verlorenheit, die Verdamnis, die stärkste Erniedrigung und Verdeckung der Würde des Ewigen im Menschen (Buddhatā)."; [Kitayama, 1934], pg. 80)

4.1.1 Distractions as fragmentation of subject

Definition 4.1. Distraction *is a mental object that is not explicit or implicit object of concentration.*

Human mind is by nature (though perhaps not in its nature) flooded with distractions of all kinds. An experiment of observing the mind leads to the observation (if the observer is not entirely taken away by the mental chaos) that the greater is the resolution, the more thought-fragments appear, to the rave of impenetrable chaos with thousand thoughts per second. The Buddhist expression for such state of mind is "monkey mind": jumping whither and thither.

The "part" of mind unused by the object of concentration (if there is any) is normally immediately filled with distractions. Although they arise unpredictably and beyond control of the subject, they are not completely random. Every single distraction reveals existence of an activity in the subject; for otherwise it would have no reason to be. Otherwise said, clinging to a mental image is manifestation of a goal that "calls" the image to existence. The mind obeys the principle *esse est percipi*, with some simplification. A distraction is alive by virtue of "me" willing to see it and cannot exist otherwise.

What "me"? If we take subject as correlative to its ultimate goal, distractions reveal that some activities are independent of the subject. Having seen that subjects may alter one another over time (fluctuation), now is seem that even multiple independent subjects (if they are defined via goals) exist.

It seems relevant in this respect, that Jung (*e.g.* in [Jung, 1966]) shows, that there is almost always, to some extent, more "complexes" within the soul (both conscious and unconscious). Of these, the strongest is (normally) the "I" or the *Persona*; it is accompanied by its counter-balance, *Shadow*, which may take control over the individual from time to time. These complexes are autonomous (with regards to each other) in such a way that one does not know about another. This may be experienced (through reflection or in vigilance) as an activity acting as if by itself (though through the "I"), without any relation to the goals of conscious "I", frequently directly against its conscious principles. Psychopathological cases (such as schizophrenia, where there are multiple "I", or complexes, of comparable strength) differ only in degree from the picture of soul of an ordinary person. It can be

argued that it is much better to personify such autonomous forces (as possession of devils or other infernal/heavenly creatures, such as in medieval popular Christianity or Tibetan Buddhism) that to be oblivious of them or to discard them as "merely psychological" and (consequently) nonexistent. There is no reflection on what is *a priori* seen unreal.

4.1.1.1 Attachment

Distraction reveals a goal, goal reveals an *attachment* (in Buddhist terms). Any ordinary (and the question is if there is something else) activity is the source of attachment (there is my will to perform it) and obfuscates the mind. The explanation may be manifold, depending on the facet of ignorance we choose to regard; probably the most straightforward one is that it affirms the existence of its (alleged) subject, or, otherwise said, that the subject *identifies with it* to some extent, is attached to it; and this attachment is precisely the obfuscation. Although desires (sexuality, anger, . . .) are indeed concerned in the Buddhist ethics (and are primary in the popular doctrine), morality applies in general to any other activity to which the mind clings (excessively; but that is pleonasm for Buddhists), even *e.g.* attachment to the Buddhist doctrine or to merciful deeds.

In the following, we will analyze three methods for dealing with attachment (and, accordingly, distractions), ordered by their efficiency and depth: seclusion, vigilance and meditation.

4.1.2 Seclusion

The causation of attachment by sensual objects is by no means necessary, for it is always an activity to which one is attached and the external object is, in turn, object of that activity—it stimulates *what already exists* in the mind. However, if the activity woken up is spontaneously strong enough, submergence may be as if forced by the external object. The way to prevent the submergence is to interrupt the exposition; this either on permanent basis (monastery, ascetic seclusion, . . .) or by taking the necessary action in every particular case before the provoked activity destroys (as is anticipated in vigilance—see below) the decision-making faculty and becomes the subject itself.

Such separation does not go to the root of the problem: an autonomous

activity existing in the mind. To put an end to the mental chaos, the solution must be transformation of the mind itself, of activities. The difference of external object and attachment is illustrated by the following well-known story:

> Two traveling monks reached a river where they met a young woman. Wary of the current, she asked if they could carry her across. One of the monks hesitated, but the other quickly picked her up onto his shoulders, transported her across the water, and put her down on the other bank. She thanked him and departed.
>
> As the monks continued on their way, the one was brooding and preoccupied. Unable to hold his silence, he spoke out. "Brother, our spiritual training teaches us to avoid any contact with women, but you picked that one up on your shoulders and carried her!"
>
> "Brother," the second monk replied, "I set her down on the other side, while you are still carrying her."[7]

For this reason, one could object that since the causation is not necessary, he does not *have to* separate himself from the external sources and rather will strive to become detached from those objects mentally. It is no doubt true *theoretically*; but the Buddhist practice is always subject-bound—it is primarily a cure, not a doctrine—and such decision may and may not be beneficial for the adept in question. The question to ask would be why does he cling to keeping those objects if he considers himself detached from them. Another question: isn't there an unwillingness to avow that I *am* attached to some objects (more precisely: activities) and that I am ashamed of it even before myself? We come back to the role of self-knowledge in a moment.

4.1.3 Detachment in vigilance

To make mind less fluctuating (less attached, less distracted), a stable point (persistent activity) is needed to tame the chaos. Such activity is provided

---

[7] We were unfortunately unable to find this famous Zen story printed (though it almost certainly appears in [Suzuki, 1961a]) and reproduce the version found at http://www. rider.edu/~suler/zenstory/obsessed.html (as of 16th April 2006).

precisely by the ultimate goal (correlative to the subject). It is almost a truism to say that to make the ultimate goal present in mind, one has to be aware of it. The awareness of an activity is *vigilance*,[8] introduced in sect. 2.3.3.1, existing alongside with the activity itself; in this case, it is its maximum degree, that is, awareness of the ultimate goal. The more-or-less of vigilance comes from the fact that a goal is not a point to be reached but rather an activity that is present, at least virtually through its subordinate activities. One may be aware of his/her immediate activity (verbalized perhaps as "me, I walk, right here and right now") or of its causes, proximate or remote ("I am going to have lunch at my grand-mom's"—which is being expressed by walking).

It can be objected (righteously) that such an activity uselessly takes a lot of mental capacity away, to the detriment of the "real" activity that is going on. But such is the case at the beginning (though this may actually signify years). Learning how to walk is at the beginning also rather energy-consuming, though later it takes so little of the mind that it can coexist with virtually any other activity. Most of the positive effects of vigilance may be observed when it has been fully habitualized. For if one is vigilant only by an explicit effort of his will, this activity will cease to exist as soon as another activity will demand full attention—which is precisely the case where it would be useful to have the stable point to anticipate and prevent submergence of the subject. When habitual it exists without being explicitly willed.

The stability of subject one gains through vigilance is at most equal to the stability of the ultimate goal. One may be doer of several aggregates of activities which are non-communicating, disjoint, unrelated and still being aware of it; otherwise said, to deal with distractions (and attachment) at their root, to develop the habit of serenity, a much stricter practice is needed (meditation—see below, sect. 4.1.4).

Nonetheless, vigilance is not only practice of detachment but equally (or even more importantly) observation of one's mind. The goal of the Buddhist practice being thoroughly practical (not theoretical) and consisting in dissolving ignorance, as much mindfulness as possible is expedient. No doctrine equals the experience, which comes, unstructured, by itself in

---

[8] *smrti*; some literature on Buddhism uses the word "mindfulness" instead; we prefer vigilance since it has not other denotations and the latin *vigilatio* had the same meaning in Christianity.

the fullest intensity, in the full awareness, in the state of vigilance.

> "Have the yourself for light, have yourself for the only refuge,
> the Law [Dharma] for light and refuge."
>
> [Buddha] explicates that it practically signifies life of unceasing
> watchfulness (*smrti*). The accent that Buddhism puts upon
> presence of the spirit can hardly be exaggerated; nothing should
> be done absent-mindedly; nothing should be done so that one
> could say "I didn't have the intention to do it"; for a sin [*i.e.*, a
> deed being karmically bad] committed because of inadvertence
> is worse than a deliberate one.[9]

The reason why absent-mindedness is worse than any conscious deed is that
ignorance is the root of all suffering and dwelling in the ignorance amounts
to perpetuating it.

It is important to note that incessant attention does not yet imply
judgement upon moral value of that action, despite it being the factual
base of such judgement. Before changing one's activities, one has to know
them thoroughly as they are. It is not possible to start from "Point Zero",
as a *tabula rasa*—that should be the outcome of the cure (in the sense
of detachment, *not* as total non-activity)—, one's habits (deeply rooted
activities) already exist and cannot be denied and cannot even be pushed
out by religious zealousness; if one denied the habits, they would show up
(in disguise, unconsciously—which is worse) as the preliminary voluntary
aspect influencing any activity (sect. 2.3.3). Strict separation of subject
and object is not possible. This would lead to erroneous self-deception of
the kind "I want to achieve enlightenment"—"Why?"—"To save all beings
from suffering."—"Do you want them to be saved or rather *you* to be the
savior?" Thus the reflection upon one's motivations for "following the path"
is already a step targeting the most coarse self-deception.[10]

---

[9]   "« Soyez avec le Soi (*âtman*) pour lampe, le Soi pour unique refuge, la Loi [Dharma]
pour lampe et refuge. »

[Le Bouddha] explique que cela signifie en pratique une vie d'incessant rappel (*smrti*).
L'accent mis par le Bouddhisme sur la présence d'esprit peut difficilement être exa-
géré ; on ne doit rien faire avec un esprit absent ; on ne doit rien faire dont on pourrait
dire : « Je n'avais par l'intention de faire cela » ; car un péché commis par inadvertance
est pire qu'un péché délibéré." ([Coomaraswamy, 2000], pg. 90.)

[10]   For a dedicated volume on this topic, see [Trungpa, 1987].

This problem of self-deception (addressed systematically previously as well) and the correlative cognitive-voluntary dependence can be diminished in certain measure by separating the two activities, of observing and of judging, in time: instead of digging the "data" for judging from unreliable memory (aposterior reflection), one observes his own activities with judgement suspended; and in a time dedicated for reflection, the judgement is carried out. In Buddha's words:

> Here a bhikkhu, ardent, clearly comprehending things and [being] mindful, lives observing (the activities of) the body, having overcome covetousness and repugnance towards the world (of body); observing feelings [(the activities) of mind / mental objects], having overcome covetousness and repugnance towards the world (of feelings [of mind / of mental objects]) [11]

Paradoxically (again), the observation of one's activities leads to changing them, and without changing the activities disinterested observation is virtually impossible. Little by little, though, the detailed observation and scrutinization of one's activities does discover some of them hitherto unconscious:

> By pointing out particular approaches to the existence (*Daseinshaltungen*) in the self-analytic, we are able to shed light on everyday consciousness, thus hitting the limits of everydayness of this very *Dasein* and being guided on the way out of the everydayness to the eternal homeland. [12]

4.1.3.1 Aposterior reflection as aid

As shown above (2.3.3.2), aposterior reflection is prone to perpetuating self-deception. But as the adept that has not yet cultivated to the full extent his habit of vigilance (which is complementary and superior to aposterior reflection), there is no other choice; some cases may be so counter-deceptive

---

[11] [Koller, 1991], pg. 205; abbreviations in [brackets].

[12] "Durch das genaue Aufzeigen der einzelnen Daseinshaltungen in der Selbstanalytik können wir unser Alltäglichkeitsbewußtseinn erleuchten und dadurch an die Grenze der Alltäglichkeit des eigenene Daseins stoßen und so werden wir in die Suche der ewigen Heimat über die Alltäglichkeit hinaus geleitet." ([Kitayama, 1934], pg. 80.)

that the subject will not find his own "re"-constructions of the goals plausible.

SOCCER. A young man will become a member of a soccer team. To himself, he may justify it by the fact that he needs some physical activity. He will become a soccer enthusiast, practicing several times a week. After a few months (weeks), a girl that was in the team quits. Suddenly, the young man realizes that he is no longer a soccer enthusiasts; he may come to see that nothing else changed except the girl quitting and discovers that his interest for her was the real drive for entering the team etc. Of course, he may also become even more a soccer enthusiast, to falsify for himself (subconsciously, perhaps) such a logical conclusion.

Scrutinizing one's own behavior (if it is inconsistent with itself) is, in small scale, the same as being confronted with a paradox: may result in "interpretation" or in *katharsis*, emergence—if one is ready to acknowledge and accept his self-deception.

Contrary to occidental culture (Christianity), where searching one's conscience (*i.e.* aposterior reflection) has a prominent place within moral systems, it does not appear to be so markedly present in Buddhism; to us, it seems to be the effect of general suspicion of the ego, of its mental fabrications in Buddhism.

4.1.4 Detachment in meditation

Any attachment is an habit, and its absence is cultivable by practices "designed" for that purpose. From the large palette of practices that developed over centuries within different schools of Buddhism, we choose one which has, as we think, an eminent place amongst them: meditation. The Buddhist tradition produced great amount of techniques, though we believe that meditation in the sense we treat it here is the functional core of them; simplification cannot be avoided. In order to avoid misunderstanding, let us be once more formal to indicate the sense of this variable word.

Definition 4.2. Meditation *is the practice of concentration.*

Concentration may be achieved by pushing away all the rest (including distractions) or by making the mind habitually calm. Naturally, the first is the beginning-phase, which may be gradually transformed over into the second form, that of habit. The strenuous effort works only for relatively

short periods of time, before the will is exhausted, whereas the habit of serenity (being much more difficult to obtain, though), will keep the mind relatively calm, free of distractions and attachment, even in the "dry season" of mental indisposition.

In meditation, the adept is given an object at which he should point all his mental faculties for some period of time. This object may be some conceptual doctrine (*e.g.* the fourfold truth), a story (of Buddha showing the flower), a very simple object (candle, breath). The simpler the object, the more difficult the concentration is, for it saturates lesser "part" of the mind. The target state of mind is frequently described by similes from the well of beautiful Buddhist imagery: water surface reflecting the moon without any aberration etc.

It is in vain to resist the flux of distractions directly, for two reasons. First, the goals because of which they arise are already present in the subject (express attachment) and do not fall under deliberation. Second, the resistance itself is a distraction, distinct from the object of concentration. The only applicable attitude is to "let go", not to care about them—*i.e.* detachment.

The object given for concentration is proportionate, in its simplicity, to the habit of detachment for a particular adept. For example, if mind is unable to concentrate to breathing exclusively, it is complemented by counting breaths, etc. These auxiliary objects are progressively removed and, at the end, the mind should not cling to any activity notwithstanding absence of the object of concentration that normally inhibits, by its very presence, the flux of distractions. The state of of deep concentration without object is called *samādhi*[13] and is a disposition towards the emergence—later on this, though.

At the point of the adept being able to keep the object of practice in mind constantly and distractions occurring only marginally, we are well beyond complete submergence into the object, beyond uncontrollable desire in the strong sense. So far, this is only the case at the time of meditation, when (presumably) external distractions are minimized, the mind is not extremely perturbed etc. Such state of mind should be gradually propagated to everyday activities:

The most ordinary attitude to existence (*Daseinshaltungen*)

---

[13] [Suzuki, 1961a], pg. 82–84.

are the most intensive forces, that keep man back from the absolute insight. As long as these forces of the will-to-be act upon man as obstacle of the insight, the absolute consciousness [the awakened mind] remains filled with concealed impure mirror-images.[14]

4.2 Breaking through

The Buddhist practices and theories presented above do not resolve the main paradox that we presented at the beginning: the subject being captured in his own activities, unable to effect emergence of higher subject and hereby resolving its *aporias*. This said, it should not be taken as statement of unnecessity of the moral and intellectual cultivation—quite to the contrary; only that it is merely a training to a yet further stage which will have precisely the resolution of *aporias* as its "objective".

In different wording of the profound [Kitayama, 1934]:

> Does the striving to enhance cognitive faculties of man mean only pushing further and higher the limit of the finite in him or is it rather transcending the finitude through the finite into the infinity of the eternal [the cessation]?

> *I.e.*, man with all his efforts to enhance his cognitive faculties, as long as they are limited to human consciousness, will only hit the limit of his own finitude. To go beyond this limit, however possible it is to put it higher and higer, seems impossible to us.[15]

---

[14] "Die allerallgemeinsten Daseinshaltungen sind die allerintensivsten Kräfte, die das menschliche Dasein von der absoluten Vernunft zurückhalten. Solange diese Kräfte des Seinswillens als Verhüllung der Vernunft am Menschen wiksam sind, bleibt das absolute Bewußtsein gefüllt mit den unreinen verdeckten Spiegelbildern der Ideen." ([Kitayama, 1934], pg. 68.)

[15] "Bedeutet die Bemühung um Steigerung des Erkenntnisvermögens im Menschen nur die Erweiterung un Erhöhung der Grenze des Endlichen in Menschen oder ein Überschreiten des Endlichen über die Endlichkeit in die Unendlichkeit des Ewigen hin?

U. E. wird der Mensch bei allen seinen Bestrebungen um Steigerung seines Erkenntnisvermögens, insofern sie im menschlichen Bewußtsein vollzogen werden, nur an die Grenze der Endlichkeit seiner selbst stoßen. Über diese Grenze, mag sie auch noch

The aporetical nature of the Buddhist training has been reflected upon by Buddhists themselves thoroughly, as seen already in preceding chapter when the rejection of the ultimate truth was presented. We will present the reasoning behind, both based on our analyses from preceding sections and on some elements from the Chan/Zen tradition.

4.2.1 *Aporia* solution

The solution of an *aporia* is the transformation of subject, the emergence; the hitherto impossible-to-give-up intellectual structuring (one's situation) is broken, disappears. In the DREAM context, it is the fact of waking up, in fact, this metaphor was actually frequently used in oriental traditions (a notable example being the Zhuanzi's "butterfly problem"), wherefore the frequently used word "awakening".

Chan/Zen tradition[16] makes the distinction of "small awakening" and

---

so seht hinaugesteigert sein, hinüberzuschreiten, scheint uns nich möglich zu sein." ([Kitayama, 1934], pg. 94.)

[16] A brief presentation of this tradition ([Král, 1999], pg. 13–14): the name Chan (rendered *zen* in Japanese) etymologically derives from *dhyāna*, literally "meditation". According to a legend, Chan was brought to China from India by the first Zen patriarch, Bodhidharma, a figure generally believed to be historically existent though not much is known about him; the year of him coming in China is about 520 ([Suzuki, 1972], pg. 9). He was not the first teacher of Buddhism in China, though he gained influence by propagation of the Buddhist teaching. He declared *The Lankavatara sutra* to be the only source of the dharma, which contains in a rather pronounced way the extra-rational nature of the awakening (dissolving ignorance).

The ulterior Chan tradition incorporated many autochtonous Chinese elements, notably the teaching of *Laozi* and *Zhuangzi* (considered two key-figures of the Daoism), as there are affinities of their thought with Mahayana Buddhism. On the other hand, abstract doctrines of the Indian Buddhism were left behind Himalayas: "Roughly, then, the Chinese are above all a most practical people, while the Indians are visionary and highly speculative. [...] When Buddhism with all its characteristically Indian dialectics and imageries was first introduced into China, it must have staggered the Chinese mind." ([Suzuki, 1961a], pg. 96–97)

The advantage of Chan/Zen for us it, since theories were generally frown upon in this tradition, that practice was expressed much more directly and does not have to be decoded from abstractions. That is not to say that theories are not based on experience, only that it is easier for us and for the reader as well: "The claim of the Zen followers that they are transmitting the essence of Buddhism is based on their belief that Zen takes hold of the enlivening spirit of the Buddha, stripped of all its

"great awakening". In our understanding, it corresponds to the scale of subject-transformation: the small awakening denotes solution of a particular *aporia*, emergence of a higher subject; in this case, the most general problem is not yet resolved, as the higher subject is still a subject, having goals that again make the *ignorance → suffering → craving → ignorance → . . .* causation effective, although on a different level. The Bus would be, in this terminology and in a somewhat pedantic analysis, a series of small awakenings.

The great awakening, on the other hand, denotes the ultimate solution of all *aporias*: the subject ceases to will and does not structure discriminatively as in the preceding: *i.e.* projecting its craving into the original experience, producing ignorance and suffering. The subject (of attribution) ceases to exist *without* any higher subject (of attribution) replacing it.

4.2.2 Causation of the solution?

We began this section (4.2) by posing the question of whether any activity of the lower subject (*e.g.* S_2 in DREAM) may cause or at least contribute to the emersion of the higher subject (S_1; in case of the "small awakening" or even to the disappearance of all viewpoint (great awakening).

There are arguments against such a possibility. Firstly, any activity produced, directly or indirectly, by the lower subject, will never go beyond that originating subject, its activities; this is what we called "subject persistence" (2.3.4). Secondly, any practice produes the (arguably false) view of the solution being something yet to be reached[17]—this argument corresponds to the unity of conventional and ultimate truth (sect. 3.5).

The argument for such a possiblity is that if it were not possible, all effort, all mental training would be vain.

The key is to make clear what the nature of delusion is and, theoretically, what is the goal of the practice; if we consider DREAM, the crucial point is *not* that what is being dreamt is unreal, nonexistent—it *does* exist (though perhaps not in the Cartesian sense, but certainly in Jung's "empiricist" definition that "wirklich ist, was wirkt"[18]) without any doubt. The point

---

historical and doctrinal garments." ([Suzuki, 1961a], pg. 54) While this is certainly written from the position of a Zen follower and has to be taken with limitation, there is some truth to it.

[17] For a dedicated volume on this topic, see [Trungpa, 2000].

[18] "the real is what effects" (C. G. Jung)

in question is *how* it exists: I can conceive the "same" dream-content as:

1. the reality itself, for itself, pointing to nothing else; otherwise said, that activity is everything I know of and I mistake that dream (which is partial, from a "higher" view) for the whole, since there is nothing else in my cognition;

2. real, but not as the whole reality; it exists in a context and makes up only a part of the whole. (This whole, is not another illusion there, a part with regards to another whole?)

The first case is delusory; in the second one, the dream is identified *as* dream. It is in this sense that the awakening does not consist in producing different reality, as a replacement of the everyday one.

In much the same way as Nāgārjuna's *śūnyatā* is *absence* of class (concept), not an empty class: the conventional does not disappear in *śūnyatā*, it merely appears *as conventional*. Similarly, the idea of no-thought (or empty mind; that is the goal of meditation—see above—and is frequently misunderstood as being nihilist, quietist, etc.) does not denote simply mind without anything being thought; rather, it is mind that does not cling to what "it" thinks (is without attachment): "What is the *wu-nien*, no-thought-ness? Seeing all things and yet to keep your mind free from stain and attachment, this is no-thought-ness."[19]

On the other hand, given the interdependence of ignorance—craving— suffering, one can not simply decide to realize the conventional as conventional, the dream as dream etc. In this sense, what we called "mental stabilization" is necessary. Let us explore what exactly makes it necessary.

4.2.3 *Aporia* as paradox

The cognitive-voluntary interdependency results in subject persistence (as shown in chapter 2). Our task is to figure out theoretically, where the reason of this persistence, the chain of "ignorance $\rightarrow$ craving $\rightarrow$ suffering $\rightarrow$ ...", could be broken. As the breakage cannot be produced directly, it must happen *despite* those elements. Are there some limitations, some conditioning factors of the three elements beyond those in the chain, yet

---

[19] Hui-neng (638–713, author of *The Platform Sutra*), quoted in [Suzuki, 1972], pg. 126.

identifiable by the subject, that can make the chain break? It seems that neither craving nor suffering have any such limitation.

Ignorance, on the other hand, does have such a limitation: inconsistency, paradoxity. We may define it as any conceptual content on which the reason "chokes", something that is plainly unthinkable; this impossibility is expressed formally by the principle of non-contradiction. On the level of experience, it is *not* the other way around, *i.e.* that reason rejects it *because of* the existence of that principle; there would be no reason why it could not be otherwise.

What are the necessary conditions for the inconsistency to be identified and what needs to be done so that the contradiction-entailing ignorance collapses from within?

Identification of the inconsistency requires that two contradictory statements be present simultaneously and as explicitly as possible in the mind. The speculative analysis using the chains of logical inference, to make explicit consequences of a statement ("mental statement"); such intellectual ripening may take a long time, wherefore consistent effort is necessary. At the beginning, the inconsistency (which has, at this point, excessively intellectual connotations) may be only experienced as a frustration without any definitive expression, perhaps induced by existentially questionable situations.

> Looking at a pot, for example, or thinking of a pot, at one of Mr. Knott's pots, it was in vain that Watt said, Pot, pot. Well, perhaps not quite in vain, but very nearly. For it was not a pot, the more he looked, the more he reflected, the more he felt sure that, that it was not a pot at all. I resembled a pot, it was almost a pot, but it was not a pot of which one could say, Pot, pot, and be comforted. It was in vain that it answered, with unexceptionable adequacy, all the purposes, and performed all the offices, of a pot, it was not a pot. And it was just this hairbreadth departure from the nature of a true pot that so excruciated Watt.[20]

The frustration comes from the fact that there is, latently, the questioning of the claim of existence of the subject, which identifies with its goal and

---

[20] [Beckett, 1963], pg. 78.

correlatively with its understanding; of the pot, in this particular example. The rest consists in making the unspecific frustration as explicit as possible.

4.2.3.1 Kōan

The Chan/Zen tradition developed a method just for this purpose: the kōan. Kōan is an intellectually unresolvable riddle that teachers give to their students to "solve". Virtually any literature on Chan/Zen quotes some from the thousands of traditional kōans (as we did, also). The point of a kōan is to make the student's mind stuck so that its intellectual aspirations or inclinations collapse when the impossibility of any solution, of going neither back nor forth, is fully realized. At the moment of collapse the old ego disappears: for the kōan is, being an *aporia* of objects becomes, if deeply understood, *i.e.* internalized, an *aporia* of the subject itself. Without the subject being interested in the kōan from the very beginning (that it "fits" its situation, that it responds as a more explicit formulation to its internal not-yet-so-specific frustration), it could not be internalized.

Kōan is used widely in the *Rinzai* school of Chan/Zen (founded by Lin-ji / Rinzai in Japanese, †866). Its usage is a consequence of the emphasis of sudden awakening—only opening the eyes. No constructing, no progress. Lin-ji says:

> For as few as not having any thought, you would be delivered
> wherever you are. What am I trying to say by that? Adepts,
> I see you having all the thoughts that make you seek intensely,
> without you being able to stop them, thus vainly falling into
> the traps laid by the tradition.[21]

The method of the kōan may be considered an application of Nāgārjuna's gradual rejection of any theses of his opponent (which is, in the Buddhist therapy, delusion of one's own), a systematic way of starving the reasoning (there is no ultimate truth to be reached; wherefore pure refutation)—the result is not annihilation of any reasoning, "merely" becoming independent

---

[21] "Pour peu qu'on n'ait aucune pensée, on sera delivré où qu'on soit. Quelle est donc mon idée en vous parlant ainsi? C'est seulement, adeptes, que je vous vois avoir toutes ces pensées qui vous font courrir en cherchant, sans que vous puissiez les arrêter, tombant ainsi dans le vains pièges que vous tendent les anciens." ([Faure, 1993], pg. 228.)

on it, it the sense of being free to use it or not; for clearly concepts cannot capture everything; how would concepts themselves be captured?

4.2.3.2 Paradox development

Even a slight frustration, slight *aporia*, may be the gate to the insight that produces the collapse of conceptual structures.

> Sometimes, however, such details play the role of those anoma-
> lies of dream that are so singularly aberrant, that they force
> the dreamer to concede that all that is impossible and that he
> dreams.[22]

The more the paradox is apparent (explicit), the more is it frustrating; but the *less* likely is the subject to acknowledge it, the more is one going to *not* see it. Since subject and object are mixed at this point, all the tactics of self-deception (sect. 2.3.3) are at work. We already saw this activity–subject (of attribution) dependency and deduced that the subject is "persistent", unwilling to give up its particular way of structuring experience (sect. 2.3.4); it is precisely the case here: if the subject were disinterested in the validity of that understanding in question, it would discard it without any hesitation. To say that it makes up its identity or that it is an expression of its craving amounts to the same; there is not object separated from the subject that could be discarded, it is both at the same time.

[Beckett, 1987] is a remarkable analysis of this problem in the occidental context; Beckett uses the term "habit"to denote the persistence, with Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu* as exemplary material.

> The old ego dies hard. Such as it was, a minister of dullness,
> it was also an agent of security. When it ceases to perform
> that second function, when it is opposed by a phenomenon that
> it cannot reduce to the condition of a comfortable and familiar
> concept, when, in a word, it betrays its trust as a screen to spare
> its victim the spectacle of reality, it disappears, and the victim,

---

[22] "Parfois, pourtant, ces détails jouent le rôle de certaines anomalies particulièrement aberrantes du rêve, qui forcent le rêveur à s'avouer que tout cela est impossible, et qu'il est donc en train de rêver." ([Faure, 1998], pg. 191.)

now an ex-victim, for a moment free, is exposed to that reality—
an exposure that has its advantages and its disadvantages. It
disappears—with wailing and gnashing of teeth.[23]

How to prevent the existential frustration, the "wailing and gnashing of
teeth", the *horror vacui* of (concept-)emptiness, of the breaching under-
standing of the world, from taking over and obfuscating the mind? Beckett
says simply "When it ceases". Are we to rely on the accidental break of the
agent of security? For how long? "A good sentence is a post to which a
donkey can be tethered for ten thousand years."[24]

4.2.4 Tranquillity as insight-condition

To diminish the self-delusive effects of the subject being put in question
by the paradox, the intellectual quest must be complemented by cultiva-
tion of mind itself. In this particular context, the *horror vacui* is a mere
distraction with regards to the object of examination. As we have shown
(4.1.4), distractions express activity-attachment of the subject (*i.e.* differ-
ent activities of the subject with which it identifies).

4.2.4.1 Zazen

Zazen is a Japanese word translated as "sitting meditation". Although we al-
ready presented meditation as a means of mental stabilization (sect. 4.1.4),
its role at this point is different: it tries to suspend any activity by habit-
uating the mind to tranquillity (contrary to the kōan, that suspends the
activity of intellection by sharpening it up to the point of collapse), which
makes conditions for the delusion to dissolve; such mental state naturally
should propagate to everyday. Even if some Chan schools do not empha-
size zazen (such as *Rinzai*, they still require the adept to keep the "empty
mind" (as explained above, sect. 4.2.2) during all activities.[25]

Zazen is, in popular understanding, the preferred method of training
in the *Sōtō* school (introduced to Japan by Dōgen). Dōgen defends the
preference of zazen in the following way:

---

23   [Beckett, 1987], pg. 21

24   "Dobrá věta je jako kůl, k němuž lze přivázat osal na deset tisíc let" (Chan teacher
     Cheng of 9th century, quoted in [Foster, 2002], pg. 119.)

25   [Su-La-Ce, 2005], pg. 234–248.

Question 1: You have told us about the sublime merits of zazen. But an ordinary person might ask you this: "There are many entrances to the Buddha Dharma. What is it that makes you advocate zazen alone?"

Answer 1: Because it is the right entrance to the Buddha Dharma. [...]

Question 3: [...] How can you be certain that if you pass your time sitting idly in zazen, enlightenment will result?

Answer 3: When you characterize the unsurpassingly great Dharma and the samadhi of the Buddhas as merely "sitting idly", you are guilty of maligning the Great Vehicle. [...] Fortunately, the Buddhas are already seared firmly established in *jijuyū* samadhi. Does that not produce immense merit? It is a pity that your eyes are not opened yet, that intoxication still befogs your mind.

The realm of Buddhas is utterly incomprehensible, not to be reached by the workings of the mind.[26]

Contrary to what seems, Dōgen does not advocate sitting in zazen as a means of attaining awakening (if doing it the right way): "the person seated in zazen without fail casts off body and mind, severs all the heretofore disordered and defiled thoughts and views emanating from his discriminating consciousness, conforms totally with the genuine Buddha Dharma."[27] This results in his view of oneness of practice and attainment[28], of the "just sitting" (*shikantaza*) instruction: the awakening is not something to be reached; such projection into future is a mere intellectual construct, furthering ignorance and attachment (see SALVATION).

4.2.4.2 Paradox and tranquillity as complements

The attachment is the source of conceptual structures, of which necessary paradoxical nature we take as a key to discovering and destroying them; without the paradox, there is no manifested aporia to be solved. Without tranquillity, the mind will not permit the paradox to become effective as

---

[26] From *Bendōwa* fascicle of Dōgen's *Shōbōgenzō*; [Wadell & Abe, 2002], pg. 15.

[27] [Wadell & Abe, 2002], pg. 12.

[28] [Abe, 1992], pg. 17–33.

the incentive of conceptual collapse. Therefore, the intellectual analysis and mental tranquillity are complementary and neither will work without the other.

If one merely analyzes intellectually (*i.e.* is a philosopher) without mental discipline, the mind will be clenched in frustration, unable to cast off its constructions without any compromise. Otherwise said, the frustration will not be able to develop to the degree of being unbearable, by explication and seeing the strict impossibility of any solution, for that already requires mental discipline. The self-delusion does not go away by merely being sincere to oneself, even in the best sense of the word. The philosopher may be schematized thusly:

escape?

ignorance   craving

suffering
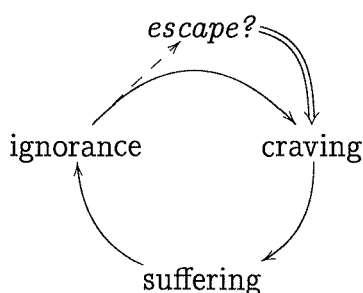
If one merely calms the mind, the result will be what Buddhists call "serenity of a chewing cow". As it was already noted, the tranquillity will be necessarily achieved first by itself, and it is not until when it habitualizes that it can be carried out without interference along with other activities— not as yet another activity but as a global "mind-set". The chewing cow looks like this:

ignorance   craving

suffering
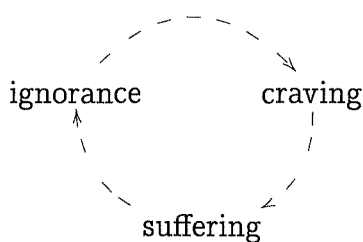
In the context of the Chan/Zen tradition, it is true that the *Sōtō* and *Rinzai* schools emphasize zazen and kōan; nevertheless, they do not use either of them exclusively. This was anticipated in Dōgen's view of unity of attainment and practice and is manifest not only from the theoretical analysis, but also from the history of both schools. For example, Dōgen says:

> When you open a sutra to read, it should be for the purpose of
> clarifying the teachings the Buddha set forth about the rules and
> regulations for practicing sudden *and* gradual enlightenment.
> (translator's note: The Buddha is said to have taught two kinds
> of practice by which people could attain enlightenment quickly
> or gradually, according to their differing spiritual capacities.)[29]

It would not have sense from the functional point of view to employ one of
them only, both are necessary for the training:

> It is true that Buddhism uses the technique of mental tranquil-
> lization, when all thought is temporarily suspended. Attaining
> such state is *samādhi*, which is the Saskrit term for deep and
> thoughtless contemplation. This state is in true meditation il-
> luminated by awareness and is in no case a goal for itself. Quite
> on the contrary: it is the beginning. It is what Buddha called
> "fertile" state of mind, ground, in which the seed of awakening
> may sprout and burst into flower. He considers that in under
> different circumstance the sprouting is possible unlikely to be
> as successful.
>
> The Zen tradition warns its practitioners not to take the blissful
> state of *samādhi* for the objective of their efforts. It is a reef
> on which many Buddhist, having the best intentions, suffered
> shipwreck. If the meditation is to be effective, deep and inten-
> sive concentration (often resulting in *samādhi*) is needed, but
> it must be accompanied by thoughtful spirit.[30]

---

[29] [Wadell & Abe, 2002], pg. 15; *emphasis* ours.

[30] "Je sice pravda, že buddhismus používá techniku utišení mysli, kdy je veškeré myšlení
dočasně zastaveno. Dosažení toho stavu přináší stav *samādhi*, jak zní sánskrtský
výraz pro hlubokou, myšlenek prostou kontemplaci. Tento stav je však u skutečného
meditujícího osvětlen uvědoměním a v žádném případě není cílem sám o sobě. Právě
naopak: je to začátek. Je tím, co Buddha nazval „plodným" stavem mysli, půdou, v
níž může vyklíčit semeno probuzení a dospět do květu. Za jiných podmínek, domnívá
se, je jeho vyklíčení sice možné, avšak nejspíše ne tak úspěšné.

Zenová tradice varuje své stoupence, aby dosažení blaženého stavu *samādhi* nepo-
važovali za konečný cíl svého snažení. Je to útes, na němž mnozí dobře smýšlející
buddhisté ztroskotali. Aby byla meditace účinná, je sice třeba hluboké a intenzivní
soustředěnosti (často ústící do stavu *samādhi*), ale provázené hloubavým duchem."
([Poster, 2002], pg. 97.)

In yet another words:

> The Buddhist way to deliverance, therefore, consisted in three-fold discipline: moral rules (*śīla*), tranquillization (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*prajñā*). By Śīla one's conduct is regulated externally, by Samādhi quietude is attained, and by Prajñā real understanding takes place. Hence the importance of meditation in Buddhism.[31]

Let us summarize: The goal of the whole process (though it cannot be an effect of some voluntary causes) is to break the subject (lower subject) by sharply identifying its impossibility, its contradictory nature, its inconsistency (paradox, kōan). Such inconsistency concerns the subject in its inmost ontological depth; at the same time, paradoxically, the inconsistency may not be initially thought (produced), let alone progressively explicated and finally being sharply thought, without the mind being more and more concentrated, tranquil, *detached*; this mental habit is the fruit of what we described as "mental stabilization" previously.

It is not surprising that theoretical description of the solution is itself of aporetic nature (by virtue of mutual dependence of tranquillity and inconsistency), for an *aporia* is by definition a problem without solution: without any means of producing it.

4.3 Conclusion

This chapter presented some Buddhist practices of dealing with the paradoxical structure of the mind, which was elaborated earlier. We believe that they represent the functional core, which we tried to show theoretically. Two steps were distinguished in the process of *aporia*-solution.

Firstly, mental stabilization, without which no consistent effort is possible, and which comprises 3 practices, that of seclusion, vigilance and meditation; we have shown the intimate relationship of attachment (craving) and distractions in meditation.

Secondly, the solution itself should take place. It was discussed generally, as well as within the Chan/Zen tradition, where the notion of awakening is central. It was shown that there are two complementary elements

---

[31] [Suzuki, 1961a], pg. 81–82.

of favorable conditions for the solution: paradox-awareness and tranquility, which correspond to two principal methods of the Chan/Zen tradition, kōan and zazen. The complementary nature is based on the cognitive-voluntary interdependence, the core of all *aporias*, elaborated earlier.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

The attempt at taking the subject into account by analyzing everyday activities has proved to be worthwhile; it made possible to distinguish *aporias* (solutionless) and technical problems and to outline subject structure, along with problems it poses, notably that of subject persistence and cognitive-voluntary interdependence. Given the ubiquitous nature of solutionless problems (including, but not limited to, philosophy), the rest tried to provide theoretical base for the solution of such solutionless problems. Since Buddhism seemed to have dealt with the same problems, we benefited from its tradition. Since conclusions of individual chapters (sect. 2.5, 3.6 and 4.3) give more detailed overview of what has been done, it is not necessary to repeat it at this place. "What I have written I have written."

There is no use of any text except of the one for the reader. The judgement must be based in one's own understanding and rests inevitably individual: *quidquid recipitur, secundum modo recipientis recipitur.* The process of writing was lead for the most part by the push to clarify obscurities in which the author was personally involved. It would be foolish to claim ultimate description, since the intent was purely pragmatic (and if formal requirements are met, it is only accidentally).

The fact that any "real" (that is, striving to solve existential problems, the *aporias*) philosophical activity is necessarily a process of subject-transformation—and correspondingly object-transformation—implies provisional nature of *any* theories. The "sceptical cure"[1] does not result in a sceptical theory being held firmly but rather in freeing oneself from the will to theorize. Paradoxically, these theories are born out of necessity, yet one

---

[1]   [Garfield, 2002], Chapter 1. (*Epoche* and *Śūnyatā*), pg. 1–23.

should see them as mere instruments, not to cling to them. This paradox (cognitive-voluntary interdependence) is what implies the complementarity of theoretical (intellectual) and practical (in the sense of mind cultivation) philosophy.

This is a point clearly made in the Buddhism (contrary to the development of thought in the Occident) and it is where its inspirational force, at least in the author's case, comes from. By formulating our introspection (which resulted, accidentally, into formulation of some of the Buddhist doctrines) in chapter 2 in the Occidental philosophical context, we hope to have shown that the problems arisen are not altogether alien to the Western philosophy, although they have never become mainstream. Aristotle's ultimate goal that governs all decision-making is itself exempt from that decision-making and Aquinas affirms that grace is needed in order to accept grace.

If philosophy is a job—which is completely legitimate, but not to be confused with the "true" philosophy as outlined above—it merely fabricates concepts that effectively stuff the cognition so that the real is not needed any more; and the fabricator (the philosopher) falls in love with his theories:

> And yet it is useless not to seek, not to want, for when you
> cease to seek you start to find, and when you cease to want,
> then life begins to ram her fish and chips down your gullet until
> you puke, and then the puke down your gullet until you puke
> the puke and then puked puke until you begin to like it.[2]

The point is not that the objective is to never reach the goal of philosophy (that is, cessation of suffering through dissolving ignorance) and that what is important is to ask questions forever: that is only a disguised way of self-affirmation, analogous to the "masochist" self-affirmation through suffering and penitence so well known in Christianity. Of course the solution *is* to be reached: but it is never something the subject can attribute to itself, as its achievement, as "fish and chips".

Mind cultivation was pushed out of philosophy into the domain of religion in the West after the divorce of reason and faith. To think that the ability to concentrate is merely the ability to think *more* things simultaneously is symptomatic of this. Better concentration makes it (also, but more importantly) possible to think *less* and more intensively. However,

---

[2]   [Beckett, 1963], pg. 43.

the intensity makes one not see the same thing better but to see something different: when the permanent source of distractions and attachment (ignorance→craving→suffering→...) is silenced through concentration, all the ego-maintaining and self-deluding activities become transparent. It is here that the possibility of giving up any (once existentially induced) theory appears.

— Tell us, pray, abbot: what will happen with the teaching of the Highest one when all the people will have become Buddhas?

— Teaching of who? — asked the abbot uncomprehendingly.

— Teaching of the Highest Buddha — said one of the monks again, with hesitation.

— What a news for me, that the Highest Buddha has some teaching — said the abbot and puzzled silence descended on the corridor, among the monks.

— Master! It was yourself who acquainted us with that teaching! [...]

— I know no such teaching.

— [...] What was all that, Lin-ji? Wasn't it the Buddha's teaching?

— For sure it was not Buddha's teaching, since I don't know any such teaching.

— What teaching was it then, abbot?

— I know of no teaching. I don't know any teaching.[3]

---

[3]   "— Řekni, opate! Co se stane s učením Nejvyššího, až budou všichni lidé na světě buddhové?

— S učením koho? — ptal se opat nechápavě.

— S učením nejvyššího Buddhy — zopakoval poněkud nejistě jeden z nich.

— To je pro mě novina, že má nejvyšší Buddha nějaké učení — řekl, opat, načež se v síni na hodnou chvíli rozhostilo bezradné ticho.

— Mistře! Vždyť právě tys nás s jeho učením sám obeznamoval! [...]

— Žádné takové učení neznám.

— [...] Co všechno to bylo, opate Lin-ťi? Nebylo to snad Buddhovo učení?

— Buddhovo učení to určitě nebylo, mnichové! Já žádné Buddhovo učení neznám.

— Tak jaké učení to bylo, opate?

— O žádném učení nevím. Žádné učení neznám." ([Šu-La-Ce, 2005], pg. 221–222.)

Bibliography

[Abe, 1992] Masao Abe, *A study of Dōgen*, State University of New York Press, New York 1992.

[Abe, 1985] Masao Abe, *Zen and Western Thought*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu 1985.

[Aristotle, 1958] Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, W. D. Ross' translation, http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/metaphysics.html

[Beckett, 1987] Samuel Beckett, *Proust; Three dialogues*, John Calder, London 1987.

[Beckett, 1963] Samuel Beckett, *Watt*, John Calder, London 1963.

[Bugault, 1994] Guy Bugault, *L'inde pense-t-elle?*, Presses universitaires de France, Paris 1994.

[Chenet, 1998] François Chenet, *La philosophie indienne*, Armand Colin, Paris 1998.

[Coomaraswamy, 2000] Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *Hindouisme et Bouddhisme*, Gallimard, 2000.

[Eckhart, 1957] Raymond B. Blakney (transl.), *Meister Eckhart*, Harper & Row, San Francisco 1957.

[Faure, 1998] Bernard Faure, *Bouddhismes, philosophies et religions*, Flammarion, 1998.

[Foster, 2002] Paul Foster, *Beckett a zen [Beckett and Zen]*, Mladá Fronta, Praha 2002.

[Frisch, 1985] Max Firsch, *Stiller*, Volk und Welt, Berlin 1985.

[Garfield, 1995] Jay L. Garfield (transl. and commentary), *The Funda-mental Wisdom of the Middle Way* (Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhya-makakārikā*), Oxford University Press, New York 1995.

[Garfield, 2002] Jay L. Garfield, *Empty Words (Buddhist Philosophy and Cross-Cultural Interpretation)*, Oxfor University Press, New York 2002.

[Hauzer, 2002] Karel Hauzer, Zdeněk Bígl, *Filosofie II*, Česká zemědělská univerzita v Praze, Praha 2002.

[Jung, 1966] Carl Gustav Jung, *Die Beziehungen zwischen dem ich und dem Unbewußten*, Rascher Verlag, Zürich 1966.

[Kapleau, 1966] Philp Kapleau, *The Three Pillars of Zen*, Harper & Row, San Francisco 1966.

[Katsura, 2000] Shōryū Katsura, *Nāgārjuna and the Tetralemma* (Catuṣkoṭi), in: Jonathan A. Silk (ed.), *Wisdom, Compassion, and the Search for Understanding*, University of Hawai'i Press, Honolulu 2000.

[Kitayama, 1944] Junyu Kitayama, *Heroisches Ethos*, Walter de Gruygter & Co, Berlin 1944.

[Kitayama, 1934] Junyu Kitayama, *Metaphysik der Buddhismus*, W. Kohlhammer, Stuttgart 1934.

[Koller, 1991] John M. Koller & Patricia Koller (eds.), *A Sourcebook in Asian Philosophy*, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River 1991.

[Král, 1999] Oldřich Král, *Tribunová sútra šestého patriarchy [The Plat-form Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch]*, Vyšehrad, Praha 1999.

[Lidell & Scott, 1997] *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon*, Claren-don Press, Oxford 1997.

[Lopez, 2004] Donald S. Lopez, jr. (ed.),*Buddhist Scriptures*, Penguin Books, London 2004.

[Martino, 1963] Richard de Martino, *The Human Situation and Zen Buddhism*, *in:* Daisetz T. Suzuki *et al.*, *Zen Buddhism & Psychoanalysis*, Grove Press, New York 1963.

[Pascal, 1985] Blaise Pascal, *Listy venkovanovi [Provincial Letters]*, *in:* Petr Horák, *Svět Blaise Pascala*, Vyšehrad, Praha 1985.

[Priest, 2002] Graham Priest, *Beyond the Limits of Thought*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 2002.

[Robinson, 1957] Richard H. Robinson, *Some Logical Aspects of Naagaarjuna's system*, in: *Philosophy East & West*, vol. 6, no. 4 (oct. 1957), pg. 291–308.

[Siderits, 1997] Mark Siderits, *Distinguishing the Mādhyamika from the Advaitin: A Field Guide*, in: S. R. Saha (ed.), *Essays in Indian Philosophy*, Jadavpur Studies in Philosophy, Calcutta: Allied Publishers, pp. 129–43.

[Siderits, 1989] Mark Siderits, *Thinking on empty: Madhyamaka Anti-Realism and Canons of Rationality*, *in:* Shlomo Biderman, Ben-Ami Scharfstein (eds.), *Rationality in Question: On Eastern and Western Views of Rationality*, E. J. Brill, Leiden 1989, pg. 231–249.

[Suzuki, 1961a] Daisetz T. Suzuki, *Essays in Zen Buddhism*, Grove Press, New York 1961.

[Suzuki, 1961b] Daisetz T. Suzuki, *An Introduction to Zen Zen Buddhism*, Grove Press, New York 1961.

[Suzuki, 1972] Daisetz T. Suzuki, *The Zen doctrine of no-mind*, Red Wheel/Weiser, York Beach 1972.

[Suzuki, 1996] William Barrett (ed.), *Zen Buddhism (selected writings of D. T. Suzuki)*, Doubleday, New York 1996.

[Šmilauer, 2000] Václav Šmilauer, *Intelektivní poznání smyslového [Intellective Knowledge of the Sensual]*, unpublished paper for a course on Aristotle's *De anima*, 2000.

[Špička, 1992] Ivan Špička, *Mentální průprava bez ilusí*, Alogodos, Praha 1992.

[Trungpa, 2000] Chögyam Trungpa, *Cesta je cíl [The Path is the Goal]*, Vadžra, Jablonec nad Nisou 2000. (Original english edition: Chögyam Trungpa, *The Path is the Goal*, Shambhala, Massachusets 1995.)

[Šu-La-Ce, 2005] Šu-La-Ce, *Ranní rozhovory v klášteře opata Lin-tiho [Morning dialogues in the monastery of Lin-ji]*, Malvern, Praha 2005.

[Trungpa, 1987] Chögyam Trungpa, *Cutting through the Spiritual Materialism*, Shambhala, Boston 1987.

[Vopěnka, 2001] Petr Vopěnka, *Meditace o základech vědy [Meditations on the Fundaments of the Science]*, Práh, Praha 2001.

[Tillemans, 1999] Tom J. F. Tillemans, *Scripture, Logic, Language*, Wisdom Publications, Boston 1999.

[Wadell & Abe, 2002] Norman Wadell, Masao Abe (translators), *The Heart of Dōgen's* Shōbōgenzō, State Univerity of New York Press, Albany 2002.

[Watzlawick, 1998] Paul Watzlawick (ed.), *L'invention de la réalité*, Seuil, Paris 1998.

[Yalom, 2004] Irvin D. Yalom, *Láska a její kat [Love's Executioner]*, Portál, Praha 2004.

[Nietzsche, 2005] Irvin D. Yalom, *When Nietzsche Wept*, Harper Perennial, New York 2005.
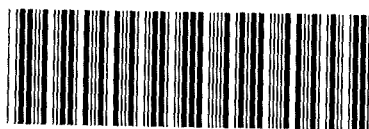
Index

Resumé

This paper analyzes everyday experience in general, based on the notion of goal and problem. It makes the distinction of two fundamentally different problem types: technical problem and *aporia* (solutionless), the latter being subject of the rest. The reason of the solutionlessness is identified as cognitive-voluntary interdependence and the corresponding Buddhist concept of interdependent origination is brought up. In the following, theoretical and practical requirements for breaking the solutionlessness are analyzed. Theoretical foundations necessitate reformulation of subjectivity, objectivity and truth; those are presented through several doctrines from the Buddhist tradition, notably Nāgārjuna. The practical side involves various methods of mind-cultivation (paradox-sharpening and tranquility), as requirement of the solution itself; we explain their functioning based on the model we elaborated earlier. *Aporias* are shown to be of particular importance for philosophy, which therefore has to involve cultivation of the mind.

Tato práce analyzuje každodenní zkušenost skrze pojmy cíle a problému. Jsou rozlišeny dva základní typy problémů: technické a aporie (neřešitelné); aporie jsou přitom hlavním tématem dalšího. Ukazuje se, že důvodem jejich neřešitelnosti je kognitivně-voluntární závislost; poté je představena odpovídající buddhistická nauka o řetězu závislého vznikání. Dále jsou rozebírány teoretické a praktické předpoklady pro prolomení zmíněné neřešitelnosti. Na teoretické rovině se jedná o reformulaci subjektivity, objektivity a pravdy; zde se opíráme o různé buddhistické nauky, zejména filosofa Nāgārjunu. Praktická stránka zahrnuje různé metody kultivace mysli (vyhrocení paradoxu a ztišení) jako předpokladu pro provedení vlastního řešení; fungování těchto metod osvětlujeme v prve vypracovaném modelu. Aporie se ukazují jako zvláště důležité pro filosofii, která se proto musí zabývat kultivací mysli.

F-20/2006